



REP. RYAN BIZZARRO'S

BIZZ REPORT

SUMMER EDITION, 2019



A PLAN TO MOVE US FORWARD

The 2019-20 legislative session got off to an exciting start, as I was named chief deputy whip of the Pennsylvania House Democratic Caucus and vice chair of the Northwest Delegation.

I was also reappointed to serve as vice chair of the House Policy Committee and as a member of the Judiciary, Insurance, Consumer Affairs, and Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness committees.

The committee work gives me a chance to examine bills from the ground level up to determine whether they promise to improve life for working families here in Erie and around the state.

In fact, that question guides all our work in Harrisburg.

budget misses some important opportunities to save the state money.

On balance, however, we believe the new plan – which does not add any new tax burden on residents – spends wisely and directs dollars to where they'll do the most good for Pennsylvania's working families.

For example, the new budget makes substantial investments in public education, including \$160 million more for basic education, \$60 million for school security grants; \$50 million more for special education and \$30 million more for preschool programs. The funding will directly benefit our region's schools.

The budget also invests in career and job training programs to help prepare young Pennsylvanians for the demands of a modern, competitive workforce, and it ensures that our veterans, our seniors and the most vulnerable among us have the resources they need to thrive.

Additionally, the plan invests nearly \$20 million to support agriculture, and it provides for a substantial deposit to the state's Rainy Day fund, which will ensure that we're prepared for any emergency that might arise.

In the final analysis, no budget is perfect, but it's important not to let the perfect stand in the way of the good. This budget has a lot of good to offer, and it also has the right priorities – putting Pennsylvania's families at the top of the list.

SEE HOW MY OFFICE CAN HELP!

Please remember that my staff and I can help with a wide range of services. For a list, visit www.pahouse.com/Bizzarro and click on "Help and Services." In addition, my office offers the following monthly programs:

Veterans' Liaison. An expert from the state VFW is at the office from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month to help answer veterans' questions about state programs and services.

Healthcare Navigator. The commonwealth offers excellent, free health insurance counseling that can help you with coverage decisions. Call my office at (814) 835-2880 to set up a meeting with a specially trained counselor.

Depending on the answer, it may require reaching across the aisle to negotiate a bipartisan solution or standing my ground if I believe a proposed law is not in the best interests of the people of the 3rd Legislative District.

I recently reached across the aisle to vote for the state's \$34 billion budget bill. It wasn't an easy decision: By failing to address workers' wages and close loopholes for special interests, the

A LOOK AT MY COMMITTEE WORK AND APPOINTMENTS

Before a bill is passed and signed into law, it must be approved by a committee. Here's a brief look at the committees I serve on and a sampling of some key bills we approved and issues we tackled.



Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness (Secretary). We approved a bill – recently signed into law – that will allow Pennsylvania National Guard members who reenlist for a second term to earn college education benefits for their spouses and children.

Judiciary (member, Subcommittee on Courts). We approved a bill – which now heads to the state's voters for a ratification vote in November – that would amend the state constitution to create a Victim's Bill of Rights.

Insurance. We approved a bill – recently signed into law – that will let the state run its own insurance exchange for consumers with private plans, rather than paying fees to the federal government to use its exchange. The millions saved will be used to create a reinsurance program that will help insurers manage risk and bring down premiums.

Consumer Affairs. We recently approved a bill that would help protect consumers by strengthening the state's ability to crack down on fraudulent pyramid schemes. The House recently passed the bill unanimously.

Policy. As vice chair of the House Policy Committee, I have a unique opportunity to address topics such as lead paint dangers, maternal mortality, fair school funding, workplace harassment and other important issues facing the state.

In addition to my committee work, I serve on the Climate Change Caucus and the Climate Change Advisory Committee, which work to shape the commonwealth's climate change action plan, and on the PA Grade Crude Development Advisory Council, which examines existing technical regulations and policies for the oil and gas industry.

