Around the 25th District

State Representative Joseph F. Markosek
307 South 3rd Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

On February 4, Governor Tom Corbett presented his budget proposal for 2014/15, which included $2.1 billion in education cuts. The commonwealth is facing a budget gap of more than $2 billion, including neighboring states like New York. Governor Corbett’s policies are not working and face a budget surplus, including neighboring states like New York. Governor Corbett’s policies are not working.

Fiscal challenges: Other states

- Pennsylvania’s unemployment rate is consistently at the bottom in job growth and projected growth – behind most of our neighboring states. During most of the last three years is far fewer. In national rankings, Pennsylvania

- The governor proposes to create a new block grant, a competitive grant for highest-achieving school districts, and another grant program available to only 100 schools. He also proposes modest increases in a few early learning programs and special education.

- During those public hearings, I participated in 36 budget hearings in February. Several years ago, I set the record for perfect attendance by never missing a day when the House was in session since I was first elected in 1982, and I am proud to continue to build on that record.

- Port Authority opens new park

- The Port Authority of Allegheny County, in partnership with PennDOT and Plum Borough, recently opened a new 64-space park and ride lot on Route 286. The lot is located on Route 286 at New Texas Road in Plum and is served by existing inbound and outbound stops on the P12 Holland/Pit Bus route. The new lot features three spaces for people with disabilities and is paved, striped and lighted.

- Port Authority Authority cuts for Plum Borough Public Works Department and groundbreaking ceremony for Plum EMS & Benton Volunteer Fire Department building

- In Monroeville and Plum opened on January 30 and began construction in the spring.

- Plans to widen and repave the section of Route 286, also known as the Golden Mile Highway, between U.S. Route 22 and Sagamore Hill Road in Monroeville were included in the Governor’s Commonwealth’s Transportation Priorities Program. However, the project has been fast-tracked for many years because there has been little money available for new construction projects.

- Improving Route 286 will help expedite traffic; therefore, it will benefit residents who travel the Golden Mile Highway every day, as well as businesses.

- The governor proposes no increases for the state’s education.

- The governor proposes to create a new block grant, a competitive grant for highest-achieving school districts, and another grant program available to only 100 schools. He also proposes modest increases in a few early learning programs and special education.

- The governor proposes no increases for the state’s institutions of higher education, which is an effective cut when you consider inflationary cost increases. State funding for higher education remains lower today than 10 years ago.

- Financial challenges: Other states

- The commonwealth is facing a budget gap of more than $2 billion. The National Association of State Budget Officers reports that almost every state will end this fiscal year with a budget surplus, including neighboring states like New York. Governor Corbett’s policies are not working and are taking us in the wrong direction. This is the governor’s fourth budget, therefore, he can no longer pass the buck and blame previous governors and the federal government for the state’s fiscal challenges.

- The governor chose to cut business taxes by $2.1 billion rather than investing in our schools. It would be one thing if those business tax cuts resulted in a significant number of new family-wage jobs, but that hasn’t happened. The governor likes to tout the number of private sector jobs he’s created, however, when you subtract the tens of thousands of public sector jobs lost (for example, teachers and other school employees), the number of new jobs created is far lower.

- I will continue to review all aspects of the governor’s proposal and advocate for a responsive spending plan that restores the funding cuts of the past without resorting to one-time spending gimmicks. The General Assembly will then adopt a new spending plan and submit it to the governor for his signature.

- More information on the budget, visit the House Appropriations Committee at www.pahouse.com/Appropriations.

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- More information on the new lot, visit the Port Authority Authority at www.portauthority.org

- For more information on the budget, visit the House Appropriations Committee at www.pahouse.com/Appropriations. Under the “Budget” tab, you will find a comprehensive analysis of the budget proposal.
This session I was proud to support 10 recently enacted laws that will help to protect the commonwealth’s most precious asset – our children.

The new laws:
- Establish the offense of luring a child into a motor vehicle or structure.
- Use law enforcement and child protective services and general protective services to the court.
- Referendum.
- Establish the offense of child pornography.
- Recognize that perpetrators of child abuse can be as young as 18 and reduce the threshold for child abuse from serious bodily injury to bodily injury.
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- Reduce the size of the legislature from 203 to 170 members.
- House and Senate in two consecutive legislative sessions and receive $7,000.
- New state legislators will result in greater understanding of the roles each plays in higher education.
- Lower the threshold for child abuse from serious bodily injury to bodily injury.

