



# Frank Burns



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[www.pahouse.com/Burns](http://www.pahouse.com/Burns)

Senior Update 2010

Dear Neighbor,

This newsletter contains valuable and vital information for older Pennsylvanians living in the Greater Johnstown Area. Please take a minute of your time and read about the many state and federal programs that are available to you, including:

- PennDOT licensing, registration and other paperwork;
- Obtaining copies of birth or death certificates;
- Applying for PACE benefits or Property Tax/Rent Rebates;
- Disability placard applications;

*and many other programs and services!*

We also have a variety of informational booklets, brochures and other publications on subjects such as emergency planning, tips for older consumers, identity theft protection, living wills, how to obtain your free credit report, and much more. You can pick up these materials at my office or write or call to request they be sent to you.

As always, please feel free to contact my office at 814-536-8400 with any state-related question, concern or issue you may have.

## 2009 Property Tax/Rent Rebate applications available

Please be aware that applications for the state's Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program are available now through my offices.

The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program provides rebates on the previous year's property taxes or rent to income-eligible residents who are 65 or older, 50 or older and widowed, and 18 or older with a permanent disability. The household income limit for homeowners is \$35,000; for renters, the income limit is \$15,000. Applicants only have to count half of any Social Security or federal railroad retirement benefits when calculating income. The maximum rebate is \$650. Some senior homeowners may be eligible for an even larger rebate, depending on income, which they will automatically receive based on the Department of Revenue's calculations.

If you qualified for, or received, a state property tax or rent rebate for the 2008 tax year, you should receive an application for the 2009 tax year in the mail automatically. Otherwise, you can download the form online at [www.revenue.state.pa.us/ptrr](http://www.revenue.state.pa.us/ptrr) or contact my office. We have plenty of copies, and we can help you apply. Call my office to set up an appointment so that we can assist you in filling out an application for this important program.



# Benefits available to older Pennsylvanians

Older Pennsylvanians have long relied on the services provided by our local Area Agency on Aging. The Area Agency on Aging offers a wealth of information ranging from health care to home-delivered meals.



## SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE AGENCY INCLUDE:

- In-home help with cleaning and cooking
- Help with assessing individual care needs
- Care management with a case worker
- Housing placement in nursing homes or personal care facilities
- Support for caregivers
- Help with personal care
- Emergency response and medical supplies

For more information on services and programs available through this agency, contact:

### **Cambria Area Agency on Aging**

Central Park Complex  
110 Franklin Street, Suite 400  
Johnstown, PA 15901  
Toll-free: (800) 992-4464  
(814) 539-5595

[www.co.cambria.pa.us/Pages/AreaAgencyonAging.aspx](http://www.co.cambria.pa.us/Pages/AreaAgencyonAging.aspx)

### **Somerset Area Agency on Aging**

1338 South Edgewood Avenue  
Somerset, PA 15501  
Toll-free: (800) 452-0825  
(814) 443-2681

[www.somersetaaa.org](http://www.somersetaaa.org)



## Low-cost prescriptions available through PACE/PACENET

PACE, PACENET and PACE Plus Medicare are Pennsylvania's prescription assistance programs for older adults, offering low-cost prescription medication to qualified residents 65 and older.

To be eligible for PACE, in addition to being 65 or older, you must be a Pennsylvania resident for at least 90 days prior to the date of application and you cannot be enrolled in the Department of Public Welfare's Medicaid prescription benefit. For a single person, your total income must be \$14,500 or less. For a married couple, your combined total income must be \$17,700 or less.

To be eligible for PACENET, you must also be 65 or older, a Pennsylvania resident for at least 90 days prior to the date of application, and you cannot be enrolled in the Department of Public Welfare's Medicaid prescription benefit. A single person's total income can be between \$14,500 and \$23,500. A married couple's combined total income can be between \$17,700 and \$31,500.

My staff and I can answer any questions you have about these programs, and we can also help you apply.

## Free legal advice offered for older adults

The SeniorLAW Helpline is a statewide confidential telephone service that provides free legal information, advice and referrals to Pennsylvania residents who are 60 and older. This AARP-sponsored service is staffed by experienced attorneys who can provide information on civil legal matters and almost any personal legal issues, including:

- Consumer problems – credit, debt and bankruptcy
- Health care, including Medicare Part D
- Estate planning, wills and powers of attorney
- Government and private pensions
- Family law – divorce, custody and domestic violence
- Housing, including landlord-tenant issues, deeds and utilities

**Interpretation services in 150 languages are also available!**

Call toll free 1-877-727-7529 Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For additional information about the program, visit [www.seniorlawcenter.org](http://www.seniorlawcenter.org).

