

State Representative ▼ 197th Legislative District

Leslie Acosta



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Winter 2015

Dear Neighbors,

I am Leslie Acosta, your new state representative for the 197th Legislative District. It is truly an honor to represent so many of my friends in this new role and ensure my constituents' voices are heard in Harrisburg. As the first Hispanic woman elected to the state legislature, I take my new responsibilities very seriously and look forward to meeting and serving you.

A longtime resident of Philadelphia, I am a former social worker who served as a child advocate with the Philadelphia Public Defender's Office, and was also employed as an adjunct professor at Esperanza College of Eastern University. Some of my main interests include improving our schools, bolstering economic development and strengthening our communities. I am eager to work with community organizations, my colleagues and any other interested parties to make sure all Philadelphians have the tools needed to succeed.

If you have any questions or need help accessing state-related services, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (215) 457-5281. My office at 511 W. Courtland St. in Philadelphia is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and my staff there can assist you in English, Spanish and Vietnamese. Another office west of Broad Street will be opening soon, so please stay tuned for details. In the meantime, I will be sure to keep you updated about important legislative and community events as they arise.

Sincerely,

Leslie Acosta
State Representative
197th Legislative District

Stay up-to-date!

Connect with me online to stay informed! Visit my website - www.pahouse.com/Acosta - to sign up for email alerts. I'll send periodic messages on state government programs and services that may be useful to you, as well as information on what's happening in our community.

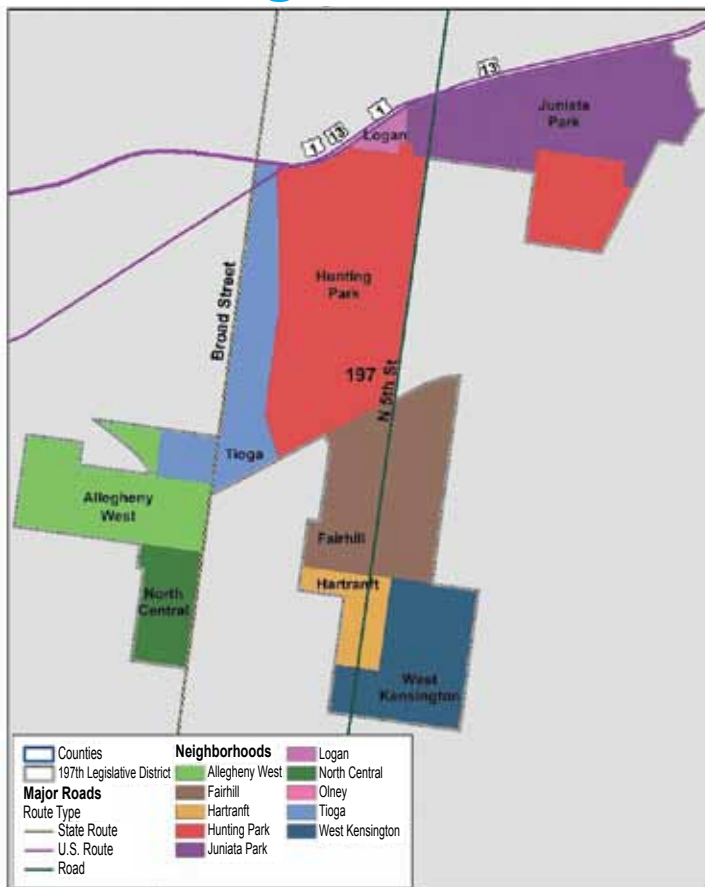
You can also follow me on Facebook and Twitter for updates.

www.facebook.com/RepLeslieAcosta

www.twitter.com/RepLeslieAcosta

I look forward to interacting with you!

197th Legislative District



It was a true honor to be sworn in as the first Hispanic woman elected to the Pennsylvania legislature and first woman Representative in the 197th District. The swearing-in ceremony was particularly meaningful as my family was able to join me in Harrisburg and I met so many new colleagues at the event.

Committee Appointments

I am honored to have been appointed to the following House committees for the 2015-16 legislative session:

- **Children and Youth**, which oversees bills designed to protect children from abuse and help further child development;
- **Finance**, which reviews bills dealing with issues such as tax collection rates and banking policies;
- **Human Services**, which considers legislation dealing with social service issues, such as Medicaid expansion;
- **State Government**, which takes up bills on voting and elections; and
- **Tourism and Recreational Development**, which oversees legislation related to the state's tourism industry, which generates nearly \$33 billion annually – with a large share coming from tourists in Philadelphia.

By serving on these committees, I hope to bring a voice to some of Pennsylvania's most vulnerable residents and make sure their needs are met. I will be sure to keep you informed of important committee developments.

State funding approved for Fairhill development project

I am pleased to announce the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (Pennvest) has awarded a \$3.5 million loan to developer Jarynn, L.P. The funding will be used for soil and water improvement projects at the new Plaza Allegheny retail shopping center site in Fairhill.

This project has the potential not only to improve water quality on-site by capping contaminated soil and installing above-ground and subsurface storm water filtration systems, but it is also expected to have a positive impact on water throughout the city. In addition, the initiative is slated to bring roughly 175 jobs to the area, and I am hopeful that the shopping center will help provide an economic boost to our region. I appreciate that the state is financing such an important initiative and will be watching the project's development.



My colleagues, friends and I enjoyed the great company and wonderful weather at last year's Puerto Rican Day Parade in Philadelphia.



I suggested that the definition of "legislative nonprofit organization" needed to be further clarified when discussing a bill during a House State Government Committee meeting.

