Property Tax/Rent Rebate application deadline extended

By now, you should have received your rebate check if you applied to the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program. If you haven’t applied, you still have time.

The state extended the deadline to apply to the program until the end of this year.

The program provides qualifying senior citizens and other Pennsylvania residents with rebates based on the property taxes or rent they paid the previous year.

The program is open to Pennsylvania residents 65 or older, widows and widowers 50 or older, and people 18 or older who have a disability. The income limit to qualify is $35,000 for homeowners and $15,000 for renters. Applicants must count all sources of income toward the limit, but only half of any Social Security, Supplemental Security or federal Railroad Retirement Tier 1 benefits toward their total income.

The maximum property tax or rent rebate for most qualifying Pennsylvania residents is $650. Forms and assistance are available from your district office.

Remember: There is no charge to apply for this program. If you receive an offer to help you file an application for a fee, please ignore it. My office can help you file for FREE.

State House acts to bolster ‘Do Not Call’ law

I was pleased to support a bill that would bolster Pennsylvania’s “Do Not Call” law, the Telemarketer Registration Act. House Bill 129 would make two improvements:

- It would remove the five-year time limit a subscriber is permitted to remain on the Do-Not-Call list without having to re-register. A subscriber would only be removed from the list upon their request, and;
- It would ban telemarketing on legal holidays.

House Bill 129 awaits consideration in the state Senate. You can enroll on the Do-Not-Call list at www.attorneygeneral.gov/dnc.aspx or by calling the Pennsylvania Attorney General’s office toll free at 1-888-777-3406.

Rocco’s Law – “Rocco’s Law” increases the penalty for anyone who harms a police animal. The penalty increases from a third-degree to a second-degree felony, which comes with a $25,000 fine and up to 10 years in prison. The bill is named for a K-9 officer stabbed while on duty in Pittsburgh.

Youth Suicide Prevention – Suicide is the third-leading cause of death for people age 15 to 24. A new law requires teachers who work with students in grades six through 12 to complete four hours of youth suicide awareness training every five years as part of their continuing educational development program.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for developing a suicide prevention awareness program that can be used by both public and private schools. Each school must create a youth suicide awareness program to be taught in the schools. The new law requires the Department of Education and school districts to have the suicide training and educational information in place for the 2015-16 school year.

Here is some information on legislation signed into law earlier this year.

Pulse Oximetry Screening

Pulse oximetry is a blood oxygen test that can detect congenital heart defects. Recent studies have shown that this testing, with wide use, could detect 90 percent of congenital heart defects. Many birthing facilities already offer the testing, but it becomes mandatory under this new law. The law is supported by the American Heart Association.

Indoor Tanning Ban for Minors – The Indoor Tanning Regulation Act took effect on July 7, 2014, prohibiting tanning for those under age 17 and requiring written parental consent for those who are 17. Among the new requirements for regulation and registration: operators are now required to provide protective eyewear, free of charge, to each customer.

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Please know that if legislative action is needed on this matter, I will support it.

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State Representative

Joseph F. Markosek

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P.O. Box 202025
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2025
(717) 783-1540

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Commerce Building, Suite 303
4232 Northern Pike
Monroeville, PA 15146
(412) 856-8284

EMAIL: jmarkose@pahouse.net
WEBSITE: www.pahouse.com/Markosek

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/REPMARKOSEK • TWITTER.COM/REPJOEMARKOSEK

New Pennsylvania laws

To learn more about enacted or pending legislation, visit the General Assembly’s website at www.legis.state.pa.us.
Pennsylvania’s Yellow Dot Program assists citizens in the "golden hour" of emergency care following a traffic accident when they may not be able to communicate their needs. Placing a yellow dot in your vehicle’s rear window alerts first responders to check your glove compartment for vital information to ensure you receive the medical attention you need.

To participate, you must complete a personal information form, which includes your name, contact information, emergency contact information, medical history and medications, allergies and your doctors’ names. A photo – showing only your head and shoulders – is then taped to the front of the completed information sheet. The yellow dot decal provided in the program kit is placed in the lower left corner of your rear windshield. The decal should be placed no higher than three inches from the bottom of the windshield. This decal alerts first responders that vital information can be found in the vehicle.

The program is a cooperative effort among the Pennsylvania Departments of Transportation, Health and Aging; the Pennsylvania State Police, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission and first responders and local law enforcement.

You can visit www.yellowdot.pa.gov for more information and to fill out the form.

Special permits for hunters with disabilities

Permits are available from the Pennsylvania Game Commission that allow people with certain disabilities to have a loaded firearm in their vehicle, and to use the vehicle as a blind or as a shooting platform. The vehicle must be parked off the right-of-way of a public highway and be at a complete stop with the motor turned off.

Applicants must provide documentation if they have any of the following medical disabilities:

- A permanent or irreversible physical disability that prevents them from moving from place to place and requires them to use a wheelchair, walker, one leg brace or external prosthesis above the knee, two leg braces or external prostheses below the knees, two crutches or two canes for mobility.
- Significant lung disease.
- Significant cardiovascular disease, to the extent that ordinary physical activity causes fatigue, palpitation, dyspnea or angina.
- A disability or combination of disabilities creating a minimum impairment of function of at least 90 percent in one leg.
- A temporary disability that restricts mobility or ambulation of any distance due to illness or injury and operative procedures and who either has a leg, hip or back casted by a licensed physician due to a fracture or has leg, hip or back surgery.

Permit applications and the required physician's statement forms may be obtained by visiting the Game Commission's website at www.pgc.state.pa.us, from each of the commission’s six regional offices, the Bureau of Wildlife Protection at the Harrisburg headquarters, or your constituent service office.

The southwest region headquarters is located at 4820 Route 711 in Bolivar. It is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. The phone number is 724-238-9523.

In addition to a disabled person permit, all permit holders must be in possession of a valid Pennsylvania hunting or furtaker license as required by the Game and Wildlife Code.

Is the state holding your unclaimed property?

The state Treasurer’s Office is holding $1.9 billion in unclaimed property, and it is estimated that about one of 10 Pennsylvanians has unclaimed property.

Unclaimed property may include:
- Closed bank accounts;
- Uncashed checks, including paychecks;
- Lost stocks and bonds;
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- Proceeds from the demutualization of insurance companies;
- Expired gift cards/gift certificates.

To find out whether you have unclaimed property, you can search your name, as well as that of your friends and family in the unclaimed property database at www.patreasury.gov/Unclaimed/Search.html or call 1-800-222-2046. There is NO CHARGE to claim your unclaimed property.

You can also contact or stop by my office. My staff will be happy to help you search the Pennsylvania Treasurer’s Office website for unclaimed property free of charge.

Around the 25th District

Gateway Midight Football and Cheerleading Association speed and agility camp, May 31.

Accepting Mon Yough Area Chamber of Commerce Visionary Leadership Award, May 2.

Visiting the Monroeville Senior Center, May 15.

Franklin Regional High School state championship wrestling team at the state Capitol, April 28.

Bus trip to the Capitol and Gettysburg, May 8.


Monroeville Memorial Day parade, May 26.

Visiting the Monroeville Senior Center, May 16.

Visiting the North Versailles Senior Center, May 15.

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