



State Representative • 31st Legislative District

Steve Santarsiero

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Fighting For Education

The budget debate is under way in Harrisburg, and I am making it my priority to fight for Pennsylvania families. I don't believe it is fair to give the oil and gas industries in Pennsylvania a free pass when our residents are paying their fair share, yet not getting the benefit of adequate support for public education and environmental oversight.

I voted against the House Republican budget proposal bill because it made drastic cuts to education without considering a tax on natural gas drillers and more than \$500 million in unanticipated revenue through the first 10 months of this fiscal year alone.

The plan slashes \$1 billion in funding for basic education. Right here at home, funding for Council Rock School District is slashed \$904,824, or 6.2 percent, under the House Republican budget plan. To put it in perspective, that's a revenue loss of \$76 per student.

The picture is not much better regarding higher education. The House Republican proposal seeks to cut \$300 million from funding for our colleges and universities.

While I agree that tough cuts need to be made in this year's budget – as we did in each of the last two budgets since I took office – it is wrong to balance the budget on the backs of children and hard-working property taxpayers. These cuts to state education funding will almost certainly result in increased property taxes to help fill the gap. Pennsylvania already ranks 44th among the 50 states in terms of the percentage of public education funding that the state provides. These cuts will only add to that dubious distinction.

Alternatives do exist. As I explained at a recent informational session at the Council Rock Administration Building, the additional revenue noted above as well as the natural gas drilling tax would help us restore funding for over 60 percent of the proposed cuts.

Visit my website at www.pahouse.com/santarsiero to view presentations from the education discussion.



Rep. Santarsiero speaks at his Investing in the Future discussion about funding for education in Pennsylvania.

Santarsiero Announces Donation Of COLA To Keep D.A.R.E. Program Alive Locally

You can do your part to keep this vital program alive in Pennsylvania! Visit my website at www.pahouse.com/Santarsiero or scan the code below to sign my petition to restore funding to the D.A.R.E. program.

I recently announced that I will donate my annual cost-of-living adjustment to keep the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program running in Lower Makefield and Newtown townships.

Since taking office Dec. 1, 2008, I have written a check to the state treasury each month to return the automatic COLA given to state legislators. Effective immediately I will deposit the monthly \$288.24 payment representing both the 2008 and 2010 COLAs into a new account, and at the end of the year I will divide up the more than \$3,000 between the Newtown and Lower Makefield township police departments for the D.A.R.E. programs.

In the past, the state would reimburse local police departments \$10,000 to \$12,000 for D.A.R.E., depending on the size of the community. State funding for this program has decreased steadily over the years, even though the need for the program has only increased. Gov. Rendell eliminated the program in 2010 and this year neither Gov. Corbett's proposed budget nor the House Republican plan restored any state funding to the program. Without state funding, many police departments are not able to run this program.

I believe the D.A.R.E. program is effective and should be expanded, particularly during the middle school years, rather than eliminated.

Newtown Township Police Department D.A.R.E. programs:

- Goodnoe Elementary School
- Newtown Elementary School
- Sol Feinstone Elementary School
- St. Andrew Catholic Church Catholic Education Center



To learn more and sign the petition, scan with your smartphone's QR reader.

Santarsiero Introduces Bipartisan Plan To Make Pa. Roads Safer

I recently teamed up with state Rep. Paul Clymer, R-Bucks, to introduce legislation that would allow local police to use radar when enforcing speed limits on local roads.

Our bill (H.B. 1475), which has bipartisan support in the House, would increase traffic safety in the Commonwealth by allowing local police departments to use this efficient method of speed tracking.

Pennsylvania is currently the only state in the entire country that does not permit local police to use radar as a speed enforcement tool. Pennsylvania State Police officers are the only authorized users of radar to determine when an individual is driving at an unsafe speed.

Local police personnel have long requested this tool to help make their neighborhoods safer and their departments more efficient, and it is time that we extend this resource to them.



Rep. Santarsiero speaks at a House Democratic Policy Committee hearing to explore Marcellus Shale natural gas drilling issues in Pennsylvania.

Keeping Pennsylvania's Roads Safer For Drivers

I voted for two bills in the House that would help make Pennsylvania's roads and highways safer for those who travel them.

I supported H.B. 896, which would add an additional \$50 fine for distracted driving. This bill also more clearly defines distracted driving, including such things as the use of interactive wireless communication devices, eating, personal grooming and reading printed material in its definition.

I also voted for H.B. 9, which would increase behind-the-wheel training from 50 hours to 65 hours for junior drivers (age 16 to 18). Ten of those driving hours would be required at night, and five would be required during inclement weather.

