

Here to Serve You!

**Welcome to the first newsletter
from my staff and me for Erie
County's 3rd Legislative District!**



State Representative

**Ryan A.
Bizzarro**

3rd Legislative District

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As your state representative, part of my promise to district residents is to keep our community informed on what's happening around the district, in Harrisburg and across the commonwealth. This inaugural newsletter is one way to accomplish that task. The newsletter will highlight key legislative decisions, upcoming events in the district and general information on how our offices can serve you.

This first edition includes information on the Pennsylvania budget and its shortfalls — including specific cuts to local school districts.

This newsletter also includes information on obtaining a special license plate to show your support of Pennsylvania's veterans, updates on how our office can aid in your job search, details on the Identify Theft and Scam Seminar that took place in July and the Senior Fair scheduled for Aug. 26 at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center — and more.

The first months have proved that there is a lot to do in Harrisburg to ensure that Pennsylvanians are receiving the care they need and deserve.

I'm proud to announce that I was appointed to three significant committees: Aging and Older Adult Services, Gaming Oversight, and Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness. Being a newly elected representative, I was honored to be appointed to serve on the Aging and Older Adult Services Subcommittee on Programs and Benefits and as Democratic secretary for the Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee.

All three panels face crucial issues confronting Erie County and the commonwealth and are integral to legislation that affects issues like health care, adult services and protecting pensions and benefits for Erie County families. I am honored to further my service to you in these areas.

My staff and I are eager to keep serving you. Please stop by any of the offices if you need assistance or have any questions with state government issues affecting you or your family.

Information, including news releases and links to the employment center and key state resources, is available around the clock at www.pahouse.com/Bizzarro. You may also sign up for e-mail alerts for up-to-the-minute news from the Capitol and around the district.

Again, please feel free to call or reach out if you have any questions, comments or concerns. My offices are here to help and look forward to serving you.

All the best,



New state budget has few bright spots

Despite a few spending increases, Rep. Bizzarro says the state's new \$28.4 billion budget plan is a measure of mediocrity, offering very little to address Pennsylvania's most pressing problems like education and economic development.

"The 2013-14 budget fails to find solutions and reinforces poor policy decisions of the past," Rep. Bizzarro said. "It is inconsiderate of both job creation and retention within the state. Pennsylvania is rated near the bottom on such efforts, and the spending plan does little to change dismal unemployment and economic development numbers."

Lack of economic development initiatives

The state budget offers few opportunities to address pending economic development downturns like those currently faced in Erie County. In Harrisburg, the Erie delegation emphasized the looming GE Transportation layoffs at the Lawrence Park locomotive plants, including the

statewide repercussions of such a loss to the area.

"The delegation is committed to seeking alternatives to job furloughs and work transfers," Rep. Bizzarro said. "However, it will be difficult without the needed investment in human capital."

Rep. Bizzarro is urging his colleagues on the other side of the aisle to stop focusing on providing deep tax cuts to a privileged few. Instead, he is encouraging them to find new routes to job growth and retention in local communities and in the commonwealth.

Dismal school funding

The budget also continues underfunding of local school districts. Only nine states contribute a lower percentage of state education funding than Pennsylvania.

Failing to provide the state funding needed to maintain a "thorough and efficient" education system puts the fiscal burden on the backs of property taxpayers. This is unfair to the hardworking, middle-class families in Erie County and across the state.

"I was not yet elected and serving in the House of Representatives when nearly \$1 billion was cut from the education budget two years ago," Rep. Bizzarro noted. "The new state budget would restore too little to begin undoing the harm caused by these cuts."

"As a former administrative employee in one of our local districts, I know all too well how this cut in funding will affect the key asset to a strong future — Pennsylvania students."

Rep. Bizzarro speaks out for better funding for job creation and retention efforts and public education during a Capitol news conference.



The chart below, which includes the education subsidies in the new state budget, demonstrates the cuts since the 2010-11 school year:

School District	School funding cut since 2011	Per student cuts since 2011
Fairview	\$326,957 less	\$203 less per student
Fort LeBoeuf	\$769,104 less	\$357 less per student
General McLane	\$634,584 less	\$296 less per student
Millcreek Township	\$1,404,386 less	\$191 less per student



Rep. Bizzarro takes the oath of office on Jan. 1 to represent the 3rd Legislative District in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives.



Many people showed up for a free Theft and Scams Seminar sponsored by Rep. Bizzarro in July.

Bright spots

HEALTH: The budget restores funding for diabetes programs, biotechnology research, epilepsy support services, lupus programs, regional poison control centers, trauma-coordination and Tourette syndrome programs, and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) support services, which would have been eliminated in the governor's original proposal.

