

# THE ROZZI *Report*

From State Representative

**MARK ROZZI**

*126th Legislative District*



## Dear Neighbor,

I've spent the last decade as your state representative, and the beginning of the 2023-24 legislative session has undoubtedly been the most memorable yet. On Jan. 3, I took the oath of office for the sixth time. Then, later that day, my peers elected me as Speaker of the House with a come-from-behind victory, because Republicans had the seated majority at that time. I felt honored and humbled to be chosen for the highest office in the House of Representatives, and I did not take the responsibilities that come with this position lightly.

As Speaker of the House, I believed it was important to remain independent and non-partisan. This is because the Speaker's job is to lead this branch of the legislature and ensure every elected member gets the chance to be heard.

My top priority from day one as a rank-and-file member of the House was to deliver justice for victims, and I carried that with me into my speakership. As I presided over the House, we passed a total of five bills over to the Senate which would allow survivors to have their day in court.

I'm also proud to share that the House adopted the operating rules that I drafted during my time as Speaker. The "Rozzi Rules" reflect my promise to govern the House independently. They accomplish this in three ways.

The first is by giving the minority party a larger presence on standing committees. This creates balance because committees ultimately decide which bills receive a full House vote.

My rules also reform the constitutional amendment process by requiring them to stick to one subject and they can only appear on fall municipal or general election ballots.

Lastly, the "Rozzi Rules" broaden harassment and discrimination protections. Anyone conducting official business with an elected representative, on state House property or at a House-sponsored event may file harassment complaints. Previously, harassment and discrimination protections only covered House members and employees.

Although my time as Speaker was just two months, I resigned with dignity knowing that I did everything I could for childhood sexual abuse survivors and to end the House's partisan games. For too long, victims were denied justice, so I made them my first and top priority. Partisan games played a role in that, and unfortunately, they always have and always will plague Harrisburg. However, I wrote the adopted House rules with the intentions of minimizing instances of hyper partisanship. We lawmakers all serve our communities, so that's where our loyalty should lie – not with any political party.

Now, I'm happy to be back in my old seat on the House floor and spending more time in the district. Know that my office in Temple remains open and ready to help you with any state-related matter.

# REPRESENTATIVE Mark Rozzi

## 2023-2024 Committee Assignments

Education

Chair Subcommittee  
Special Education

Labor and Industry

Policy



State Representative

# Mark Rozzi

By the Numbers



# 56

Days as  
Speaker

# 5

Bills  
Passed



# 2

Gavels  
Busted

# 4

Stops on  
Statewide  
Listening  
Tour



# 3

Special  
Elections Scheduled



# PROGRESS ON MY LEGISLATION

## STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS

As Speaker, my priority was to get two paths to justice for victims of childhood sexual abuse. In March, the PA House of Representatives passed a constitutional amendment (House Bill 1), which would open a retroactive two-year window allowing these victims to file a civil suit against their abusers and any institution that covered it up. Constitutional amendments require passage in two consecutive sessions and this bill had passed the House and Senate in 2021. If passed by the Senate, the amendment could go on the ballot before voters as soon as November.

In the meantime, House Bill 2, through the typical legislative process, passed the House and has been referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Another piece of legislation, Senate Bill 1, came over from the Senate, bundled with two unrelated bills. According to House rules regarding single subject bills, these were stripped from the bill in the House Judiciary Committee and Senate Bill 1 now mirrors House Bill 1.

Childhood sexual abuse survivors deserve justice. They deserve to have their day in court without lawmakers turning this into a partisan game. These three bills have the power to spare future children from sexual abuse by exposing child predators and holding them accountable now. It's critical that the Senate does its job and brings these bills up to a vote. Let the PA Supreme Court make the final decision if necessary. Victims have waited long enough.



*I graciously accepted Luzerne Advocacy Center's Guardian Sh... month. This award is presented... person or organization dedica... Pennsylvania a better, safer pla...*

# RECENT COMMONWEALTH COURT RULING ON EDUCATION FUNDING

For too long, the Pennsylvania legislature has neglected our students by failing to properly fund our schools while depending too heavily on property tax payers. This has been confirmed by a recent Commonwealth Court ruling from the William Penn School District v. Pennsylvania Department of Education case. The ruling concluded that Pennsylvania underfunds some school districts so badly, like ones right here in our neighborhoods, it violates the state constitution. Specifically, the judge held that:

1. Education is a fundamental right in Pennsylvania.
2. The Education Clause of the Pennsylvania Constitution was “clearly, palpably, and plainly violated because of a failure to provide all students with access to a comprehensive, effective, and contemporary system of public education that will give them a meaningful opportunity to succeed.”
3. It is the legislature’s, executive branch’s and educators’ responsibility to uphold the education clause and ensure that right is a reality throughout the commonwealth.