The legislation would also limit the number of teen passengers to one in a car driven by a licensed junior driver, with exceptions for family members.

In addition, the measure would make the failure by drivers and passengers under age 18 to wear a seatbelt a primary offense.

Both of these bills will now move to the Senate.



Rep. Santarsiero, along with Rep. Scott Petri and House Speaker Sam Smith, recognizes the Council Rock North golf team on the floor of the state House of Representatives. The team captured the PIAA golf championship in October, capping a spectacular season in which the Indians also captured league, district and regional championships.

House Adopts Santarsiero Resolution to Recognize September 11th National Memorial Trail

The House of Representatives unanimously adopted my resolution (H.R. 303) seeking legislative support for the September 11th National Memorial Trail and its connection to two memorials located in Pennsylvania.

The establishment of this 1,130-mile hiking, biking and driving trail will connect the memorials commemorating the tragic events that occurred at the Flight 93 National Memorial, the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. The memorial trail will extend from the site of Ground Zero in New York City, to the Pentagon in Virginia, to the Flight 93 crash site in Shanksville, and then across the state returning to Ground Zero. Along the way it will pass through our very own Garden of Reflection in Lower Makefield Township, the official state memorial to the victims of September 11.



Pictured with Rep. Santarsiero are House Speaker Sam Smith; Ellen Saracini; David Brinkley, president, Sept. 11th National Memorial Trail Alliance; and Liuba Lashchyk, architect for Garden of Reflection.

The resolution also honors the Garden of Reflection and the Flight 93 National Memorial. While presenting the resolution on the House floor, I recognized Lower Makefield resident, Ellen Saracini, whose husband Victor Saracini was a pilot on United Airlines Flight 175. Ellen was one of the co-founders of the Garden of Reflection – and a driving force behind its construction – and has been a leading advocate for its perpetual maintenance as a fitting tribute to those who perished on that terrible day.

It was an honor to present this resolution to the House for its consideration.

Santarsiero Announces \$850,000 Grant For Edgewood Village Project

The Commonwealth Financing Authority recently approved our request for an \$850,000 grant for a project in Lower Makefield Township.

The H2O PA grant will be used to assist with the Edgewood Village Sewer and Water Extension Project, which addresses public health and safety issues by providing public sewer service to 29 existing homes, while at the same time revitalizing the historic village to serve as a much-needed downtown area for Lower Makefield.

A connection to the public sewer system will be a real catalyst for the revitalization of Edgewood Village. Not only has the absence of public sewers had a negative effect on property values in this area, but it has also become a public safety issue.

I have been working for more than a year now to obtain this funding, and I am pleased that our hard work and advocacy has paid off.

When completed, the Edgewood Village project is expected to create 250 permanent jobs. The construction phase alone is estimated to create 100 temporary jobs.





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Update On New Jersey Residency Requirement

Last month, Gov. Chris Christie of New Jersey signed into law a measure that requires all state employees to live in New Jersey. I am pleased to report that this law contained a provision I fought for that exempts all current public sector employees from the residency requirement.

Without this grandfather provision many families would have had to choose between their jobs and their homes, forcing many to sell their homes at the bottom of the market. I was proud to fight on behalf of those of you who live here in Pennsylvania and work in New Jersey.

Santarsiero Welcomes Local Residents To House Floor



Rep. Santarsiero welcomes Newtown resident Emily Rosenberg, a recent graduate of Council Rock High School North, as a guest page in the House of Representatives' chamber.



Rep. Santarsiero welcomes Lenore Cohen as a guest page in the chamber of the House of Representatives. Cohen, a student at the University of Vermont and a resident of Newtown Borough, is doing a summer internship in Santarsiero's constituent service office.

Visit My Updated Website and Sign Up for E-mail Alerts!

Visit my updated website at www.pahouse.com/Santarsiero to stay up-to-date on my legislative and community initiatives. You can also sign up to receive e-mail alerts about my progress in Harrisburg and state-related issues that affect your life by clicking "Contact Me" and filling out the form.

You can also stay up-to-date with me via Facebook (www.facebook.com/RepSantarsiero) and on Twitter (@RepSantarsiero).

What My Office Can Do For You

- FREE notary services
- Car registrations, special tags, titles and license applications
- Information on financial assistance for higher education
- Birth certificate applications
- Pennsylvania income tax problems
- Complaints or questions about utilities and the PUC
- Consumer complaints
- Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding local accomplishments and family milestones
- Complaints about road conditions
- Problems or questions about PennDOT
- Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups
- Disability plates and placards
- PACE cards for senior citizens
- Complaints and problems with insurance companies
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions
- Any other question or issue with state government!