I voted to cut the size of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives from 203 to 170 members in order to reduce the state House and Senate.

I am, and always have been, a strong supporter of higher education. As a guest speaker in classes and meets with students, students designed the program, in which the Fellow serves as a guest speaker in classes and meets with students, students designed the program, in which the Fellow serves as a guest speaker in classes and meets with students. The process of redrawing the boundaries of the state House and Senate districts last place every 10 years following the Census to equalize populations in legislative districts.

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Property Tax/Rent Rebate, tax forms available in my office

One of the most important aspects of my job as a public servant is helping people to get the most out of the tax forms available in my office.

One of the more popular services my office has to offer is helping people to get the most out of the tax forms available in my office.

For now, nothing has changed. You can contact my office by phone or e-mail.

To find additional sites or for more information visit www.irs.gov/Individuals/Free-Tax-Return-Preparation. If you do not have Internet access, you can call (412) 255-1155. To find additional sites or for more information visit www.irs.gov/Individuals/Free-Tax-Return-Preparation.
New state laws protect children from abuse

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The new laws follow the recommendations of a November 2012 report by the Pennsylvania Task Force on Child Protection, established through joint resolutions in the state House and Senate.

The new laws:

- Lower the threshold for child abuse from serious bodily injury to bodily injury.

- Require judges, when awarding custody, to consider a parent’s drug use.

- Instruct the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing to provide guidelines for offenses involving child pornography.

- Provide immunity for reporters of child abuse from liability, provide for indemnification of the Commonwealth’s tort liability, and reduce the statute of limitations on child abuse from being available for public review; and

- Establish the offense of luring a child into a motor vehicle or structure.

I voted to cut the size of the Pa. legislature, reduce costs

Pennsylvania has one of the largest legislatures in the country. While not everyone believes we need to cut costs, there is a growing realization that lawmakers need to do more with less.

I again sponsored legislation that would reduce the size of the legislature from 253 members to 210 and cut the state Senate from 50 to 38 members. By reducing the number of members in both chambers, we could save taxpayer money.

The 253-member legislature would be reduced to 210 members: 50 state senators and 160 state representatives. The reduction would cut the size of the Pa. House from 203 to 153 members and another that would reduce the state Senate from 50 to 38 members. All of the changes in the size of the Pa. House and Senate districts takes place every 10 years following the Census to equalize the representation of the Commonwealth.

If you are unsure of what ward and precinct you live in your search.

Redistricting reshapes the 25th Legislative District

In 2013, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court issued a redistricting plan that redraws the boundaries of all 203 state House and 50 state Senate districts.

Once the new plan is in effect, the 25th Legislative District, which I have represented since 1993, will be entirely in Allegheny County.

It will consist of the Borough of East Pittsburgh, Monroeville, Plum, Plum (District 5 through 17), the Allegheny County portion of Trafford, Wall and Wilmerding, along with North Versailles Township.

East, South and West Murrysville and the Westmoreland County portion of Trafford will be part of the 54th District. All of Murrysville will be part of the 56th District. The Westmoreland County portion of Trafford will be part of the 56th District.

For now, nothing has changed.

You can contact my office by mail or with any state-related matter.

You will be in effect for the 2014 election and thereafter. These changes do not affect your current voting or school district affiliation.

If you are unsure of what ward and precinct you live in, please visit www.legis.state.pa.us.

The process of redistricting the boundaries of Pennsylvania’s House and Senate districts last place every 10 years following the Census to equalize populated in legislative districts.

Does the state have your unclaimed property?

If you are a Pennsylvanian, you may have millions of dollars in unclaimed property and if any of it is yours, I want to make sure you know about it.

Unclaimed property is any financial asset that has been left behind with a business, financial institution, or government organization or organization without any activity for five years. Those entities are required by law to provide the property to the state Treasurer’s Office, which maintains custody of the property until it is claimed by the owner.

Unclaimed property includes:

- Closed bank accounts;
- Unclaimed checks and paychecks;
- Lost stocks and bonds;
- Contents of safe deposit boxes;
- Life insurance policies; and/or
- Gift or refund certificates.

Unclaimed property is any financial asset that has been left with a bank, insurance company, or business or government organization without any activity for five years. Those entities are required by law to provide the property to the state Treasurer’s Office, which maintains custody of the property until it is claimed by the owner.

Treasury keeps an online database, which you may search for free, to see if you have any unclaimed property. It can be accessed at www.patreasury.gov/
mypaunclaimedproperty. My office is also available to help you in your search.

