



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

JOE WEBSTER

SERVING THE 150TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY



35 Evansburg Rd. | Collegeville, PA 19426 | (484) 200-8263 | Fax: (484) 200-8268 | Hours: 9:30AM-4:30PM

www.RepJoeWebster.com | RepWebster@pahouse.net

www.facebook.com/RepJoeWebster | [@RepJoeWebster](https://twitter.com/RepJoeWebster) | [repjoewebster150](https://www.instagram.com/repjoewebster150)

Dear Neighbor,

I write to you grateful and humbled in my second term as your state representative. I know this year has been challenging and I reach out in hopes that you are doing well and staying safe.

For the past two years we have faced a pandemic, worsening climate conditions, challenges to our civil rights, and real threats to our democracy here in Pennsylvania and across our country. Yet in the face of adversity, I still believe we will overcome. We have the power to enact real change and progress to make our state and our nation a better place for all.

Our division does not accomplish anything. Division doesn't make us better or stronger. It doesn't make us healthier or safer and as we head into a new year it is my hope that we once again find common ground and unite as a community and as a state against the issues at hand.

In this newsletter you will find updates from Harrisburg, resources for our community and a review of the past year. As always, my staff and I are ready to assist you with any state-related questions.

My commitment to you is unwavering as we continue to move forward. I wish you all a happy and safe holiday season and brighter new year.

Money Brought Back to the 150th District

Throughout my time in office, I have worked hard to ensure your tax dollars were brought back to our district to fund projects that benefit our community. I'm proud to have helped secure over \$13 million in grants and state funding for the 150th Legislative District.

Since 2019, the grants have helped to strengthen our schools, improve environmental protections, upgrade emergency services, and revamp our infrastructure.

Here are just a few of the projects that state funding has helped:

1. Support for Norristown Area, Spring-Ford, Methacton, and Perkiomen Valley school districts with over \$2.5 million in combined school safety grants, safety equipment, STEM learning, and mental health resources.
2. Protection of homes and structures by restoring watershed basins that will also reduce water pollution and better disperse water run-off.
3. Help for local first responders to secure funding for fire, EMS, and safety services to help keep them and our community safe.
4. Improvement of the health and quality of our waterways through upgrades to waste-water infrastructure and extensions for neighborhood sewer systems.
5. Upgrades to our infrastructure including pedestrian crosswalks and intersection improvements that seek to revise the flow of traffic, widen the lanes, and provide better drainage.



Budget and PA Rescue Plan

This past summer we had the opportunity to pass a budget that would deliver targeted relief and invest in our workers without raising taxes. Due to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic throughout 2020, Pennsylvania had a total of \$10 billion in additional revenue: \$3 billion from a state revenue surplus and \$7 billion in federal stimulus from the American Rescue Plan. Despite pleas to invest in education, small business, workers, and infrastructure, \$6 billion went unused.

We had the opportunity to provide and expand funding for job creation, statewide high-speed internet access, property tax relief, and support for families and essential workers. These are areas where there is broad bipartisan support across the district and the commonwealth, and the changes we could make now could help strengthen the district and commonwealth for years to come.

There are thousands of ways to invest this money that don't incur a running expense but do create ongoing benefits. We were able to invest a significant \$300 million for basic education, including \$100 million to target some of our state's poorest and most over-taxed school districts. The budget also contained \$450 million for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program and an additional \$282 million for long-term care facilities that struggled during the pandemic.

There is work still to do in Harrisburg and I will be there to continue to push for the release of this funding now and into the next year to invest in Pennsylvania. We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to invest in Pennsylvania. It would be a disaster to miss this chance.

Legislative Updates

Nothing can become law in the state without being proposed by a member of the General Assembly, and I'm proud of the bills I've sponsored in this session. They include efforts to provide financial security to families of first responders who die in the line of duty, protect the personal information of veterans, preserve our rivers and streams, and guarantee educational access for our children.