The budget also includes \$19.9 million to provide community waiver services for 1,180 intellectually disabled citizens in 2013-14, including 380 people on waiting lists.

STATE POLICE: The budget also provides \$210 million for the state troopers, an increase of \$15 million or 7.6 percent. This will allow the state police to hire 290 cadets, as more than 1,200 state troopers become eligible to retire this summer.

SENIOR PROGRAMS: The commonwealth can thank its successful Pennsylvania Lottery for a record investment in programs for older state residents in the 2013-14 spending plan.

The budget provides more than \$50 million in additional funding for senior programs, including:

- \$49 million to expand home- and community-based services for 4,528 elderly and disabled Pennsylvanians;
- \$2 million in grants to senior centers to modernize facilities and programs; and
- \$5 million in enhanced support to Area Agencies on Aging.

Missed Opportunities

MEDICAID EXPANSION: Rep. Bizzarro said that Gov. Corbett and his allies continue to balk at expanding Medicaid, even though more than half the states — including many Republican governors — have seen the wisdom in doing so.

One day after the budget was signed, a provision that would expand Medicaid was destroyed despite bipartisan support for it. This will hurt Pennsylvanians and many families in Erie County.

"Medicaid expansion would provide more than half a million Pennsylvanians with health care — including 30,000 veterans — and would create 40,000 good-paying jobs," Rep. Bizzarro said. "Denying Medicaid expansion also will cost us existing jobs at hospitals across the state that are struggling with the cost of uncompensated care."

The purpose of Medicaid is to provide health insurance coverage to low-income families and individuals, including children, parents, pregnant women, people with disabilities and senior citizens. Those who could potentially qualify for Medicaid coverage under expansion would be relatives, friends or neighbors.

"One of the largest beneficiaries of expansion would be seniors," Rep. Bizzarro said. "They deserve the ability to live their retirements out fully and with the dignity that Medicaid expansion would provide."

The federal government would cover 100 percent of Pennsylvania's cost for the first three years and gradually reduce to 90 percent after that.

TRANSPORTATION: A plan to adequately and fairly fund Pennsylvania's transportation infrastructure — our roads and bridges — and mass transit never gelled during the budget process.

"Fortunately, a plan that never had any substantial bipartisan support was detoured in the House," Rep. Bizzarro said. "Transportation funding will be revisited in the fall, and I will continue to work in a bipartisan fashion to pass a proposal that addresses the needs of the 3rd Legislative District and all of Pennsylvania."



Rep. Bizzarro is honored to present Millcreek's Jordyn Colao, Miss Pennsylvania 2012, and her family with an official citation from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives recognizing her hard work.



Rep. Bizzarro takes a short break during a flu vaccination clinic he sponsored to have his blood pressure checked. More than 50 residents took advantage of the free service held at his district office in the Peninsula Plaza.



Rep. Bizzarro greets concerned residents during a House Democratic Policy Committee meeting in Erie regarding Medicaid expansion. Rep. Bizzarro also brought the panel to Erie for a hearing about liquor privatization.

Misguided Priorities

LIQUOR PRIVATIZATION: Gov. Corbett attempted to tie passage of the budget to privatization of the liquor stores but was unable to garner sufficient support.

Rep. Bizzarro supports modernizing the state liquor system, and not the outright sale of a proven revenue producer.

“Pennsylvania’s liquor stores provided a record \$560 million to state coffers and local entities in the last fiscal year,” Rep. Bizzarro said. “We can modernize the sale of spirits without devastating an important state asset whose components include hundreds of small businesses.”

This issue also could be revisited in the fall.

LOTTERY PRIVATIZATION: A last-minute effort by the governor during the budget process to privatize our Pennsylvania Lottery fell through.

“The attention given to the privatization scheme

detracted from attention to the budget,” Rep. Bizzarro said. “Little support exists for selling the operations of the lottery, which consistently provides more than \$1 billion yearly to benefit seniors through programs like long-term care, pharmaceutical assistance, caregiver support, shared rides, free transit rides, and property tax and rent rebates.”

The lottery recently posted another record-breaking year, finishing the fiscal year with nearly \$3.7 billion in sales, resulting in more than \$1 billion net profit that is used to fund programs for senior citizens.

“Unfortunately, after the budget was passed, the governor announced two contract extensions, enabling him to continue working toward his goal of privatizing the lottery by selling it to a British firm,” Rep. Bizzarro said. “The lottery will have to pay \$3.5 million in consultant fees linked to the privatization effort, and that’s wasted money that could have benefitted our older residents.”



Rep. Bizzarro and his staff sponsored park clean ups throughout the district to keep the community safe and clean.