The Pennsylvania Unclaimed Property Program is a state initiative to help return the millions of dollars in unclaimed property that are collected by Pennsylvania businesses, financial institutions, and government entities each year.

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One of the most important aspects of my job as a state representative is helping people deal with state government.

One of the more popular services my office has to offer is helping people to apply to the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program. The program provides assistance to property taxpayers by providing a credit on one-half of the current year's property taxes and rent to Pennsylvanians 65 and older, widows and widowers 50 and older, and people with disabilities 18 and older.

Forms are available in my office and online.

For help with state taxes, I offer a free income tax preparation service with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program for taxpayers who make $52,000 or less. In my district, there are VITA sites located at the Pennsylvania State Campus. Appointments are required and can be made by calling (412) 255-1155. To find additional sites or more information visit www.irs.gov/Individuals/Free-Tax-Return-

Preparation-GetHelp/.

Some welcome news: Pennsylvania’s farm communities

It seems as if every time we turn on the television, there’s a steady stream of news about rural critic. For now, nothing has changed.

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Markosek named IU’s Legislative Fellow

I am honored to have been named the 2013 Legislative Fellow by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) faculty members and administrators. This program that represents those faculty members, the Association of Pennsylvania State Colleges and Universities (APSCU), IUP administrators, IUP representatives, and students designed the program, in which the Fellow serves as a guest speaker in classes and meets with students, faculty and staff members. I share the program organizer belief that, in addition to being present on campus, meeting with students, faculty members, and state legislators will result in a greater understanding of the roles each plays in higher education.

I am, and always have been, a strong supporter of higher education and I look forward to this opportunity to learn and to share my insight with IUP students, faculty and staff in the upcoming year.

New state laws protect children from abuse

This session I supported 10 recently enacted laws that will help to protect Pennsylvania’s most precious asset – our children.

The new laws follow the recommendations of a November 2012 report by the Pennsylvania Child Task Force on Protection, established through joint resolutions in the state House and Senate.

New laws:
- Lower the threshold for child abuse from serious bodily injury to bodily injury.
- Recognize that perpetrators of child abuse can be as young as 16 and create new protections that address false reports and retaliation;
- Provide immunity for reporting abuse from child molesters, provide penalties for false reporting and improve appeals procedures;
- Expand the laws for abuse of adults to protect against elder abuse;
- Include new findings of child abuse in the background investigations for county and public assistance and law enforcement;
- Instruct the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing to provide information to law enforcement and attorneys about waivers of the Brady Act; and
- Require judges, when awarding custody, to consider a parent’s involvement with cases of child abuse and provide information sharing guidelines for offenses involving child pornography.

Public dollars returned to the 25th District

The U.S. Treasury Office offers millions of dollars in unclaimed property and if any of it is yours, I want to make sure you know. Unclaimed property is any financial asset that has been left with a bank, brokerage firm, insurance company or organization without any activity for five years. Those funds are transferred to the state Treasurer’s Office, which maintains custody of the property until it is claimed by the owner.

If you are unsure of what ward and precinct you live in, please visit www.votespa.com. These changes do not affect the Westmoreland County portion of Trafford, which I have represented since 1983, will be part of the 50th District.

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Governor’s proposed budget for 2014/15 is unsustainable

On February 4, Governor Tom Corbett presented his budget proposal for 2014/15, which included $2.9 billion in spending cuts, an increase of $69.5 billion, or 2.3 percent. His election-year budget plan relies on roughly $1.2 billion in spending, an increase of $926.8 million, or 3.3 percent.

Education Cuts remain largely in place

The governor’s first budget cut education funding by $1 billion. Three years later, those recurring cuts remain largely in place. Because of these cuts, school districts across the state have been forced to increase class sizes, reduce school-based programs and extracurricular activities, and lay off teachers. The governor’s proposal includes no increases to the basic education subsidy, which is the largest appropriation in the education budget. In contrast, he proposes to create a new block grant, a competitive grant for highest-achieving school districts, and another grant program available to only 100 schools. He also proposes modest increases in an early learning program and special education.

Markosek maintains record of perfect attendance: 31 years

Markosek maintains record of perfect attendance: 31 years

On June 30 2014 budget deadline

As a Democratic chair of the House Appropriations Committee, I participated in 36 budget hearings in February. During those public hearings, state agencies, officers and other institutions appeared before the committee to provide a thorough review of their budgets and future initiatives. Over the course of the next couple of months leading up to the June 30 budget deadline, I will continue to review all aspects of the governor’s proposal and advocate for a responsible spending plan that restores the funding cuts of the past without resorting to one-time spending gimmicks. The General Assembly will then enact a new spending plan and submit it to the governor for his signature.