Through all our work – on committees and in the House chamber – we'll be fighting to pass legislation that accomplishes the people-centered goals of the Democrats' Plan for PA, including good jobs, affordable health care, quality schools and economic fairness across the board.

MORE THAN \$7.5 MILLION IN GRANTS RETURNING TO THE DISTRICT, REGION

One of my most important jobs as your representative is ensuring that your taxpayer dollars return to the district or region to improve life for residents. If I don't fight to bring our tax dollars back to our community, they go to someone else's. We're happy to share news of the following grants.

■ **Ensuring clean, safe drinking water.** Three state grants totaling **\$482,022** will help ensure that our residents continue to enjoy clean, safe drinking water.

■ **Overcoming transportation obstacles.** A grant of **\$141,900** in federal funding will help working families in our district overcome transportation obstacles that can jeopardize their jobs by providing reliable transportation assistance.

■ **Boosting an important local industry.** A grant of **\$71,060** will fund the Pennsylvania Brewers' Yeast Library program at Edinboro University, providing an innovative way to improve beer quality.

■ **Preserving a piece of history.** A **\$1,500** grant will help the Erie County Public Library permanently preserve the region's rich Civil War history.

■ **Bringing computer science to our students.** A **\$35,000** grant will allow General McLane School District to make computer science a part of the curriculum.

■ **Connecting employers and job seekers.** More than **\$460,000** in state grants will expand job training opportunities for county residents while helping regional industries grow more competitive.

■ **Helping students defray the costs of higher education.** Grants totaling nearly **\$2.4 million** will help 844 students in our district shoulder the cost of higher education.

■ **Providing internships for local students.** A grant of **\$83,122** will provide Erie County students a chance to benefit from paid summer internships.

■ **Funding new housing for residents with disabilities.** Funding of **\$1 million** from the Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program will help finance the EHCA New Community Homes Project constructing homes for Erie County residents with physical and intellectual disabilities.

■ **Ensuring efficient delivery of services.** A **\$70,000** grant from the Department of Community and Economic Development will help ensure that Millcreek has the necessary resources to deliver essential services to residents.

■ **Bolstering school safety.** Two grants from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency totaling **\$386,816** will bolster safety in Millcreek Township schools and fund a county violence-prevention project.

■ **Providing on-the-job training to regional job seekers.** A grant of **\$200,000** will provide job-training skills tailored to workforce needs, as well as placement assistance for the Erie County region.

■ **Funding resources for front-line workers.** Grants totaling **more than \$114,000** will fund much-needed resources for eight fire and EMS companies in the district.

■ **Helping Erie County businesses grow greener.** State matching grants totaling **\$65,335** will help 12 small businesses in Erie adopt greener, more efficient practices.

■ **Fueling better academic performance.** More than **\$8,500** in grants will help ensure Erie students start their day with a healthy breakfast.

■ **Expanding resources for crime victims, at-risk youth, those struggling with addiction.** Nearly **\$1.33 million** in grants will fund programs and services to reduce crime, assist victims, address substance abuse and help at-risk youth in Erie County.

■ **Expanding affordable housing and combating blight.** Nearly **\$450,000** in grants will fund construction of affordable homes and help the Erie Land Bank fight blight.

■ **Funding kids' love of science.** A mini-grant of **\$2,900** will fund microscopes for students studying climate, watersheds and other environmental subjects.

■ **Improving school nutrition.** More than **\$250,000** in grants awarded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program will bring healthier menu choices to area students.

OUT AND ABOUT AT HOME AND IN HARRISBURG



It was great to join Gov. Tom Wolf, Lt. Gov. John Fetterman and students from Edinboro University at the Capitol to advocate for the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.



The Erie Delegation had a great time visiting our local heroes for National Salute to Veterans Week.



Looking at development projects funded by the commonwealth. It's rewarding seeing tax revenue being used to drive economic growth and job creation.



I had a great evening learning more about Ramadan and partaking in the Iftar with members of our Islamic community.



In July, I participated in a discussion about the Erie Coalition for a Trauma-Informed Community hosted by PA Attorney General Josh Shapiro and the United Way of Erie County.



