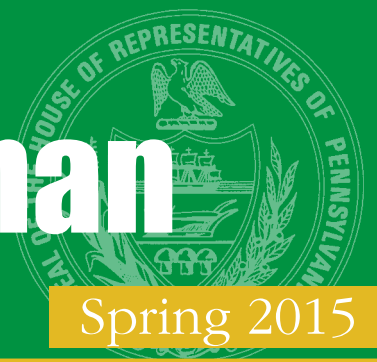




State Representative Brandon Neuman

48th Legislative District



Spring 2015

Capitol Office: 225 Irvis Office Building • P.O. Box 202048 • Harrisburg, PA 17120-2048 • (717) 783-4834

North Strabane Office: 1825 Washington Road, Suite C • Washington, PA 15301 • (724) 743-7602

George Washington Office: George Washington Hotel • 60 S. Main St., Suite 207 • Washington, PA 15301 • (724) 222-1091

Email: RepNeuman@pahouse.net • **Website:** www.pahouse.com/Neuman

Neuman bill would advance investigations of sexual assaults

My legislation that would upgrade testing of DNA evidence stemming from sexual assaults is making quick progress through the Pennsylvania Legislature.

The measure, H.B. 272, deserves prompt consideration. Victims of sexual assault and their families deserve closure and timely resolution of these despicable crimes.

Experts estimate hundreds of thousands of sexual assault kits nationwide have never been submitted to a laboratory for testing. The problem is compounded by the fact that most states don't require police forces to track and count untested kits.

To counter those backlogs, H.B. 272 would codify precise policies and procedures dealing with the collection and testing of sexual assault evidence.

As an added benefit, the bill also would make the commonwealth eligible for more federal funding that is available and designed to reduce testing backlogs.

H.B. 272 would cut through the red tape and excuses, and give due diligence to these heinous crimes by:

- Directing the state Department of Health to designate laboratories approved to receive and test sexual assault evidence;
- Requiring local authorities to submit evidence within 15 days to an approved laboratory, which must complete testing within six months;
- Mandating reports on testing backlogs, and permitting authorities to upload testing results into databases to help solve related sexual assault cases; and
- Requiring notifications to victims or surviving family when DNA testing has been completed.

Rep. Neuman selected for key House panels



Rep. Neuman is sworn in to his third term representing the 48th Legislative District.

As the new, two-year legislative session began, I was appointed to serve on the House Environmental Resources and Energy, Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Consumer Affairs, Judiciary, and Labor and Industry committees.

I'm excited by my new appointment to Environmental Resources and Energy for the 2015-16 legislative session, and my reappointment to the other committees. I look forward to addressing new challenges and continuing to work to end fraud, protect consumers and help prepare the next generation for the global job market.

The committee process is the foundation of all legislative work. The legislature and Gov. Tom Wolf are hitting the ground running on a wide range of issues, and I'm well versed on the issues confronting these committees.

Friendly award

Rep. Neuman is awarded a "Friend of the Food Industry" award from Alex Baloga, director of government and public relations for the Pennsylvania Food Merchants Association, during a ceremony in Harrisburg. The award salutes Rep. Neuman's efforts supporting a strong business climate for job growth and prosperity.



Rep. Neuman: False Claims Act would protect taxpayers

I've reintroduced my Pennsylvania False Claims legislation that would reduce waste and fraud while providing crucial revenues for the cash-strapped commonwealth.

House Bill 654 is winning significant bipartisan support because it would target those stealing from Pennsylvania and its taxpayers. It also would raise significant revenues through recovered losses and other damages.

For example, the measure would increase the commonwealth's share of recovery under a successful Medicaid fraud lawsuit by 10 percent. It also would enable citizens who have knowledge of wrongdoings by state vendors to initiate false claims actions.

Pennsylvania faces a large structural shortfall in its budget and a Pennsylvania False Claims Act can make a meaningful dent in the deficit. President Abraham Lincoln championed the first federal False Claims legislation to reduce graft during the Civil War. Subsequent improvements provided further incentives for states and taxpayers to combat government fraud and waste.

