



State Representative **JORDAN HARRIS**

House Democratic Whip
Representing the 186th Legislative District



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Beginning a new term
fighting for you in Harrisburg

HEARD
IT FROM **HARRIS**

- BRINGING OUR PRIORITIES TO THE CAPITOL
- DELIVERING GRANTS TO OUR COMMUNITY
- HELP WITH UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION
- HOME HEATING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

What I'm fighting for in Harrisburg



On January 5th, I was sworn in to begin my fifth term representing our district in Philadelphia and my second term as the House Democratic Whip, the second highest position in our caucus leadership. While swearing-in day is usually a joyous occasion full of pomp and circumstance, there's little time to waste as we begin a new legislative session. Our state is facing a host of problems, including the continuing COVID-19 pandemic that is still impacting far too many people, severe economic issues from the fallout of COVID-19 on our local businesses, unemployment compensation problems as the system continues to be overwhelmed, and issues that we've been fighting for over many years, such as raising the minimum wage, fixing our education system so that every child gets a good education regardless of zip code and ensuring that people can get the health care they need without going bankrupt.

These are big issues facing our state and we must address them to help our neediest citizens. We'll be tackling these problems with a new leader in our caucus. Rep. Joanna McClinton, from a neighboring district representing parts of Philadelphia and Delaware counties, was chosen to be the first woman to lead either caucus in the history of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. I've known Rep. McClinton since we attended bible studies together as children and I'm very excited to see where she can take our caucus. We've partnered on numerous issues in the past and her values and priorities are exactly what Pennsylvania needs to move forward. I look forward to working closely with her to help advance our goals and deliver for the people of Pennsylvania. Below are some of the issues I'm fighting for the hardest:

Pennsylvania's Clean Slate Law - which I helped pass several years ago, has already sealed more than **35 million** low-level criminal records from public view. It's time we go further and **expand that to more individuals who deserve their second chance.**

Fix our probation system - Last session I had legislation that would make necessary changes to our broken probation system and **stop our probation system from acting like quicksand** – always pulling you back in no matter how hard you try to get out.

Eliminate cash bail - Cash bail has basically brought back debtor's prisons in Pennsylvania. If you can't pay your bail, you can't leave jail and **you haven't even been convicted of a crime.** It tears apart families and can cause job or home loss.

Help public defenders - Our constitution guarantees a lawyer to those who can't afford one, but our public defenders are often overburdened and overworked. This leads to people who can't afford a lawyer getting incomplete legal advice. I strongly support the **creation of a statewide office to offer funding and supervision for public defenders.**

Raise the minimum wage - It's long past time to **raise the minimum wage**, which has been stagnant for over a decade.

I stand with Gov. Tom Wolf in calling for an immediate jump to a minimum wage of \$12 per hour and increasing that to \$15 per hour in the coming years. Putting money directly into your hands is the best way to see our economy rebound.

Create educational equity - Education is the elevator out of poverty, and for too many students that elevator is broken. We must **make our public education more equitable and our higher education more affordable.** The value of the education a student receives shouldn't depend on their zip code and I'll continue fighting to make quality education more widely available

Help for small businesses - COVID-19 has caused our small businesses to suffer, and they need our help. Both the state and federal government need to come forward and **create no-interest loans or grants to help these mainstays of our community** weather the storm and come out stronger on the other side.

Help for renters and homeowners – It's essential that we ensure **Pennsylvanians can stay in their home** during and after this pandemic. Housing assistance is essential for people who have fallen on hard times through no fault of their own. This includes small mom and pop landlords who also need our help.



DELIVERING HELP TO OUR COMMUNITIES

In early February, the legislature sent Gov. Tom Wolf legislation that will deliver aid to some of our neediest friends and family members. Most importantly, Senate Bill 109 sends nearly \$570 million COVID-19 relief funds to the Department of Human Services for the Rental and Utility Assistance Grant Program. This will help provide rent assistance, including help for those who owe back rent, utility and home energy costs and housing stability services. This bill was a necessity and I'm proud to have helped fight to get it to the governor's desk to be signed into law. Though this funding will help, there's still other options available for you if you need immediate assistance. Below is a list of organizations that may be helpful to you. Please know that there's nothing wrong with asking for a helping hand if you're in need.



Financial help

Catholic Social Services

215-587-3614

Catholic Social Services, Southwest

215-724-8550

CSS Helpline: 267-331-2490

Provides limited financial assistance towards rent.