My team and I have proposed a range of nonpartisan solutions designed to clean up our political system. As citizens and taxpayers of this commonwealth, you deserve stewardship with your money and transparency at all levels of government. A glaring issue in the modern form of elections is that a candidate for office in Pennsylvania can accept a contribution of any amount. If that candidate wins their respective election and becomes a public official, they can accept gifts from the people and interests they oversee and regulate. Even more troubling, outgoing legislators can leave office and pass through a revolving door to lobby their former colleagues. Additionally, legislators can decide who will vote on their candidacies in the next election and gerrymander "safe" districts for themselves. All of these actions (and more) corrupt our elections, stifle our voices, and encourage bad government – and this is today, not in some bygone era.

I have also proposed a range of bills and resolutions taking on everyday environmental issues around our state. We all see increased flooding and erosion, for example, and like so many others this is an issue that has significant economic impacts. While the causes of such problems may be global, we can seek solutions that are local. Converting played-out coal mines to geothermal energy generators is one. Promoting rainwater recovery (which saves households money and reduces stress on sewers) is another. Practical solutions to real problems – that's what I consider good government.

And we're not just thinking of today, we're looking out for tomorrow. The COVID pandemic disrupted education (among so many other things), and the legislature responded by allowing any student to repeat the 2020-21 school year. However, what they failed to do was protect students with learning disabilities that could "age out" of our educational system before completing their course of study. I am proposing legislation to empower the Secretary of Education to provide one-year extensions for any of our students who were impacted by the pandemic and find themselves unable to graduate due to the age-out rule. Let's not punish young people tomorrow for being responsible today.

We deserve a government that empowers the best in us, protects the vulnerable among us, and promotes the ideals we enshrined in our national identity more than two centuries ago. I will continue to pursue the creation and adoption of good laws to that purpose. In the months to come, I will take the same common sense, good government approach to other policy areas – healthcare, veterans affairs, transportation and more – in the hope of helping tomorrow be better than today.

Committees

Appropriations

Finance

State Government

Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness

EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



Paying past due rent and utility bills continues to be one of the biggest economic challenges some of us are facing, but there is help available.

Eligible Pennsylvanians can apply for financial assistance through the Rent & Utility Relief Program, which can provide up to 12 months of assistance for past due rent and utility bills, dating back to March 13, 2020. This financial help can also be used for future rent payments, funding for security deposits, and the first and/or last month of rent. There is no limit on the amount of financial assistance a household can receive.

To apply, Montgomery County residents can call Your Way Home by dialing 211 or text their zip code to 898-211. For eligibility requirements please visit www.yourwayhome.org/eruc.



LOW INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

2021-2022 Application Open

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, also known as LIHEAP, is open to apply. A yearly program, LIHEAP helps low-income families pay their heating bills in cash grants. It is a one-time payment sent directly to your utility company or fuel provider and credited to your bill. The payments can range from \$500 to \$1,500, all based on income, household size, and fuel type.

You can apply either online through COMPASS or in person at the Montgomery County Assistance Office at 1931 New Hope Street, Norristown, PA 19401. For more information on LIHEAP and to review eligibility visit: <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/LIHEAP.aspx>

SEPTA KEY SENIOR CARD

The SEPTA Senior Key Card is a wonderful service provided in our district office that is free for members of the community. Constituents need only be over the age of 65 for this service. The pass allows for travel on all SEPTA buses and regional rail systems in the state. Constituents are required to present their driver's license as proof of age.



By the Numbers

JOE WEBSTER
PENNSYLVANIA STATE REPRESENTATIVE

8 Virtual Town Halls



400 Virtual Event Attendees



3,072
Constituent Services Provided



562
Votes Cast



441
Bills/Resolutions Sponsored & Co-sponsored



Events in our Community

Though the Delta variant and COVID-19 pandemic limited some of the ways we were able to gather the last two years, it remained important for individuals to be connected and engaged within our community.



Making American History & Honoring Black Legacies Town Hall

I'm proud to have hosted eight virtual town halls over the course of this past year that covered a wide range of topics including: election infrastructure and law, honoring Black legacies, the importance of civic engagement, the whole child approach to education, American Rescue Plan funding for Montgomery County, destigmatizing mental health care, and supporting our veterans. We heard from

expert panelists, and on two occasions, from local high school students about their unique perspectives and how we can improve our community for the better.