This was a historic decision by Commonwealth Court and affirms what we knew to be true: our current system for funding schools, which relies heavily on local property taxes tied to community wealth and wages, has been denying Pennsylvania students equal access to public education. While the judge’s ruling lacked direction for the state legislature on just how much aid to distribute or how, she did indicate that it’s up to the governor, lawmakers and the school districts that sued to formulate a plan that addresses the constitutional violations. The judge made it clear that our current approach is not working.

Now that budget season is underway in Harrisburg, it’s time for the legislature to create a funding system for our schools in which every student and every taxpayer is treated equally. I’m ready to fight for equitable funding in Pennsylvania’s public schools to close this gap that deprives children of quality education and to relieve the burden of expensive property taxes for Berks County homeowners.

## ENCOURAGING PENNSYLVANIA STUDENTS TO PURSUE EDUCATION DEGREES

To remedy our commonwealth’s teacher shortage, I introduced legislation that would help relieve the financial burden of earning an education degree. My bill would establish the Teacher Pipeline Scholarship Program, providing a scholarship of up to \$8,000 per year, \$32,000 in total, to Pennsylvania students in a primary or secondary education program or in a student teaching role. To ensure Pennsylvania students can benefit from this, scholarship recipients would be required to work within the commonwealth for a period of one year for each academic year that the student received a PA Teach scholarship, or they would need to pay their scholarship back. One way we can fund this without increasing the burden on taxpayers would be to use available dollars sitting in the “Rainy Day” fund. For Pennsylvania educators, it’s pouring right now, and they need our support to grow and truly transform our commonwealth’s learning landscape.

***Last action: Passed the House on May 2, will head to the Senate next.***

County Child  
Award last  
annually to a  
d to making  
for children.

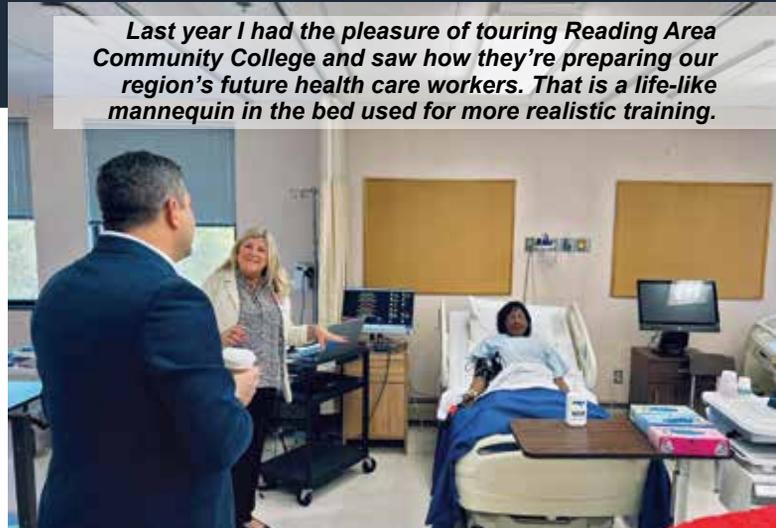


# \$5.8 MILLION IN GRANTS BROUGHT HOME

Part of my job as state representative is ensuring that my district gets our fair share of state funding. Here is a recap of some grants I recently helped bring home. If you're working on an endeavor and need help navigating state grant programs, reach out to my office and see how my staff can help.

## BERKS COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD:

\$176,155 grant from the Nursing Pathway Apprenticeship Industry Partnership Program to bolster the Reading area's health care industry, addressing workforce challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.



*Last year I had the pleasure of touring Reading Area Community College and saw how they're preparing our region's future health care workers. That is a life-like mannequin in the bed used for more realistic training.*

## Ten grants distributed by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development to projects meant to improve local infrastructure.