Diversified Community Services (Dixon House)

215-336-3511

Housing stabilization services for homeowners behind on their rent or in danger of defaulting.

Emergency Assistance and Response Unit (EARU)

215-686-7177

EARU helps families and people who are at risk of becoming homeless or facing a housing crisis.

Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS PA)

215-832-0920

HIAS Pennsylvania provides legal and supportive services to immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers from all backgrounds to assure their fair treatment and full integration into American society.

HELP Philadelphia

215-473-6454

Provides a range of financial and supportive services to people and families.

People's Emergency Center

267-777-5800

Provides a range of financial and supportive services to people and families.

Pennsylvania Department of Human Services

Philadelphia County Assistance Office

215-560-7226

Offer Emergency Shelter Allowance to help a homeless or near homeless family/person to:

- stop eviction from home/apartment
- find a long-term place to live
- find a short-term place to live

United Communities Southeast Philadelphia

215-468-1645, ext. 223

Assists renters behind on their rent and needing financial help to catch up with their payments.

United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey

215-665-2500

Utility Emergency Services Fund (UESF)

215-972-5170 • Vet Line: 215-814-6888

Assistance includes help with back rent for families struggling to remain in their homes.



Mental Health Addiction Assistance

National Alliance on Mental Health Philadelphia

Suicide and Crisis Hotline
215-686-4420

Pennsylvania Support & Referral Helpline

Connects Pennsylvanians with mental and emotional support resources
855-284-2494

Philadelphia Mental Health Support

24-hour behavioral health
emergency line
215-685-6440

Crisis text line – Text "HOME" to
741741

Non-emergency line
1-855-507-9276



Food resources

Coalition Against Hunger

SNAP Hotline – 215-430-0556

Philabundance

Provides access to food and food banks
215-339-0900

Philadelphia Food Distribution Sites

The City of Philadelphia can connect you with food pantries in your community – 1-800-5HUNGRY or text your zip code to 1-800-548-6479.

Apply for Property Tax/Rent Rebate online with myPATH

Qualified Pennsylvanians can visit mypath.pa.gov to file their 2020 Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program applications.



Learn more at revenue.pa.gov/ptrr



Property Tax/Rent Rebates now available online

Older and disabled Pennsylvanians can now apply for the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program. This year, the state Department of Revenue is encouraging those who are eligible to use an online filing option via mypath.pa.gov.

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 age 65 and older; widows and widowers age 50 and older; and people with disabilities age 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. 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.

Help with winter heating costs now available

Pennsylvania's Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is now accepting applications to help families living on low incomes afford their heating bills this winter. LIHEAP provides cash grants paid directly to your provider to help cover the cost of keeping your family warm. It also provides emergency cash grants to those in danger of being without heat.

To be eligible, you must meet income guidelines, you don't have to be on public assistance, you don't have to have an unpaid heating bill, and you can rent or own your home. For more information, please contact my office by calling (215) 952-3378.

Apply online at www.compass.state.pa.us.



Need help heating your home?

Utility & Crisis Grants Available

Apply Online Today



What happened to my unemployment compensation?

Republicans in the state Senate decided to close several unemployment compensation centers around the state and lay off 600 staffers. Now we're unfortunately seeing the effect of that lost staff. Due to the vast economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Pennsylvania's unemployment compensation (UC) system has been overwhelmed with requests. Sadly, this has caused slowdowns on Pennsylvanians getting the benefits they deserve. If you've filed for unemployment benefits and aren't receiving payments or are having trouble with a PIN assigned by the Department of Labor and Industry, I strongly encourage you to contact my office by calling (215) 952-3378. We can do our best to help your situation get remedied.

DELIVERING OVER \$9 MILLION FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Part of my job as your state representative is to support and advocate for people, non-profits, and businesses in our community who apply for state grants to improve the neighborhoods we live in. In 2020, I'm proud to say that over \$9 million in grants for community green spaces, job training, music and the arts and help for health care workers, among other things, was delivered to our community. These grants will not only better the space we live in, but also provide apprenticeships and pathways to long-term employment for our friends and neighbors or provide necessary personal protective equipment to frontline workers. I look forward to continuing to see our community succeed and grow even more in 2021!

African Cultural Alliance of North America Africa Center
Schulykill River Development Corp
Schulykill River Trail
Bartram's Garden Community Boathouse and Workshop
Woodland Academy Child Development Center/Greater Philadelphia Health Action NESTT Project
Philadelphia Clef Club of Performing Arts building upgrades
City Year Operation Support
Big Brothers Big Sisters Independence Job Training
Bethesda Project Facility Upgrades

Universal Institute Charter School Continuity of Education Grant
Beiteinu Charitable Foundation
Headlong Dance Theater
Universal Alcorn Charter School Continuity of Education Grant
JNA Institute of Culinary Arts
Brandywine Workshops and Archives Operational Support
Philadelphia Clef Club of Jazz & Performing Arts Operation Support
Universal Vare Charter School Continuity of Education Grant
Chester A. Arthur School Milk Cooler

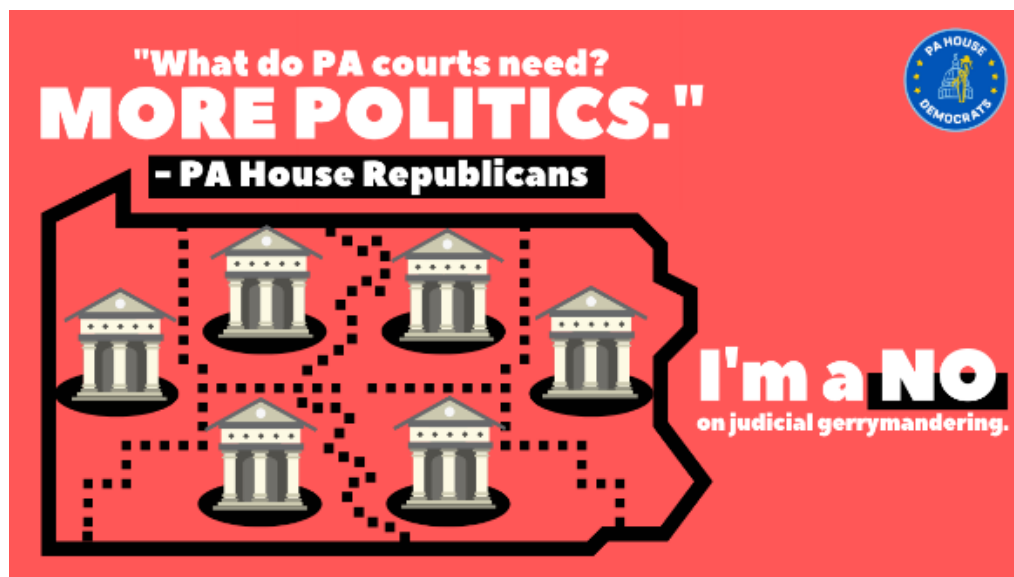
African Cultural Alliance of North America Census Outreach
Prep Charter School of Math and Science Continuity of Education Grant
BalletX
Brandywine Workshop and Archives
Philadelphia Clef Club of Jazz & Performing Arts
The Mustard Seed Home Care LLC Hazard Pay
Universal Audenried Charter School Continuity of Education Grant
Little Sister of the Poor Hazard Pay
Ultimate Home Care Agency LLC

I'm a NO on judicial gerrymandering

I've already had neighbors in our community reach out about my stance on judicial gerrymandering. If you haven't heard of it, you'll hear that term frequently over the next few weeks and months. Judicial gerrymandering refers to a misguided plan to pass a constitutional amendment creating districts throughout Pennsylvania for judges to run in.

Currently, our superior court and supreme court judges are elected statewide. This makes sense, as their rulings apply to all Pennsylvanians, not just those in certain parts of the state. The rule of law doesn't differ in Erie, Altoona, Scranton or Lancaster, therefore there's no reason to silence the voters who deserve to have their voice heard in electing judges.

Rest assured, I will not be supporting judicial gerrymandering and will loudly voice my opposition to this misguided plan.





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VIRTUAL TOWN HALL

on the Pardons Process
and PA's Clean Slate Law

Join us online via Zoom!

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2021

5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Zoom Webinar ID 876 4992 2715

Passcode: 919776

You're invited to a virtual town hall on the pardons process, commutations and Pennsylvania's Clean Slate law. We'll be joined by **Lieutenant Governor John Fetterman**, **Board of Pardons Secretary Brandon Flood**, and **Community Legal Services of Philadelphia** for information on who's eligible and what you can do to seal or clear a criminal record.