



State Representative JORDAN HARRIS



House Democratic Whip
Representing the 186th Legislative District

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Rep. Jordan Harris fighting to keep our community in their homes

HEARD IT FROM **HARRIS**

- NEW BUDGET BRINGS HISTORIC PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING
- MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN GRANTS COMING TO OUR COMMUNITY
- WHOLE HOME REPAIRS PROGRAM GETS FUNDING
- ABORTION ACCESS MUST BE PROTECTED



BUDGET MAKES HISTORIC INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

In early July, I was proud to make a historic investment in our schools and communities as we negotiated a new state budget. This budget contains a \$1.8 billion increase toward public education, including over \$189 million coming to Philadelphia public schools. We know that our schools are inadequately funded. From old textbooks to outdated equipment to downright unsafe conditions due to lead and asbestos, our school district badly needs these funds to make sure our children get the education they deserve. This is the largest increase coming to Philadelphia since I've been in office and I'm looking forward to it helping lift up our students as they learn and grow.

Beyond education funding, this budget takes real steps toward keeping our communities safe. We all know that

gun violence is a serious problem not just in Philadelphia but around the state. It impacts our families, friends, and neighbors in so many ways. Not just through the tragic loss of a loved one, but through the mental trauma associated with seeing gun violence or simply being afraid to walk around the block. To help combat this, we've invested \$50 million in Gun Violence Intervention and Prevention programs. I brought Gov. Tom Wolf to Philadelphia several years ago as chairman of the Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus to make sure he heard firsthand the impact gun violence has on our community. Following that visit, we made a historic investment in these programs that aim to get illegal guns off our streets and allow community programs to apply for grants to reduce violence. These dollars are a key

component in keeping us safe and reducing the violence that plagues our streets.

In addition, we invested heavily in mental health support, with \$100 million going toward adult mental health and another \$100 million toward youth mental health support. The past few years have been a struggle for all of us as we continue to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated issues that's caused. Mental health is health, and we all need to ensure we're taking care of it just as we take care of our physical health. If you or someone you know is struggling, please don't hesitate to ask for help. Also know that as of July 16, 2022, a new hotline is available for those having suicidal thoughts. Just dial 9-8-8 to be directly connected with help.

Budget by the numbers:

- **\$750 million** total increase to public K-12 schools
- **\$100 million** increase for special education
- **\$79 million** increase for early education
- **\$375 million** increase for safe and affordable housing
- **\$25 million** for a new Child Care Tax Credit
- **\$2 million** increase for women's reentry programs
- **\$100 million** for adult mental health
- **\$100 million** for student mental health
- **\$50 million** for Gun Violence Intervention and Prevention programs
- **\$100 million** increase for youth school safety grants



WHOLE HOME REPAIRS PROGRAM GETS FUNDING

I'm thrilled to let you know that this year's budget contains \$125 million for a new program meant to keep some of our neediest citizens in their homes. The Whole Home Repairs Program is something I've fought strongly for this year along with my colleagues Sen. Nikil Saval and Reps. Sara Innamorato and Rick Krajewski. We know that far too many families live in homes that need everyday repairs, such as a new roof, a new furnace, or new windows. Unfortunately, these repairs can be incredibly expensive, especially for people living on a low or fixed income.

This leads to people selling homes that in some cases have been in their family for generations. In certain areas of Philadelphia, this is a leading cause of gentrification. When people can't afford necessary repairs on their home, often they're more willing to sell their house for less than its fair market value. That leads to speculators coming in, buying the home, making necessary repairs, and reselling it for a much higher price than they paid. This is forcing people out of the communities they know and love.

That's where the Whole Home Repairs Program comes in. Eligible Pennsylvanians will be able to apply for a grant up to \$50,000 to make the repairs they need to stay in their home. Small mom and pop landlords may also qualify to help fix rental units that need repairs. Our hope is that this money will allow folks to repair their home and stop the loss of generational wealth that occurs when people feel they have no option but to sell their home for less than it's worth. We'll continue fighting to make this a yearly part of Pennsylvania's budget and increase the amount of money to help even more families remain in their home.



PROPERTY TAX/RENT REBATE PROGRAM GETS \$140 MILLION BOOST



As part of this year's budget, I was proud to vote to increase Property Tax/Rent Rebate payments by 70% for this year's applicants. This \$140 million boost is aimed at easing the cost of living for the elderly as well as folks living with disabilities. If you've already applied, you don't need to take any action. The Pennsylvania Department of Revenue will ensure every eligible applicant receives the proper rebate.

If you haven't applied, don't forget that you can contact my office at (215) 952-3378 to set up your appointment or visit mypath.pa.gov to electronically submit your application. Submitting your application online is easy and does not require you to sign up for an account. You'll be asked to provide specific information on your income and rent/property taxes. You can contact my office to get your Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program instruction booklet to learn which information you'll need.

The rebate program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians 65 and older; widows and widowers 50 and older; and people with disabilities 18 and older. The income limit is \$35,000 a year for homeowners and \$15,000 annually for renters, and half of Social Security income is excluded. Spouses, personal representatives or estates may also file rebate claims on behalf of claimants who lived at least one day in 2020 and meet all other eligibility criteria.

If you still wish to file a paper application, it's available by calling 1-888-222-9190. And remember, if you need additional assistance with completing or submitting your form, please contact my office and set up an appointment by calling (215) 952-3378.

BRINGING STATE DOLLARS BACK TO OUR COMMUNITY



Part of my job as your state representative is to ensure our community receives its fair share of funding from Harrisburg. That includes helping local non-profits and organizations apply for and receive state grants. In the past few months, I'm proud to have helped bring back millions of dollars that will help make our community a better place to live.

Among the latest grants is \$4.5 million toward the Francis J. Myers Rec Center to fix the roof and exterior, upgrade the windows and doors, enhance the plumbing, mechanical and electrical systems, and increase building accessibility by adding an elevator. In addition to that, Career Wardrobe, an organization that helps formally incarcerated individuals acquire clothing for interviews and a new career, received \$200,000 for their Returning Wardrobe pilot program.



One that's especially close to me is a \$53,000 grant to the South Philly Sigma Sharks. This non-profit provides local boys and girls an opportunity for development and cultural enrichment through sports and after school activities. I played football for the Sigma Sharks when I was younger, and I can attest to the positive influence it had on me. Many of the volunteers who work with the youth serve as mentors and positive male and female role models to our kids. I look forward to seeing all these organizations continue to serve our city!



WORKING TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY POLICING

June is a busy month in Harrisburg as the state budget is due by June 30. With so much activity, many groups visit the Capitol to speak with lawmakers about their needs and the issues they're facing. I had the pleasure of meeting with a group of Philadelphia Police Officers from our community along with my colleagues Rep. Regina Young and our Democratic leader Rep. Joanna McClinton. We had a discussion in my office about the issues they're facing as well as how we can improve the relationship between law enforcement and our community. I brought up some of the issues with distrust members of our community have brought to my attention and I believe the meeting was well received on both sides. We discussed priorities and where we can improve, and I look forward to seeing better interactions with law enforcement from these discussions.



FIGHTING TO PROTECT ACCESS TO ABORTION

In June, we saw the Supreme Court do something it has never done before: take away an expressly recognized constitutional right in America. Their decision overturning *Roe v. Wade* and invalidating a woman's right to health care choices marks a sad day in our nation. Suddenly, across the country, abortion laws that were passed over one hundred years ago are legal and back in effect. We cannot allow our nation to move backwards. We cannot normalize losing rights instead of expanding them. The decision to get an abortion is a deeply personal one that should only be made by a woman and her doctor. There is no room for elected officials in that conversation.

Please know that here in Pennsylvania, abortion access continues to be safe and continues to be legal. Though we have a governor in Tom Wolf who supports a woman's right to decide what's best for her body and will veto any legislation that restricts a woman's access to health care, this sadly isn't enough. Republicans in Harrisburg rushed through a constitutional amendment to deny access to abortion in Pennsylvania. A constitutional amendment must be passed in two consecutive legislative sessions and is unable to be vetoed by the governor, meaning that if Republicans pass this same legislation early next year, this could be voted on by Pennsylvanians in next year's Primary Election.

We must use this anger and energy to make our voices heard. We simply can't lose access to this vital health procedure in Pennsylvania.

**Abortion is
SAFE &
LEGAL
in Pennsylvania.**



VISIT HIGHLIGHTS THE NEED FOR EARLY EDUCATION

In May, I visited Grays Ferry Early Learning Academy to meet with young students and learn more about their program. Grays Ferry ELA provides multiple early childhood education programs to encourage our youngest students to learn and set them forward on a lifelong journey of education. Multiple studies have shown that students exposed to early learning opportunities have better educational outcomes throughout their career, and some in depth studies have even shown that children of students who received early educational opportunities do better in their own schooling.

This generational impact shows us the incredible value of early learning. Pennsylvania's Pre-K Counts program aims to increase access to early learning statewide and I strongly encourage those with young children to investigate it prior to enrolling your child in kindergarten. I was proud to support an increase of \$79 million in this year's budget for Pre-K Counts and Head Start programs and look forward to continuing to invest in our children in years to come!





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DELIVERING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

This is my 5th term representing the community I grew up in and I'm honored to continue fighting for our values in Harrisburg. Together, we've accomplished great things for our friends and neighbors, including:

- Bringing home over \$33.5 million in state grants to support projects and organizations in our own backyard like the Schuylkill River Trail, Bartram's Garden, South Philly Sigma Sharks, ACANA, the Neighborhood Gardens Trust, and so many more
- Removing barriers to make getting licenses, such as for barbers or cosmetologists, easier to access
- Voting to support the right of a woman to make her own health care choices
- Fighting for nearly half a billion dollars in new funding for the Philadelphia School District since 2013
- Enacting Pennsylvania's Clean Slate law, which has helped over 1.2 million Pennsylvanians seal their record and get their second chance
- Getting millions of dollars in Philadelphia to help fight gun violence and get illegal guns off our streets
- Hosting clinics to help thousands of Philadelphians apply for Clean Slate, pardons, or commutations
- Helping countless seniors file their Property Tax/Rent Rebate applications

With your support, I truly believe we've been able to make a positive impact on not just our community, but the entire city of Philadelphia. I look forward to continuing to do everything possible to enrich all of our lives.

With kind regards, I am:

JORDAN A. HARRIS

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