



Capitol UPDATE

REP. MIKE SCHLOSSBERG

Serving the 132nd Legislative District

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Pennsylvania Budget: Bad for Our Future

No doubt, you have seen the news about the 2014-2015 state budget. This year's budget process was particularly difficult as we faced a \$1.5 billion deficit. Just as pressing, Pennsylvania continues to fall short in serving our students, strengthening our communities and investing in our economy.

Unfortunately, this budget reflected more of the same: fewer teachers to inspire our children, higher property taxes for struggling homeowners, and an unwillingness to grow Pennsylvania's economy. Most troubling is that the budget was passed knowing that it relied on one-time revenues and set the stage for a \$3.5 billion deficit next year. With that large of a deficit, I am deeply concerned that next year's budget will necessitate a major tax hike — clearly, this is something we desperately want to avoid!

I voted against this irresponsible budget. House Republicans and Governor Tom Corbett cut the Democrats out of negotiations. We would have done better if allowed to participate. The middle class, students, dedicated workers, seniors, veterans and those with disabilities deserve better treatment than what this budget provided. The longer we wait to deal with the issues facing Pennsylvania and the budget deficit, the steeper the price we will pay.

As your State Representative, I know you deserve better news than what the General Assembly and the Governor have given you in this budget. I will continue to fight for an agenda that provides greater opportunities for our children and



invests in the future of our Commonwealth. I've long believed that the most important work is often the most difficult. This year's budget shows me just how important Pennsylvania's future is — and how much hard work is required to fulfill the promise we owe our citizens.

New District Lines Go into Effect Dec. 1

Every decade, Pennsylvania's legislative boundaries are adjusted to reflect population changes. The lines of the 132nd District will change dramatically as a result. Generally, Allentown's West End and East Side will be in the 132nd District, along with parts of South Whitehall and the northern parts of Allentown.

Most of Center City and all of the South Side will be in the 22nd District. If you are receiving this, you will be living in the 132nd District on Dec. 1. Please feel free to contact my office at (610) 821-5577 if you have any questions about the changes in legislative boundaries. Information can also be found on <http://www.redistricting.state.pa.us/>.

Unclaimed Property

Every year, unclaimed property is turned over to the Commonwealth until it can be claimed by its rightful owners. My office actively combs through the list of unclaimed properties and contacts residents of the 132nd Legislative District to help them claim what belongs to them. So far in 2014, that amounts to \$274,000 in claims. My office can do a search for your name to see if the Commonwealth is holding anything for you and help complete the necessary forms to submit and track. You can also do a search by visiting www.patreasury.gov.



Working for You

Pennsylvania's Physician Shortage: A Looming Crisis

In Pennsylvania, 50% of our doctors are over the age of 50. That is setting up our state for a big wave of retirements in coming years. This couldn't come at a worse time, as Pennsylvania is expected to have more than 3 million adults over the age of 60 by 2020. That is why I worked with state Rep. Bryan Cutler of Lancaster County to introduce and adopt a bipartisan resolution to address this issue. Over the coming months, I will be working with the Joint State Government Commission to prepare strategies to alleviate the problem. Pennsylvania is fortunate to have incredible health care networks that serve our residents. We need to make certain that we have the physicians necessary to offer those important services.



Thank You for Helping Homeless Allentown Students

This summer will be difficult for the 700 homeless students in the Allentown School District. Thanks to your incredible generosity, my office continues to work with the Allentown School District liaison to deliver personal hygiene products. Since former state Rep. Jennifer Mann started this effort, folks in the 132nd District have contributed over 8,800 personal hygiene products — including 2,500 products since the end of March 2014! My office will continue to accept donations of combs and brushes, toothbrushes and toothpaste of any kind, shampoo, men's and women's deodorant, and, of course, bar soap. No donation is too small. Donations can be dropped off at my office at 2030 West Tilghman St. Because of your generosity and efforts, we are helping students stay focused on what is most important to their future: learning and thriving in school.



Focusing on the Economy

Pennsylvania's economic recovery continues to be very slow. Job creation and our communities play a key role in that recovery. In April, I hosted a House Democratic Policy Committee Hearing at the new CareerLink offices to gain greater insights on what we can do to improve Pennsylvania's job creation efforts. What I learned is very simple: smart investments in job training, education and health care will lead to a stronger economy in Pennsylvania. Recently, I was appointed to the House Urban Affairs Committee, which will allow me to work on legislation that is related to Pennsylvania's cities, housing and development agencies, economic development, community development and affordable housing. I embrace this new assignment with gusto.

Food Collection

Through the month of March, I conducted a "132 of 132" initiative. As a member of the Hunger Caucus, I frequently participate in efforts to raise awareness of food insecurity that many of our neighbors face. In March, my office served as a drop-off point for food collections to benefit Second



Harvest. My goal wasn't so much about collecting food — though we did collect more than 156 pounds of it. My goal was to educate people about the importance of Pennsylvania's Food Purchase Program and the problems it seeks to address. Here are some statistics that help put into perspective the challenges we face in addressing hunger:

- 1 in 5 Pennsylvanians struggle to find adequate food
- 38% of the Pennsylvanians are children; 8% are seniors
- 48% live in rural or suburban areas and 52% live in metropolitan areas
- 90% had a home but only 40% had access to a working vehicle
- 36% of households include at least one employed adult

I love when I have the opportunity to visit with students in Allentown. A recent visit with students at Ramos Elementary School included an opportunity to discuss the subject of good citizenship. These students are smart and work hard. We owe it to them to provide exceptional community schools.