Today, 29 states and the District of Columbia have False Claims measures that protect whistleblowers looking out for taxpayer dollars. Pennsylvania needs to get on board, as the commonwealth is losing an estimated \$200 million a year just through Medicare and Medicaid fraud.

H.B. 654 would:

- Allow the state attorney general or a whistleblower to file a civil lawsuit against anyone committing health care or other fraud against the commonwealth;
- Make convicted violators liable for triple the damages sustained by the state; and
- Provide protections for whistleblowers discharged, demoted, suspended, threatened, harassed or discriminated against for lawfully pursuing a false claims action.

Rep. Neuman opens second district office, in George Washington Hotel

My second constituent service office is now open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday in Suite 207 of the George Washington Hotel, 60 S. Main St., Washington. The office telephone number is 724-222-1091.

The office will maximize constituent access to information about state programs and state issues. The office's experienced staff are geared to help and serve.

The main district office is at 1825 Washington Road, Suite C, in North Strabane Township, and the phone number is 724-743-7602.

The Help & Services section on my website offers great resources for job seekers. Get advice on searching for a job, writing a resume, interview tips and how to dress for success, as well as information about job-training programs and transportation options.

To visit the Employment Center, go to the website, www.pahouse.com/Neuman, and click on the "Help & Services" menu, then "Constituent Services."



Staff members Carla Mast and Nicholas Scarci are eager to help in Rep. Neuman's office in the George Washington Hotel in downtown Washington.

You can also stay up to date by following me on Facebook at [Facebook.com/RepNeuman](https://www.facebook.com/RepNeuman) and on Twitter at twitter.com/RepNeuman.

The 48th District covers the City of Washington; Chartiers, North Franklin, North Strabane and South Strabane townships; and Canonsburg, East Washington and Houston boroughs.



Coro Fellows

Rep. Neuman greets participants in the Coro Fellows in Public Affairs program. The program places high achievers in nonprofits, businesses and government offices throughout Pittsburgh for a nine-month program designed to train the next generation of leaders. Rep. Neuman discussed state politics and the legislative process during their visit to his Harrisburg office.

Rep. Neuman's offices have Property Tax/Rent Rebate applications

My constituent service offices, including the new office in the George Washington Hotel in downtown Washington, have received Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program applications from the state Department of Revenue – and my staff is ready to assist you with filing!

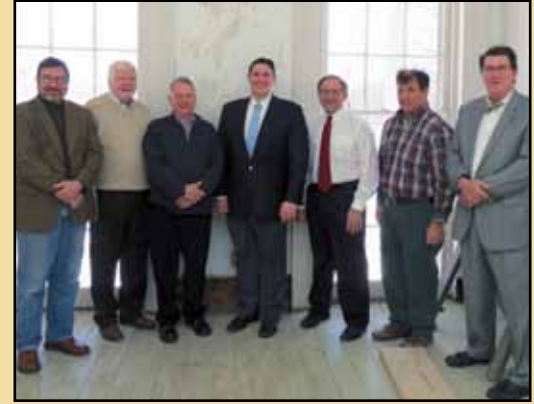
The rebate program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians 65 or older, widows and widowers 50 or older, and people with disabilities 18 or older. The income limit is \$35,000 a year for homeowners and \$15,000 annually for renters. Half of Social Security income is excluded and the maximum standard rebate is \$650.

Claimants must reapply for rebates every year because they are based on annual income and property taxes or rent paid annually. Spouses, personal representatives or estates may file rebate claims on behalf of deceased claimants who lived at least one day in 2014 and met all other eligibility criteria.

The off-extended deadline to apply for a rebate on property taxes or rent paid in 2014 is June 30, 2015, and rebates normally are distributed beginning on July 1. So, the sooner you file, the sooner you will receive your money! Please ignore offers to assist with filing the application for a fee. My offices offer help at no charge, and the Revenue Department does not charge a fee to process your application.