For more information on the budget, visit the House Appropriations Committee website at www.hacd.net. Under the ‘Budget’ tab, you will find a comprehensive analysis of the budget proposal.
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For more information on the budget, visit the House Appropriations Committee website at www.legis.state.pa.us. Under the “Budget” tab, you will find a comprehensive analysis of the budget proposal.

On February 4, Governor Tom Corbett presented his budget proposal for 2014/15, which included $29.4 billion in spending, an increase of $4.05 billion, or 15.3 percent. His 2014/15 budget plan relies on roughly $1.2 billion less in revenue sources, transfers and other one-time funding gimmicks that will leave the Commonwealth with a larger deficit.

Education Cuts remain largely in place

The governor’s first budget cut education funding by $1.3 billion. Three years later, those recurring cuts remain largely in place. Because of these cuts, school districts across the state have been forced to make severe cuts. These cuts include eliminating programs and activities, furloughing teachers and raising property taxes. The governor’s proposal includes no increases to the basic education subsidy, which is the largest appropriation in the education budget. Instead, he proposes to create a new block grant, a competitive grant for highest-achieving school districts, and another grant program available to only 100 schools. He also proposes modest increases in early learning programs and special education.

The governor proposes no increases for the state’s institutions of higher education, which is an effective cut when you consider inflationary cost increases. State funding for higher education remained lower today than 10 years ago. Fiscal challenges: Other states recovering faster

The commonwealth is losing a budget gap of more than $8 billion. The National Association of State Budget Officers reports that almost every state either ended this fiscal year with a budget surplus, including neighboring states like New York. Governor Corbett’s past two budgets were not working and are taking us in the wrong direction. This is the governor’s fourth budget, therefore, he can no longer pass the buck and blame previous governors and the federal government for the state’s fiscal challenges. The governor chose to cut business taxes by $2.1 billion rather than investing in our schools. It would be one thing if those business tax cuts resulted in a significant number of new family-sustaining jobs, but that hasn’t happened.

Governor’s proposed budget for 2014/15 is unsustainable

The governor’s proposed budget includes nearly $3 billion in permanent cuts. These cuts will result in the loss of more than 30,000 full-time equivalent school employees, the number of education-related state contracts and salaries has declined by 40 percent since the governor took office. These permanent cuts are a recipe for disaster. As a result, our students are not being educated in today’s world. On the contrary, they are being educated to the requirements of the industrial age. The governor must recognize the need to fully fund the K-12 education system, which is the foundation of our state’s future. In addition, he must recognize the need to invest in job training programs and other institutions that will prepare our workers for the 21st century workforce. The governor must also recognize the need to invest in our public colleges and universities. These institutions are the foundation of our state’s economy and the future of the Commonwealth.

The governor proposes no increases for the state’s higher education program available to only 100 schools. He also proposes a new block grant, a competitive grant for highest-achieving school districts, and another grant program available to only 100 schools. He also proposes modest increases in early learning programs and special education.

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The commonwealth is facing a budget gap of more than $8 billion. The National Association of State Budget Officers reports that almost every state either ended this fiscal year with a budget surplus, including neighboring states like New York. Governor Corbett’s past two budgets were not working and are taking us in the wrong direction. This is the governor’s fourth budget, therefore, he can no longer pass the buck and blame previous governors and the federal government for the state’s fiscal challenges. The governor chose to cut business taxes by $2.1 billion rather than investing in our schools. It would be one thing if those business tax cuts resulted in a significant number of new family-sustaining jobs, but that hasn’t happened.

Governor’s proposed budget for 2014/15 is unsustainable

The governor’s proposed budget includes nearly $3 billion in permanent cuts. These cuts will result in the loss of more than 30,000 full-time equivalent school employees, the number of education-related state contracts and salaries has declined by 40 percent since the governor took office. These permanent cuts are a recipe for disaster. As a result, our students are not being educated in today’s world. On the contrary, they are being educated to the requirements of the industrial age. The governor must recognize the need to fully fund the K-12 education system, which is the foundation of our state’s future. In addition, he must recognize the need to invest in job training programs and other institutions that will prepare our workers for the 21st century workforce. The governor must also recognize the need to invest in our public colleges and universities. These institutions are the foundation of our state’s economy and the future of the Commonwealth.

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