My colleagues and I joined Gov. Tom Wolf for an inspiring meeting with the Jefferson Educational Society's Civic Leadership Academy.



I got to meet Victoria, the late pup and driving force behind Victoria's Law – that would prohibit the sale of commercially raised dogs, cats, and rabbits in pet stores.



I presented Kelly Sieber with a House citation for rushing to her neighbor's aid when the neighbor's home was on fire.



I met with Pack 73 Cub Scouts in McKean and was impressed by their excellent questions about government, community and leadership.



In February, I met a team of local "Esports" champions at the Capitol. The House unanimously adopted my resolution designating February as "Esports Month" to increase awareness about the competitive gaming industry and its economic benefits to PA.



My colleagues and I joined staff from Logistics Plus Inc., as the House adopted a resolution recognizing June 28 as National Logistics Day.



I met with advocates for renewable energy at the state Capitol.



For many, owning a home is the American Dream. I co-authored legislation that would create a Pennsylvania First-Time Home Buyer Savings Account to help people do that.



It was an honor to meet, thank and celebrate WWII heroes at the state Capitol on the 75th anniversary of D-Day!



I was honored to be part of the ceremony at the LECOM dental offices as they were dedicated to our late, great colleague, Rep. "Flo" Fabrizio.



One of the more enjoyable parts of my job is reading to school students!



I had the honor of attending a tower-lighting ceremony held by UPMC-Hamot and the Center for Organ Recovery and Education.



In February, I spoke with the students of the Youth Leadership Institute about public service, state government and the future of Erie.



In May, we honored the famed Tuskegee Airmen, who flew missions with tremendous skill in WWII, as the House adopted a resolution designating May 8 as Tuskegee Airmen Day in Pennsylvania.



I had the chance to learn more about apprenticeships that benefit local job seekers.



Over Memorial Day weekend, I spoke with our area's amazing veterans while attending a ceremony for the dedication of a plaque honoring Erie County soldiers who died in WWI.



Joining my colleagues on the "whip squad" – including House Democratic Whip Jordan Harris, my fellow Chief Deputy Whip Jared Solomon and Assistant Whip Donna Bullock – as we fight for you.



It's always a pleasure to visit with area veterans at the Elks Lodge #67.



It was an honor to stand with Gov. Tom Wolf and area animal advocates at Humane Lobby Day 2019.



I thoroughly enjoyed participating in the United By Animals Humane Law Forum & Pet Expo, hosted by the Erie Humane Society.



In May at the state Capitol, I hosted Linda King and Kathy Hubbard of SafeNet, Erie's accredited domestic violence agency.



In April, I participated in a joint meeting in which House and Senate members discussed agricultural issues and concerns with members of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau.



It was an honor to see Pennsylvania Superior Court Judge Maria McLaughlin and Magisterial Judge Sue Mack at the state Capitol!



A SPECIAL MEDAL FOR KOREAN WAR VETERANS



This spring, I joined with U.S. Sen. Bob Casey to encourage Korean War veterans in Northwest Pennsylvania to apply for the Korean Ambassador for Peace Medal. The commemorative medal is an expression of appreciation from the Korean government to Americans who served in the war.

To be eligible, veterans must have served in Korea at some time during the Korean War from June 25, 1950, to July 27, 1953, or have participated in U.N. peacekeeping efforts until the end of 1955. Members of the U.S. Navy are also eligible if they served aboard a naval vessel that was assigned to Korean waters from 1950 to 1953.

In addition to a completed application, veterans applying must provide their Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty DD-214 form.

For more information or to apply, veterans can visit American Legion Millcreek Post 773, 4109 W. 12th St.; stop by my office at 1101 Peninsula Drive, Suite 209; or call us at (814) 835-2880.