Dieruff alumnus Andre Reed was recently inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame. The Dieruff High School community hosted a wonderful celebration of this tremendous honor. Allentown has good reason to be proud of Mr. Reed's achievements, both on and off the field.



MY OFFICE AT WORK

Property Tax and Rent Rebate Deadline Extended to Dec. 31

So far in 2014, my office has helped residents apply for more than \$94,000 in rebates. Now, eligible residents have extra time to apply for the program that can put hundreds of dollars back into their pocket to offset property taxes or rent. The deadline to apply for a 2013 rebate was extended to Dec. 31, 2014. If you haven't applied before, here's what you need to know.

The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program is open to:

- Eligible seniors 65 or older;
- Widows and widowers 50 or older; and
- People with permanent disabilities 18 or older.

To qualify, applicants must earn less than \$35,000 per year (for homeowners) or \$15,000 per year (for renters) – and only HALF of Social Security or railroad retirement benefits count toward eligibility. If you're eligible – or you know someone who might be – my constituent service office can help you file the application and answer questions. Just stop by 2030 W. Tilghman St. in Allentown, or call (610) 821-5577 and I will mail you the information.



Get the FACTS You Need about Medicare Open Enrollment



Do you know everything you need to know about your coverage? If you join a private Medicare or prescription plan, your details could change and it could cost you money. Medicare Open Enrollment begins on Oct. 15 and ends Dec. 7. If you are making a change or need help reviewing your options, my office is

here to help. Beginning Oct. 21, my office's volunteer benefits counselor will be available EVERY Tuesday. Give my office a call at (610) 821-5577 to schedule your appointment.

Proposal to protect rape victims passes House

Pennsylvania does a terrible job protecting victims of rape. A woman who becomes pregnant as a result of rape must choose between collecting child support OR eliminating the rapist's parental rights. She cannot do both. I introduced legislation to change that. The proposal was unanimously approved by the House of Representatives in June. It needs to pass the Senate to become law.

Collecting American Flags to Honor Veterans

My office continues to help Boy Scout Troup 57 collect U.S. flags to honor American veterans. The flags are properly retired and distributed in an "Ashes to Graves" ceremony. The ashes are spread on veterans' memorials and graves across the Lehigh Valley. This year, residents of the 132nd Legislative District collected more than 75 flags. If you have a flag that needs to be properly retired, please bring it to my office and I will insure that it is delivered for proper retirement. It is wonderful to see the tribute the Boy Scouts and residents of the 132nd District have provided for our heroes.

I was happy to welcome Rabbi Seth Phillips of Congregation Kenneth Israel in Allentown to provide the guest invocation for the House of Representatives. It was a pleasure to have House Speaker Sam Smith join me to welcome Rabbi Phillips and his wife Marjory Kramer to the House floor.



As part of National EMS Week, I participated in an ambulance ride-along with the Cetronia Ambulance Corps on May 22. The ride-along helped me better understand the emergency preparedness and readiness needs of the community that community-based ambulance services provide.

Construction on the arena at 7th and Hamilton Street (PPL Center) continues to wrap up. The space includes Lehigh Valley Health Network facilities and offices, a hotel and a restaurant. These are exciting times in Allentown!





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Upcoming Do Not Call List Registration Deadline

The next registration deadline to be added to the Do Not Call list for Nov. 1, 2014 is Sept. 15. You can register your cell phone, too! If you need help registering or confirming your registration, please give my office a call at (610) 821-5577.



Veterans Designation on Driver's License and Photo ID

PennDOT recently announced a Veterans Designation for driver's licenses and photo IDs. You may be eligible if you are a veteran who has a Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty/DD214 or equivalent for service in the United States Armed Forces, or if you were discharged or released from service under conditions other than dishonorable. The designation can be done as part of initial issuance, renewal or ordering of a duplicate driver's license or identification card. If you are due to renew your driver's license or photo ID, my office would be happy to help eligible veterans obtain this designation.

Tools for College and Career Planning

EducationPlanner.org is a fantastic one-stop career and college planning site operated by the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA). I also recently learned of PHEAA's Targeted Industry Program, designed to help students pursue eligible courses of study in fields such as electrical work, HVAC and the building trades. Information is available at www.pheaa.org. Look under funding opportunities and select "PA-TIP." My office also has this information available.



Car Seat Safety

When transporting young ones, safety is priority number one. Infants, toddlers and children ages 4-7 (or 40 to 80 lbs.) are safer with seats that fit their precise safety needs. Here are a couple of car seat tips to ensure that your family travels are safe:

- Select a car seat based on your child's age and size, and choose a seat that fits in your vehicle. Use it every time.

- Always refer to your specific car seat manufacturer's instructions; read the vehicle owner's manual on how to install the seat using the seat belt or LATCH system. Be sure to check height and weight limits.
- To maximize safety, keep your child in the seat for as long as possible, as long as the child fits within the manufacturer's height and weight requirements.
- Keep your child in the back seat at least through age 12.

General Services

My constituent service office is here to help you with a variety of state government-related issues, including:

- Applying for Pennsylvania birth certificates
- Renewals of car registration, driver's license and photo ID
- Applying for a parking placard for persons with disabilities
- Photo identification for minors
- Interaction with any state agency to assist with a state government issue
- Obtaining Pennsylvania tax forms

Social Media Feeds

I am a firm believer that people should be able to access elected officials through social media and that elected officials need to be engaging residents. That is why I use Twitter and Facebook so often. If you would like to follow me, here are the links you need:

www.pahouse.com/Schlossberg

www.facebook.com/RepSchlossberg

www.twitter.com/RepSchlossberg

www.instagram.com/repmikeschlossberg