- **Dominic Manzella Park:** \$482,255 awarded to Laureldale Borough to construct a bathroom facility at the park.
- **Greater Reading Chamber and Economic Development Corporation:** \$142,346 to develop the Franklin Street Transit-Oriented Development Strategic Plan. The goal is to re-establish passenger rail service from Reading through the Schuylkill River corridor to Philadelphia and along the Northeast corridor to New York City and Washington D.C.
- **Muhlenberg Township:** \$294,000 for streambank restoration and riparian buffer conservation of Laurel Run Creek.
- **Mt. Penn Fire Company:** \$60,000 to renovate the firehouse's day room. The proposed project will update flooring to include baseboard trim, update base and wall cabinets, replace countertops, paint, replace ceiling tiles, and update windows.
- **Lower Alsace Township:** \$850,000 for sidewalk construction along Carsonia Avenue in Reading.
- **Berks County Redevelopment Authority:** \$125,000 to renovate an old school building into office space. These office spaces will be available for rent to nonprofit corporations/ organizations. The Redevelopment Authority applied for the grant on behalf of the Berks County Nonprofit Development Corporation.
- **Mount Penn Borough:** \$275,000 for reconstructing handicap ramps.
- **Antietam Valley Municipal Authority:** \$376,679 for a vehicle and equipment upgrade project for use in Lower Alsace Township, Mt. Penn Borough, Exeter Township, St. Lawrence Borough, and the City of Reading.
- **Mount Penn Borough Municipal Authority:** \$207,100 for SCADA system upgrades in Exeter Township. This project will add operational data to items currently not monitored such as well water level, well flow rate, water system pressure, and water storage tank level.
- **Reading Area Water Authority:** \$165,649 for construction, engineering and administrative costs toward SCADA and IT upgrades for the Maiden Creek Filter Plant.

**Five community organizations received violence prevention grants from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. Awards may be used toward reducing community violence, such as street outreach, Safe Corridors/Safe Passages programs – which prevent incidents to/from school and other community centers – trauma-informed support to victims and survivors of gun violence, youth activities, and mentorship programs.**

Berks Community Action Program Inc.....	\$800,000	Reading Hospital .....	\$193,078
Center for Children's Law and Policy .....	\$830,600	The Salvation Army – Reading .....	\$261,676
Olivet Boys & Girls Club of Reading & Berks County..	\$607,267		

# SHRED EVENT

My summer shred event is back by popular demand! Stop by Muhlenberg High School on Saturday, June 17, with up to 15 boxes/bags of paper to be securely shredded on site.

**HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!**



People typically bring enough papers to fill multiple trucks at my shred events, so I recommend getting there early.

Please join State Representative  
**MARK ROZZI**  
for a  
**FREE**  
**SHRED EVENT**  
**Saturday, June 17**  
9 a.m. – Noon  
**Muhlenberg High School**  
400 Sharp Avenue | Laureldale, PA 19605

Rep. Mark Rozzi is sponsoring a **FREE** paper shredding event. Bring up to 15 bags or boxes full of papers containing your sensitive personal information to be securely shredded on-site. Rep. Rozzi and his staff will be present to answer any state-related questions you may have as well.

*For additional information about the event, please contact Rep. Rozzi's office at 610-921-8921.*

# CREATING CHRISTMAS MAGIC

Thank you to everyone who participated in my annual Christmas Gift Giving event. This is always one of my favorite events because it shows the true kindhearted spirit of our community. Thanks to your generosity, my office was able to connect more than 100 local families to donors last Christmas. The end result was 312 local kids getting the exact items that were on their wish lists. I sincerely appreciate all the sponsors who generously lent a helping hand during the holiday season. Thanks to your help, families in need were able to replace financial worries with happy memories. I look forward to coordinating this event again this Christmas!



## SIGN UP FOR YOUR PROPERTY TAX/RENT REBATE TODAY

Eligible Pennsylvanians can now apply to the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program. The program is open to all individuals who are 18+ and permanently disabled, 50+ and widowed, and 65+. Income requirements are detailed in the graphic to the right.

Spouses, personal representatives, or estates may also file rebate claims on behalf of claimants who lived at least one day in the claim year and meet all other eligibility criteria.

The deadline to apply is **June 30th**. Filers can apply online by visiting <https://mypath.pa.gov/> or contact my office for a paper application.

**PROPERTY TAX/  
RENT REBATE PROGRAM**  
for residents who are permanently disabled,  
50+ and widowed, or 65+  
Application Deadline: **June 30, 2023**

**What we need from you:**

**EVERYONE**  
✓ All earned income tax forms (1099 SS, W2s, etc.)

**HOMEOWNERS**  
✓ Copies of all paid tax bills

**RENTERS**  
✓ Signed form from the landlord

**\$35,000** household income for homeowners & **\$15,000** household income for renters  
For those on Social Security, half of SSI/SSD income is excluded for eligibility



State Representative

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Open for more details.

lpo.ad.0523



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@RepRozzi

## MY OFFICE CAN HELP WITH:

- **Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions**
- **Birth and death certificates**
- **PACE prescription-drug cards for senior citizens**
- **Car registrations, special tags, disability parking placards, titles, and driver's license applications**
- **Information on financial assistance for higher education**
- **Voter registration, absentee and mail-in ballot applications**
- **Unemployment compensation, disability and workers' compensation**
- **Requests for literature – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information**
- **Problems or questions about the state lottery**
- **Liquor Control Board concerns or questions**
- **Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups**