

# THE ROZZI *Report*

From State Representative  
**MARK ROZZI**  
*126th Legislative District*

SPRING 2018  
WWW.PAHOUSE.COM/ROZZI



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## Rozzi, advocates call on governor to make child protection, safety a priority

In February, I led a news conference with advocates and members of the state House of Representatives to ensure that child protection and safety is a public policy priority in the coming year.

I discussed my legislative initiatives to address custody issues and distribution of marital property when sexual abuse is involved, while calling attention to the most vulnerable victims of sexual abuse: kids.

The good news about the #MeToo and #TimesUp movements is that victims are now stepping forward to identify predators, and their protectors are on notice that sexual assault and harassment will not be tolerated. While we are sympathetic to the plight of athletes, models and movie stars who are victims, we forget that the most vulnerable population of sexual abuse victims is children. And if that isn't wrong, what else really is?

My colleagues and I called upon Gov. Tom Wolf and our fellow legislators to make the safety and protection of children a top priority and give children at least the same support that 'Libre's Law' received in Harrisburg last year to protect pets.

Along with fellow state Reps. Margo Davidson, D-Delaware, Tina Davis, D-Bucks, and Madeleine Dean, D-Montgomery, I was joined by child advocates and experts on best practices.

Danielle Pollack, parent/child advocate, advocated for the end of a practice in which abuse victims are ordered to stay with suspected abusers during child custody cases.

"Would any adult rape victim or victim of violent assault be ordered by the court to live with or visit over and over again the very person who raped or assaulted them," Pollack asked during the conference. "We would not dream of doing this. It's unthinkable. Consider the terror of the victim



having to see his or her abuser over and over, or worse, living with him or her full time. And yet, with children, somehow this is permissible by law, and in fact, it's regularly ordered. In this way, we endanger and further traumatize vulnerable children."

Jill Deitrick, a child advocate, spoke about the real impact that unfair custody practices have had on the safety and welfare of her family.

"My ex-husband sexually assaulted my five-year-old daughter and pleaded guilty to a very lenient sentence," Deitrick said. "He filed for divorce and sought half of all marital assets, including my retirements and the land and farmhouse that has been in my family since 1880. He also requested alimony.

"My older boys were ordered to see multiple mental health professionals for custody evaluations. I had to pay \$1,400 for the first evaluation even as I was paying attorney fees and caring for four hurting children."

*The ChildLine and Abuse Registry Intake Unit is available at 1-800-932-0313. It is available 24 hours a day to receive reports of suspected child abuse. Any person may report suspected abuse, even if the individual wishes to remain anonymous.*

# Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program deadline is June 30

The deadline to file a state Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program application is June 30.

**My office can help with the application, so don't wait until the last minute. Call us at (610) 921-8921 to make an appointment today.**

The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians 65 or older, widows and widowers 50 or older, and people with disabilities 18 or older. The maximum standard rebate is \$650, but supplemental rebates can boost rebates to \$975.

The income limit is \$35,000 a year for homeowners and \$15,000 annually for renters, but please don't assume you are not eligible. Half of Social Security income is discounted, and claimants are not disqualified from rebates solely because of Social Security cost-of-living adjustments.

Applications for rebates for 2017 expenses are now available.

Please share this information with anyone you think may benefit.



## Opioid and heroin 'disaster' declared

In January, Gov. Tom Wolf issued a disaster declaration for the heroin and opioid epidemic, a step that will bolster efforts already underway to combat the crisis in Pennsylvania.

The disaster declaration will speed up and expand access to treatment, improve tools for families and first responders to save lives, and enhance coordination and data collection to improve state and local response.

Elements of the declaration include:

- Creating an Opioid Operational Command Center within the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency
- Enabling emergency medical responders to leave behind naloxone
- Waiving some requirements to make accessing treatment easier
- Allowing the expansion of medication units for narcotic treatment programs

We've lost too many friends and family members to addiction already, and overdose deaths continue to climb. The additional resources created through this disaster declaration will strengthen our efforts in this fight.

House Democrats have promised to put people first in our Plan for PA, and making sure people have access to life-saving medication and treatment is part of that. I'll continue to do whatever I can to help.

## Around the District

*In November, Rep. Rozzi hosted a Pathways to Pardons event with Lt. Gov. Mike Stack. This interactive program was held to educate constituents about Pennsylvania's pardons process.*



*Rep. Rozzi joins Gov. Tom Wolf during his West Reading walking tour to see revitalization projects underway. The Keystone Communities Program, which is administered by the Department of Community and Economic Development, has provided nearly \$600,000 to West Reading community development projects over the last five years.*



*Rep. Rozzi attends the Nurse-Family Partnership's annual picnic at the Stoudt's Ferry Playground to celebrate the conclusion of another year with nurses, parents and the children enrolled in programming. More information about the program is available at [www.nursefamilypartnership.org](http://www.nursefamilypartnership.org).*

# Opioid Addiction Help Available

Now, more than ever, there are more opportunities for those in need to get help with addiction. The Council on Chemical Abuse provides countywide leadership in the development and implementation of policies and programs that promote recovery from addiction to all substances.

Services and resources from the council are for Berks County organizations and individuals only. If you are sharing this with someone who is not from Berks County, please refer to [www.SAMHSA.gov](http://www.SAMHSA.gov) for free publications and information.

If you or someone you know is battling this disease, please contact:

**Council on Chemical Abuse**  
(610) 376-8669  
601 Penn St., Suite 600, Reading, PA 19601

Anyone with a drug or alcohol problem also can call the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration at 1-800-662-4357 to access free 24-hour referrals and information about substance-abuse disorders.

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

### HeartSaver CPR Course

Thursday, March 15 • 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.

My office has teamed up with our local American Heart Association Training Center and Berks Technical Institute to offer the course free of charge to constituents. If you would like the certification card, it costs \$22. The event is limited to 45 attendees, and future events might be added based on interest.

*Please call my office if you are interested in this class.*

### Time to Talk

Thursday, April 26 • 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

West Reading Fire Hall, 223 Playground Drive

*Learn how and when to talk to your kids about drugs and alcohol.*

This program was specifically designed for parents of students of all ages, elementary through high school. Discussion with a prevention specialist will focus on how and when to start the conversation with your child about drugs and alcohol. It's time to talk.

### Spring Document Shredding Event

Saturday, April 14  
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

District Office Parking Lot



### Fall Document Shredding Event

Saturday, Oct. 20  
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

District Office Parking Lot

*Please bring your personal documents to be securely shredded and recycled during these free events for constituents. There is a 10-box limit. Please remove all paper clips and plastic bags.*

### Annual Food Bank Collection

Monday, June 4 – Sunday, Sept. 30

*All donations go to families in need.*

Please drop off donations at my district office, and my staff will arrange delivery. We can use any non-perishable donation. Please share this information with a friend!

### Gun Safety Seminar

Thursday, Aug. 16 • 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Muhlenberg Township Building  
210 George St., Reading, PA 19605

This seminar, which is held in conjunction with the Berks County Sheriff's Office, is free of charge to constituents. The first 50 registrants will be accepted. Please call my office for more information.



## Summer jobs – \$13.23 per hour – for college students!

PennDOT will again sponsor an extensive Summer Maintenance Program for college students. The program runs April through August 2018 to supplement the permanent workforce.

These students assist in completing summer maintenance work and sign-upgrade services, provide maintenance and custodial services at roadside rest facilities, and perform laboring and flagging duties in maintenance organizations and at highway work sites. Applicants must

be at least 18 years old, enrolled full time in college for the fall 2018 semester, and have a valid Pennsylvania driver's license. The pay is \$13.23 per hour.

If you're interested, you should apply online. Please contact my office if you need assistance.

Remember – you must apply online with PennDOT to be considered for this opportunity, even if you have worked for PennDOT before. Visit <http://bit.ly/2nozEKw> to apply.

## STAY CONNECTED

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## More than \$1 million in grants awarded to our community



In November, the state announced more than \$1 million in grants to continue revitalizing Fifth Street Highway and in a separate award, Jim Dietrich Park.

I am proud to have supported this project, and congratulate Muhlenberg Township for securing this highly competitive grant money. \$1 million will go to improve five intersections and traffic flow along Fifth Street Highway. This funding represents the final phase of the project and follows a 2016 grant. The new construction will yield safer turn lanes and markings, landscaped medians, LED street lights, improved signage and more.

The second grant, for \$100,000, will go to replace the stone trail in Jim Dietrich Park with an environmentally friendly and handicap-accessible surface that helps mitigate stormwater erosion. A new pavilion and storage unit also will be built to augment upkeep at the sports field.

I very much look forward to the outcomes on both projects. This will help improve the quality of life in our community.

## Don't miss out! Opt in to stay informed

I hope you find my occasional email updates useful and informative. Starting in mid-March, due to a House rule relating to elections, I will be unable to send you email updates until May 16 UNLESS you have specifically opted in to keep receiving them. To keep receiving updates about important services, news about the state budget and more, go to [www.pahouse.com/Rozzi/emailsSignup](http://www.pahouse.com/Rozzi/emailsSignup).

## MY OFFICE CAN HELP YOU WITH:

- Car registrations, special tags, titles and license applications
- Information on financial assistance for higher education
- Unemployment compensation problems
- Birth certificate applications
- Pennsylvania income tax problems
- Problems with the Department of Human Services (food stamps, assistance)
- Requests for literature of all kinds – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information, student aid information, etc.
- Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding local accomplishments and family milestones
- Complaints or questions about utilities and the PUC
- Consumer complaints
- Complaints about road conditions
- Problems or questions about PennDOT
- Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups
- Disability plates and placards
- PACE cards for senior citizens
- Complaints and problems with insurance companies
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program problems or questions
- Problems or questions about the state lottery
- Local government officials' problems with state agencies

**Any question about state government!**