



State Representative

**RYAN A.
BIZZARRO**

3rd Legislative District



WINTER/SPRING EDITION
WWW.PAHOUSE.COM/BIZZARRO



I joined lawmakers in January for a rally in the Capitol rotunda against legislation that would strip workers' rights. The rally was packed literally to the rafters with workers concerned about proposals in Harrisburg that would harm family income and budgets.

FIGHTING FOR YOU

As the attack on the middle class continues, Ryan Bizzarro is fighting back in Harrisburg



At left, I discuss the governor's proposed \$29.4 billion budget on the House floor with fellow lawmakers Pam Snyder and Tim Briggs. At right, budget discussions continue with state Sen. Daylin Leach and state Rep. Scott Conklin.



Rep. Bizzarro pans governor's budget proposal

Gov. Tom Corbett's proposed state budget is more of an election-year ploy than a credible fiscal plan for Pennsylvania.

Despite the fact that the governor proposed an increase to special education and a few other education-related appropriations, it was disappointing when he decided to offer only modest increases to certain programs while excluding others. His plan will not begin to undo the harms his past policies have inflicted on Pennsylvania.

The proposed funding will do little to address the 20,000 education jobs lost, the widespread property tax increases and the countless lost opportunities. Obviously, the governor is making no effort to restore the massive cuts he made to colleges and universities.

The governor's budget proposals come at the expense of the state's retirement systems, increasing the debt by \$13 billion over the next three decades and putting the burden on the backs of future generations.

It is this kind of irresponsibility that got us into a hole in the first place. Simply put, this is a cut-and-spend budget.

The biggest disappointment was the lack of a game plan to improve

Pennsylvania's economic climate and ability to compete in the global marketplace.

The state is among the worst in the nation in job creation under this governor, ranking 48th among all states in job creation and 41st among all states in projected job growth. Unfortunately, the governor offered little to reverse this damage.

While states surrounding Pennsylvania are showing budget surpluses and recovering economies, Pennsylvania faces a \$1.4 billion budget deficit and little hope on the horizon from the governor. After three years of disappointment, it's time for change in Pennsylvania. The legislature is an independent branch of government and does not have to pass what the governor proposes.



I believe the governor's proposed budget lacks initiatives to move Pennsylvania forward, especially on the critical issues of job creation and public education.

Rep. Bizzarro's measure honors teen epilepsy victim



At left, House Speaker Sam Smith, left, and state Rep. Adam Ravenstahl, right, join the O'Neill family of Millcreek and me on the House floor to commemorate the adoption of House Resolution 538. The resolution honors the life of the O'Neills' daughter, Alyssa, who died last year from an epileptic seizure. At right, Rep. Ravenstahl and I urge approval of the resolution on the House floor.

In December, fellow lawmakers and I won unanimous House endorsement of our resolution honoring an Erie-area resident who died too young from epilepsy and calling attention to the disorder.

House Resolution 538 salutes National Epilepsy Awareness Month and recognizes July 27, 2014, as 'Pay it Forward Day' for what would be Alyssa Josephine O'Neill's 19th birthday. Alyssa's tragic death last September from an epileptic seizure could not stand

without marking the worldwide campaign launched on her behalf to combat epilepsy.

Alyssa's bravery, kindnesses and beauty live on, and her life is reverberating through the hearts and efforts of people across the globe via social media.

Alyssa's story went global with a Facebook page about Alyssa and epilepsy. Instagram users posted thousands of photos with the #ajo hashtag, while thousands of tweets with

the hashtag were logged to promote Alyssa's Twitter page and epilepsy awareness campaign on Facebook and Twitter.

The Erie area took Alyssa into their hearts, and the 'AJ0 Forever in our Hearts' effort has since blossomed with businesses and social media embracing Alyssa's story and the efforts to find a cure for epilepsy. The worldwide attention to Alyssa's life and story is inspiring to all.

Sign up for email updates

I want to alert you to House rules that prohibit when a state representative, who is on the ballot, can contact you leading up to an election. **Unless you specifically opt in to keep receiving our emails**, I am prohibited from sending you legislative email updates for 60 days before the 2014 primary and general elections.

Opting in will allow you to continue to receive notices about important issues that matter to you, including:

- Updates on legislation
- News and events in the district
- Information about recycling drives/shredding events
- Other relevant government-related information

You can sign up to receive email alerts – and opt in to continue to receive them around elections – by visiting my website at www.pahouse.com/Bizzarro, clicking "E-MAIL ALERTS" and filling out the form.