Rep. Bizzarro holds a roundtable discussion for police, fire and emergency personnel from the district at his office to discuss concerns and to thank them for their hard work.

Veterans' Corner

Pennsylvania vehicle owners can show their support of veterans with the new “Honoring Our Veterans” license plate available through PennDOT.

The plate features images of the American flag and a bald eagle with the words “Honoring Our Veterans.”

The plate is available for cars and light trucks. It costs \$35, and \$15 from each sale goes to the Veterans

Trust Fund, which provides grants to veterans’ service organizations and other organizations assisting Pennsylvania veterans.

Please call or stop by the office for a form to obtain the new plate or for help with any other PennDOT driver or vehicle service.



Earlier this year, Rep. Bizzarro helped pass [House Bill 159](#), which, if passed by the Senate, would establish the Veterans First Tax Credit for small businesses.

“The measure would provide a \$4,000-a-year tax credit to businesses with less than 100 employees to hire veterans who are currently unemployed,” Rep. Bizzarro said. “The bill is expected to create 12,500 jobs for state veterans who have been out of work for more than six months.”

Please contact your state senator and ask for his support for this important bill.



Rep. Bizzarro considers testimony given at a House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee meeting.

See you at 'Light the Night'

As many of you know, Rep. Bizzarro was treated for leukemia at a very early age.

"I am thankful every day for the research that saved my life," he said. "Sharing my story has connected me with many survivors, their family members and friends who also have been touched by this disease."

In June, the state House of Representatives unanimously approved Rep. Bizzarro's House Resolution 403 to spotlight support for leukemia and lymphoma research. The resolution urges participation in the 200 Light the Night walks scheduled across the nation in September and October, including 12 in Pennsylvania.

"I am honored that September 2013 has officially been recognized as "Light the Night Walk Month" in Pennsylvania," Rep. Bizzarro said. "It spotlights the great

work and research being done to cure leukemia."

Rep. Bizzarro also is very pleased to be honorary chairperson for Erie's Light the Night walk, scheduled for Sept. 19 at Jerry Uht Park.

Last year's Light the Night event in Erie attracted 700 walkers and raised more than \$112,000 for research. The walk culminates weeks of spirited fundraising by teams and individuals dedicated to raising money for cancer research through the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

Rep. Bizzarro commends his colleagues for their support of this great initiative and encourages you to be a part of a great event.

Residents may call his local offices for more information and how to register a team.

How Does Redistricting Affect You?



The current 3rd Legislative District

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court earlier this year upheld a redistricting plan that redraws the boundaries of all 203 state House and all 50 state Senate districts.

The plan moves the 5th Legislative District, currently represented by state Rep. Greg Lucas, east to Berks County. Rep. Lucas will remain the representative for the current 5th District until after the November 2014 election. At that time, portions of the current 5th District will be divided among the 3rd, 4th and 6th Legislative Districts.

Rep. Bizzarro currently represents the 3rd District.

The new 3rd District will consist of McKean and Washington townships, Edinboro and McKean boroughs, as well as Districts 2 through 24 in Millcreek Township, with the exception of District 21.

Again, these changes do not take effect until December



The 3rd District in December 2014

2014.

Fairview Township – currently in the 3rd District – will move to the 6th District. Waterford Borough and Waterford Township – currently in the 3rd District – will move to the 4th Legislative District.

These changes do not affect your township or school district affiliation.

The process of redrawing the boundaries of Pennsylvania's House and Senate districts takes place every 10 years following the Census. It is done by the Legislative Reapportionment Commission to equalize populations in legislative districts.

If you have any questions about this, or any other state-related issues, please do not hesitate to contact the district office at 814-835-2880.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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Upcoming events! Senior Fair

This year's event will be held from 9 a.m. to noon Monday, Aug. 26, at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Drive, Erie.

More than 60 vendors from around the region will be available with information on health care, senior living centers, health and fitness routines, and much more. Rep. Bizzarro and his staff will be on hand to answer any questions you may have regarding state programs and services.

They hope to see you there!

To help make sure you hear about events that Rep. Bizzarro is sponsoring, please visit www.pahouse.com/Bizzarro to sign up for email updates.

News You Can Use! Information at your fingertips

A new website — www.pennwatch.pa.gov — puts reams of information about state government at your fingertips. It contains information on the state budget, spending, revenue, employees, performance and much more. The website makes government accountable to the people of Erie County and their families.



We're here to help!

- 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 Public Welfare (food stamps, welfare)
- Disability plates and placards
- Tours of the State Capitol for individuals or groups
- 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
- PACE cards for senior citizens
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions
- Problems or questions about the state lottery
- Problems or questions about PennDOT