BILLS TO BUILD A BETTER LIFE

Over the past half-year, I have introduced bills to simplify voting, expand access to health care, protect our seniors, support our veterans, help first-time buyers save for a home, keep special interests from influencing legislation, and deter theft, among other things. Here's a brief look at each:

- **Opening the door to voter access.** House Bill 101 would simplify the voting process by allowing residents to register and vote on the same day, while also protecting the sanctity of one person, one vote through multiple anti-fraud provisions, including showing identification. The bill has been referred to the House State Government Committee.
- **Freeing up emergency rooms.** By expanding the practice of "community paramedicine" – in which paramedics and emergency medical technicians deliver care to patients at home or in community settings – House Bill 1113 would free up overburdened ER rooms and improve access for rural patients. The bill has been referred to the House Health Committee.
- **Shedding light on care homes.** House Bill 1366 — the "Right to Know" bill — would make public whether any assisted care facility or nursing home employee has a criminal background or whether the home has a history of civil or criminal negligence. The bill is part of the House Democrats' "Promise of Care" package and has been referred to the House Health Committee.
- **Helping first-time buyers save for a home.** House Bill 128 would help first-time buyers save for a home by providing state tax deductions for eligible expenses such as a down payment. The bill passed the House with overwhelming bipartisan support and is now in the state Senate.
- **Deterring the theft of electronic devices.** House Bill 403 would deter the theft and quick resale of electronic devices by requiring pawn shops and other secondhand dealers to report the seller's name and address and the device serial number to the district attorney's office. The bill has been referred to the House Consumer Affairs Committee.
- **Protecting our most vulnerable citizens.** House Bill 535 would ensure that those who are granted power of attorney on behalf of older adults who are unable to look after their affairs do not misappropriate funds or otherwise abuse that power. The bill has been referred to the House Judiciary Committee.
- **Supporting our veterans.** House Bill 541 would help veterans struggling with substance abuse who have been charged with nonviolent crimes by establishing special veterans' courts to provide support, treatment and mentoring. The bill has been referred to the House Judiciary Committee.
- **Keeping special interests out of the equation.** House Bill 543 would ensure that special interests do not influence legislation by prohibiting public officials and employees from receiving compensation for serving on a corporate or nonprofit board. The bill is in the House State Government Committee.
- **Strengthening industry partnerships.** House Bill 576 would help employers partner with career and technical education centers to ensure that training programs are tailored to current workforce demands. The bill is currently in the House Labor and Industry Committee.
- **Preventing theft of prescription medications.** House Bill 537 would help protect seniors by enhancing penalties for the theft of prescription medication, which would result in a mandatory prison sentence of at least six months or one year, depending on the circumstances. The bill has been referred to the House Judiciary Committee.
- **Ensuring individuals with disabilities are better represented at PennDOT.** House Bill 539 would add a certified driver rehabilitation specialist to PennDOT's Medical Advisory Board to ensure that people with disabilities who can drive are able to do so. The bill has been referred to the House Transportation Committee.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

RYAN A. BIZZARRO

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INSIDE:

- PLAN TO MOVE US FORWARD
- 7TH ANNUAL SENIOR FAIR
- PHOTOS FROM HARRISBURG AND AROUND THE REGION

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SENIORS AND CAREGIVERS:

Don't miss our seventh Annual Senior Fair and Older Living Expo coming up on August 19! You'll find dozens of exhibitors and government agencies with great information on eating healthy, keeping fit and staying active through educational and recreational programs. We'll also have flu shots, health screenings and tons of giveaways – and the best part is, the refreshments are on me!

You can learn more by calling the office at (814) 835-2880.

LOCAL DISTRICT OFFICES

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Peninsula Plaza

1101 Peninsula Dr., Suite 209 • Erie, PA 16505
(814) 835-2880

Open Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

(Extended office hours:

Wednesday 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.)

Edinboro Office

124 Meadville St., Suite 222 • Edinboro, PA 16412

(814) 734-2773

Open Tuesday - Thursday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

(Closed Monday and Friday)

McKean Township Municipal Building

9231 Edinboro Rd. • McKean, PA 16426

(814) 835-2880

Open by appointment

WWW.PAHOUSE.COM/BIZZARRO

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