Legislative Corner

I am proud to report that my first sponsored piece of legislation, H.R. 58, was unanimously adopted by the House. The resolution marks February 2015 as "National Children's Dental Health Month" in Pennsylvania. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that even though tooth decay is preventable, it is one of the most chronic diseases among children. What's more, the CDC found that children 3 to 9 years old living in poverty have a significantly higher incidence of untreated dental cavities or tooth decay than children living above the poverty line. We need to make sure all of our children are receiving proper dental care, and I am glad H.R. 58 is bringing awareness to this important issue.

In addition, I plan to introduce several more pieces of legislation, which would:

- Prohibit the sale, use and possession of powdered or crystallized alcohol in Pennsylvania;
- Legalize the use of Lady Bird deeds, which provide an easy way to transfer real estate upon a person's death while also protecting against the state's seizure of family assets to repay Medicaid benefits;
- Provide a second chance for convicts to gain employment and find housing by expanding the opportunity to expunge certain crimes from a person's criminal record;
- Prohibit employers from requiring job seekers to disclose a criminal history on applications, allowing job seekers to demonstrate their ability to work and current character in light of prior offenses; and
- Honor Black History Month and Ms. Frances P. Aulston, founder and executive director of the West Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, for her cultural preservation efforts in our communities.

I hope these pieces of legislation will see swift action in the House so we can help our children, seniors and their caregivers, and those Pennsylvanians looking to make a fresh start. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle on these and other important bills to help improve our region and state.



I was proud to stand beside many of my colleagues and my father, former state Rep. Ralph Acosta, to mark Hispanic Heritage Month at the state Capitol in Harrisburg.

Do your children have health insurance?

Pennsylvania has a Children's Health Insurance Program that provides free and low-cost health insurance to children. CHIP is not welfare – it covers children of working parents whose employers don't offer coverage and who can't afford private insurance. If you can't afford health insurance for your children, chances are they are eligible for CHIP.

What does CHIP cover?

- Immunizations
- Routine check-ups
- Diagnostic testing
- Prescriptions
- Dental, vision, hearing services
- Emergency care
- Maternity care
- Mental health benefits
- Up to 90 days hospitalization in any year
- Durable medical equipment
- Substance abuse rehabilitation
- Partial hospitalization for mental health
- Rehabilitation therapy
- Home health care

Does my family qualify?

The following factors are considered for a child's eligibility for CHIP:

- Must not be eligible for Medicaid or have any other health insurance.
- Must be under age 19.
- Must be a U.S. citizen or lawful alien.
- Must be a Pennsylvania resident for at least 30 days, except for a newborn.

Para más información en español sobre el Programa de Seguro de Salud para Niños (CHIP), por favor visite mi oficina.

If you think your children may be eligible for CHIP, you can sign them up by calling 1-800-986-KIDS (5437).

For more information about CHIP or to see if you qualify, call my office at (215) 457-5281.



Career fair and other upcoming events

My office will host the 197th Legislative District's first annual job and career fair. The "197 Oportunidades Para Trabajar: Opportunities to Work" event will feature workshops to help with resume writing and interview skills, and will help connect job seekers to employers.

Thursday, March 26

9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Lenfest Center

3890 N. 10th St., Philadelphia

I also plan on holding many other helpful events, including:

- Town hall meetings
- Conference for formerly convicted and incarcerated Pennsylvanians
- Hearings on proposed minimum-wage increase and mental health clinic compliance
- Office open house
- Senior expo
- Health insurance briefing

Many of these events are still in the planning stages, but I will be sure to let you know when dates and locations have been set so you can mark your calendars!



I like to visit students and principals in Philadelphia's schools as often as I can! It's important to make sure we fight to give our students all the tools needed to succeed.

Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program

My staff can help senior citizens and other residents who qualify for the state's Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program.

The program provides state rebates on property taxes or rent paid in 2014 to eligible Pennsylvanians 65 or older, widows and widowers 50 or older, and people with permanent disabilities 18 or older. The state Revenue Department will also pay claims filed on behalf of Pennsylvanians who lived at least one day

during the claim year and met eligibility guidelines.

The annual income limit for homeowners is \$35,000 and \$15,000 for renters. When calculating your annual income, you only need to count 50 percent of your Social Security income and Social Security COLAS are excluded. The maximum standard rebate is \$650.

Contact my office for an application or help in applying.

Mi oficina tiene una variedad de información disponible en español, incluyendo el Programa de Reembolsos por Impuestos a la Propiedad y Renta, PACE, y los servicios del estado que están disponibles para los envejecientes. Por favor visítenos.



State Representative **Leslie Acosta**

197th Legislative District
P.O. Box 202197
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2197

lpo.kl.0215



I always enjoy visiting our area's senior citizens and providing information about services that can help them!

My Office Can Help You With:

- Car registrations, special tags, disability placards, titles and driver's license applications
- Information on financial assistance for higher education
- Assistance in obtaining and completing state forms of all kinds
- Voter registration and absentee ballot applications
- Unemployment compensation, disability and workers' compensation
- Birth and death certificates
- Problems with the Department of Human Services (food stamps, medical and income assistance)
- Getting answers to your Pennsylvania income tax questions or problems
- Requests for literature of all kinds – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information
- Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding accomplishments and family milestones
- Complaints or questions about utilities and the Public Utility Commission
- Complaints and problems with insurance companies
- Renewal of state-issued licenses or certifications
- Problems or questions about the state lottery
- PACE cards for senior citizens
- Consumer complaints
- Liquor Control Board concerns or questions
- Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups
- Information about federal, state and local government agencies

Any problem with state government!