Applications also are available online at www.revenue.pa.gov or by calling 1-888-222-9190.

Brownlee House update



Rep. Neuman meets with trustees of the Washington County Community Foundation to learn about the rehabilitation project at the historic Samuel T. Brownlee House in North Strabane Township. When completed, the Brownlee House will be the site of a Scotch-Irish Heritage Museum, an education and meeting center and home to the foundation's offices.

Rep. Neuman's 'phishing' bill targeting fraud artists

Hardly a week goes by without another report of thieves looting someone's bank account or retirement savings because they swindled confidential information such as bank account and Social Security numbers, and computer passwords.

Con artists also are specializing in tax identity theft, which occurs when someone uses your Social Security number to get a tax refund or a job.

Let's take the gloves off against these criminals and give victims and prosecutors the tools to fight back.

We need to toughen criminal and civil penalties when a person or entity misrepresents on the Internet to solicit private financial or personal information to defraud victims. It's called "phishing," and my proposed legislation would:

- Establish felonies, carrying penalties of up to 10 years in prison and fines up to \$25,000, for convictions;
- Enable civil actions, including injunctive relief, by victims, Internet service providers and the state attorney general;
- Provide for up to \$100,000 in civil damages for each violation;
- Allow courts to triple actual damage awards with repeated violations; and
- Provide liability protection for Internet service providers withholding any website, information or data they believe to be in violation of the law.

May 2 shred event offers protection from identity theft

District residents are invited to participate in the FREE shredding event I'm sponsoring from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 2, in the parking lot of my constituent service office at 1825 Washington Road in North Strabane Township.

Safe disposal will be available for personal financial documents that are no longer needed and any papers with confidential information, including:

- Documents containing Social Security, credit card and bank account numbers;
- Credit card applications;
- Canceled or unused checks;
- Insurance and income tax records;
- Bank and credit card statements; and
- Pension information.

The shredding event will be held rain or shine for personal documents.

NO BUSINESSES, PLEASE.
No tax money will be spent for this event.

Legislature focusing on 2015-16 state budget proposal

Intense negotiations, changes are the only guarantees

The legislature and Gov. Tom Wolf have the goal of completing a new budget by July 1. The prospects of achieving that goal are uncertain.

We do know that recent spending plans have not worked for Pennsylvania, producing a large structural shortfall and multiple downgrades in the commonwealth's credit rating.

In fact, only two things are certain as the General Assembly focuses on a new budget:

1. Gov. Wolf's proposed spending plan is sure to undergo changes; and
2. Protracted negotiations between the administration and the General Assembly will be needed to reach a consensus on the budget.

Key features of the governor's budget offer increases in the state sales and personal income taxes, in return for reducing homeowner property taxes by an average of more than 50 percent and eliminating property tax school taxes for 270,000 senior households.

However, as I said, the governor's plan is sure to be changed, possibly significantly.

As with any negotiations, there will be compromises. As the process evolves, my priorities, as always, will be protecting Washington County's interests and being a good steward of taxpayers' dollars.

Please consider signing up for email alerts to keep abreast of budget developments by visiting my website, www.pahouse.com/Neuman. Just click on the "Contact" tab and then "Sign Up for emails."

Rep. Neuman spearheads STEM Initiative Week, April 19-25

I've introduced a House resolution naming April 19 through 25 as Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics – STEM – Initiative Week in Pennsylvania.

Promoting strong education in these fields has long been a priority with me. STEM education not only aids our citizens in securing good-paying jobs, but promotes a strong and healthy economy in the commonwealth and beyond.

The resolution emphasizes that an education in STEM fields prepares students for the global job market. Just as importantly, STEM fields are where the jobs are now and will be well into the future.

And it gets even better: STEM occupations pay more now, and incomes are forecast to rise even faster.

My measure reinforces the STEM Education Coalition's efforts to educate state and federal policymakers to develop high-quality college and career standards in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

We all gain when students advance in STEM fields because their skills produce a workforce well-suited to keeping our country at the forefront of innovation and technology, as well as a leader in science and technology.

Simply put, education is the currency of the future, and STEM education is the gold standard.

BotsIQ finals set for April 24, 25 at Cal U

I'm looking forward once again to the BotsIQ of Southwestern Pennsylvania finals, set for April 24 and 25 at California University of Pennsylvania's Convocation Center.

SWPA BotsIQ is an educational robotics competition for high school students. It provides students with a unique, hands-on experience that allows them to discover the possibilities of a career in the manufacturing sector, and the science, technology, engineering, or math – STEM – fields.



Every year, BotsIQ gives away two \$500 scholarships to the winning teams. The competition is fun and challenging, as it seeks the best from students in fields ranging from design and measurement to metal work.

More information about the 2015 BotsIQ of Southwestern Pennsylvania finals is available online at www.botsiqpa.org.





Rep. Neuman is joined by Canon-McMillan High School sophomores R.J. Dami and Justin Allen during Job Shadow Day sponsored by Junior Achievement. Rep. Neuman discussed the responsibilities of his office, as well as decisions about colleges, career choices and resume preparation. The students also fielded calls from constituents during the March 9 visit to the district office.

Veterans' Corner

2 bills would bolster veterans' job and education prospects

I was proud to support two bills this winter designed to benefit America's military personnel in the critical areas of jobs and education.

House Bill 131 would provide in-state tuition rates at community colleges and state-related/state-owned institutions for non-resident veterans, their spouses and dependent children.

Our veterans have earned this benefit and the right to use it in Pennsylvania. The measure also would enable the commonwealth to comply with federal regulations pertaining to GI Bill education benefits.

House Bill 157 would streamline certification and licensing processes for veterans and help match them more quickly with good-paying jobs.

It makes no sense to force veterans to undergo training for skills they already possess. The legislation would ensure that service members' military education and training are taken into consideration when professional credentials are being sought.

Both measures await consideration in the state Senate.

Rep. Neuman selected for sentencing commission post

In March, I was selected by the Democratic and Republican leaders of the House of Representatives for a seat on the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing.

I look forward to administering fair and sound sentencing policies as the House Democratic Caucus' representative on the panel, which also oversees state and county parole guidelines and resentencing policies.

I come to the position well-prepared, by my service on the House Judiciary Committee and law degree from Duquesne University. My work in the legislature to strengthen and reform children and youth laws, and appointment in 2012 to the Washington County Children and Youth Task Force, also will prove beneficial.

The 11-member commission was created by the General Assembly in 1978 and charged with maintaining statewide policies that promote fairer and uniform sentencing.





State Representative
Brandon Neuman

P.O. Box 202048
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2048

INSIDE

- Bills benefiting veterans advance
- Neuman bill targets fraud
- 2nd district office opens
- Property Tax/ Rent Rebates

lpo.kaf.0415

Save the dates!

Rep. Neuman will host a **FREE** shredding event in the parking lot of his constituent service office in North Strabane Township. You can bring unneeded confidential documents for safe disposal.
NO BUSINESSES PLEASE.

Document Shredding

Saturday, May 2

9 a.m. to noon

Parking lot of Rep. Neuman's constituent service office

1825 Washington Road
Washington, PA 15301



The shredding event will be held rain or shine. No tax money will be spent for this event.



Rep. Neuman points out historical items in the state Capitol during last fall's bus trip.

Bus Trip to Harrisburg, Flight 93 National Memorial

Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2015

Experience the magnificent state Capitol during an early autumn trip to Harrisburg that I'm sponsoring. Also on the itinerary are visits to Hershey's Chocolate World and the Flight 93 National Memorial in Somerset County.

Details such as the cost and meeting spots are still being worked out. However, you may want to mark the date – Sept. 29 – on your calendar.

More information will be forthcoming. And you can get the latest news by signing up for email updates via my website, www.pahouse.com/Neuman. Just click on the "Contact" tab, and then "Sign Up for emails."