In the summer, I had the opportunity to host a free paper shredding event with Representative Matt Bradford at Norristown Area High School. Thanks to our team of staffers, interns, and volunteers, we were able to fill three trucks and successfully recycle thousands of pounds of paper.



In Abington, I was proud to serve as a volunteer at the first ever Bucks-Mont Pride festival! The LGBTQ Equality Caucus has been working diligently to draft and run bills that would extend protections for our neighbors and friends on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. It's important to show up, listen, participate, and do the work. This family friendly event was wonderful to be a part of!

We also had the privilege of coordinating a Summer Food Drive for Daily Bread Community Food Pantry. Thanks to the amazing outpouring of support from our community and coordination of our local township and borough governments, we were able to donate over 730 pounds of food! This is more than double the amount my office collected the year prior.

With the arrival of cooler autumn weather, my staff and I were pleased to be able to join in the community days and events being hosted locally across the 150th District! Skippack Days, Lower Providence and West Norriton Fall Festivals, and Upper Providence Community Days were all exceptional events, and it was so good to see familiar faces among the participants and attendees.

In October, Penn State Extension, local elected officials, and interested community members joined me for a stream health walk at the Skippack Creek in Evansburg State Park. We discussed the importance of stream health, learned how to identify the different indicators of stream health, and what we can do to better advocate for our waterways. It also served as an opportunity to highlight HB714, a bill that I've introduced to expand and protect riparian buffers along Pennsylvania's waterways.

I look forward to seeing you in the new year and I hope that you have a happy holiday season!

**CONTACT OUR OFFICE FOR INFORMATION ON RESOURCES IN THE 150TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT AND WAYS YOU CAN HELP.
484.200.8263 | REPWEBSTER@PAHOUSE.NET**

COVID-19 Updates

Vaccines are the biggest weapons we have to fight viruses and diseases and keep people healthy. The COVID vaccines are no different. Decreasing case numbers in the fall are largely due to an increase in vaccinations. In order to protect both yourself and those unable to receive vaccines, getting vaccinated is imperative. Reducing transmission rates, and thus denying the virus further opportunities for the creation of new and dangerous variants, is what will ultimately defeat this pandemic.

Vaccinated individuals are also far less likely to contract, spread, experience severe COVID-19 symptoms, or be hospitalized if infected. Booster shots are available for Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson, while children are now able to receive low-dose COVID vaccines.

As for those still unvaccinated, many express concerns, some fueled by misinformation, others from the feeling of receiving an inadequate amount of information altogether. For more information, please visit the CDC's COVID-19 website at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.

Over 600,000 Montgomery County residents have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. Schedule an appointment to get vaccinated today by visiting www.montcopa.org/3660/COVID-19-Vaccine or call the Montgomery County COVID-19 hotline at (833) 875-3967. The hotline is open five days a week, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Around the Community



All too often, good citizenship goes unrecognized. Congratulations to the recipients of this prestigious award as you all continue to be pillars in your community!



Proud to participate in this Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion event as a part of our 2021 Juneteenth celebration.

I spoke to students at Arcola Intermediate School on Constitution Day this year about the importance of the Constitution and how it impacts us today.

I was happy to welcome Dr. Mak, Skippack Pharmacy, and their volunteers to the Capitol building in June to recognize their efforts of administering 45,000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccines in our community.



As part of our plan to revitalize Main Street, House Democratic Leader Rep. Joanna McClinton visited Ursinus College to tour and discuss potential projects in and around the college.



This summer my staff and I volunteered at Mitzvah Circle and helped to pack donations to local families.



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New Office with History

To better accommodate my constituents, my staff and I have moved to one, centralized location within the district. Across from Evansburg State Park, and between Germantown and Ridge Pikes, we are now located at 35 Evansburg Road, Collegeville, PA 19426 in the newly refurbished Henry K. Boyer School building.

Boyer himself was born in our area and became a state representative, elected to the House of Representatives for 6 terms and even served as the 99th Speaker of the House. Originally a schoolteacher, Boyer was dedicated to education and the health of his community. He sponsored Act 37 of 1885, creating a State Board of Health to oversee the practice of health and sanitation in Pennsylvania.

My staff and I are excited to call this building our new home and we are looking forward to helping you with any state-related needs.