## Pension benefits available for veterans

The Veterans Administration offers a program that is largely unknown to most veterans. It's called "Aid and Attendance" and is part of an improved pension benefit that provides monetary assistance to veterans and surviving spouses who require the regular attendance of another person to assist in eating, bathing, dressing, undressing, medication dosing, or other needs of nature. The program is also available to veterans who are blind or reside in a nursing home because of mental or physical disability. Assisted care in an assisted living facility also qualifies.

This is a "Pension Benefit" and IS NOT dependent

upon service-related injuries for compensation. "Aid and Attendance" can help pay for care in a home residence, a nursing home or assisted living facility. A veteran is eligible for up to \$1,632 per month, while a surviving spouse is eligible for up to \$1,055 per month. A couple is eligible for up to \$1,949 per month.

For more information on the Veterans Administration's Aid and Attendance Pension Benefit program, please contact the Cambria County Veteran Services Office at 814-472-1590 or the Somerset County Veteran Affairs Office at 814-455-1551.

## Retirees can pay less to register their vehicles

If you are retired and receiving Social Security or other type of pension and your total annual income is \$19,200 or less, you qualify to register your passenger vehicle or light truck (9,000 pounds or less) for a \$10 processing fee per year instead of the annual registration fee of \$36 per year.

To apply, all you need to do is obtain Form MV-371, "Application for Retired Status," through PennDOT's Bureau of Motor Vehicles or my district office.

Complete the form and include it with your regular registration renewal, along with a check or money order for \$10 made payable to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. To obtain Form MV-371 or more information, call PennDOT's Driver and Vehicle Services at 1-800-932-4600, or my office at 814-536-8400.

## Report suspected elder abuse

Elder abuse and crimes targeting older people are real problems that come in many forms, including neglect, physical, financial and sexual abuse.

Although these signs do not always mean abuse, it is important to be aware that elder abuse can occur at any time to anyone.

If you believe that you or an older adult is being abused, neglected, exploited or abandoned, please call the statewide elder abuse hotline: 1-800-490-8505. This hotline is open 24 hours a day.

If you have concerns about the quality of care an older person is receiving from a facility or a caregiver, please call the Cambria Area Agency on Aging at 1-800-992-4464 or the Somerset Area Agency on Aging at 1-800-452-0825. You may also visit [www.aging.state.pa.us](http://www.aging.state.pa.us) and click "Abuse and Crime" for more information.

## My office can help you

Call or visit my office if you need help with:

- PennDOT information and assistance with car registration, license plates, etc.
- Voter registration and absentee ballot applications
- Birth and death certificate applications
- Department of Public Welfare issues
- Property tax and rent rebate assistance
- PACE applications
- Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups
- Veterans' issues

## Plan now for your long-term care

We don't like to think about it, but the simple truth is that most people will need some form of long-term care in the future. This can be very costly and can cause serious financial issues for families if the proper steps aren't taken early to come up with a plan.

The "Own Your Future Planning Kit" is a free guide that will walk you step-by-step through the process of getting your finances, insurance, home and legal work in order, and help you determine what programs are available in your community to assist you with this process.

The free kit is available by calling 1-866-752-6582. You can find out more information by visiting [www.longtermcare.gov](http://www.longtermcare.gov).



State Representative  
**Frank Burns**

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lpo.kaf.0210

State Representative 72nd Legislative District



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Senior Update 2010

## Rep. Burns wants to hear from you!

Throughout my first term as your state representative, I have visited many senior centers and talked to countless seniors across the 72nd Legislative District about the issues that matter most to them. If you have any state-related questions or concerns, or would like to set up a visit with me at your senior center, please feel free to contact me.

**My office can help you with:**

- Pennsylvania income tax problems
- Problems with the Department of Public Welfare (food stamps, welfare)
- Requests for literature of all kinds – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information, etc.
- Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding local accomplishments and family milestones
- Complaints or questions about utilities and the PUC
- Problems or questions about PennDOT
- Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups
- Disability plates and placards
- PACE cards for senior citizens
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions
- Problems or questions about the state lottery
- Local government officials' problems with state agencies

**Any problem  
with state  
government!**