I have the honor and privilege of serving with a remarkable group of individuals. Of course, we have our philosophical differences, as we should, given the dynamics of our districts. However, at the end of the day we are able to put our differences aside, roll up our sleeves and collectively get the job done for our region. I thoroughly enjoy working with this team, as a united front, to combat the issues facing Erie County. Joining me from left are Reps. Curt Sonney, Pat Harkins and Greg Lucas, Sen. Sean Wiley, and Rep. Flo Fabrizio.



Senior fair proves successful!

Meeting and discussing issues with constituents was a joy during my highly popular first annual Senior Fair at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center last August. Preparations for this year's Senior Fair are underway.



Please remember to visit www.pahouse.com/Bizzarro to sign up for email updates.

Protecting women in the workplace

I am excited to be supporting bills that protect and respect women in the workplace.

A woman earns 84 cents on average for every dollar a man makes, and that gap hurts not just the woman but her entire family. It's time to bolster family incomes by updating pay-equity efforts.

I am proudly backing H.B. 1890, which would update the conditions where employers could pay different wages because of factors other than sex to include specific, job-related attributes such as education, training and experience.

The bill also would strengthen anti-retaliation protections for workers attempting to bring a pay-equity lawsuit against their employer and those who share information about their pay.

Eliminating the pay gap would provide 89 more weeks of food, more than seven more months of mortgage and utilities payments, and more than one year of rent. Studies indicate more than 17,000 children just in Erie County are wholly

dependent on mothers' income. Clearly, we can reduce dependence on government assistance by injecting more fairness.

Women in Pennsylvania, on average, are earning \$694 a week while their male peers are earning \$849, a pay gap that requires women to work more than an additional three months to make up the difference.

Many factors contribute to the pay gap, but discrimination is a major cause. Families suffer when we allow myths to justify paying women less for the same work.

I am also supporting H.B. 1984, which would prohibit employers from discriminating based on a job applicant's marital or parental status.

Irrelevant and inappropriate questions about marital and parental status – such as if an applicant plans to have children – have no place in Pennsylvania workplaces.

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

Veterans' Corner

Valentines for Vets

To celebrate Valentine's Day, my office organized a Valentines for Veterans event. School children in the district created homemade cards that we distributed to residents of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home and the Veterans' Hospital. It was a privilege to spend some quality time with the veterans and show our appreciation for their service. The residents loved receiving cards from the school children. It truly made their day!



Rep. Bizzarro salutes veterans, offers specialized services

At right, Rep. Greg Lucas, Edinboro University President Dr. Julie Wollman and the team at Edinboro's Veterans Success Center help me cut the ribbon for the center last year. Below, joining me to help unveil this great resource for veterans are Jay Breneman, center coordinator and Erie



County councilman; Kathy Dahlkemper, county executive; state Rep. Pat Harkins; and Phil Fatica, county councilman.

My staff and I offer specialized assistance every month for military veterans at my constituent service office in the Peninsula Plaza.

Help always is available for our veterans, but on the second Tuesday of every month we partner with the state American Legion to provide service specifically geared toward veterans. No appointments are necessary, and veterans do not have to be American Legion members to participate.

Greg Luce, an American Legion service officer, will be at the office – 1101 Peninsula Drive, Suite 209 – from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every month to assist veterans living in the 3rd Legislative District.

Specialized assistance will be available on a wide range of issues affecting veterans, including:

- Compensation and pension claims;
- Education benefits;
- VA health care enrollment;
- Burial and survivor benefits; and
- Obtaining personal military documents, including medical records.

Help on any state-related matter still will be available to any resident at the same time. However, on the second Tuesday of every month we will devote time and attention to veterans, just as they deserve.

More information about the veterans outreach and any state-related matter is available online at www.pahouse.com/Bizzarro or by calling my office at 814-835-2880.



Edinboro, Washington Township joining the 3rd Legislative District

Come December, the 3rd Legislative District that I now represent will have a new look.

Edinboro and Washington Township will join the district.

The changes are coming because the state constitution requires that legislative districts be redrawn every 10 years to reflect population shifts and to ensure accurate distribution of state and federal money.

Most of the current 3rd Legislative District will not be affected by the changes. Remaining in the district will be McKean Township and McKean Borough, as well as Districts 2 through 24 in Millcreek Township, with the exception of District 21.

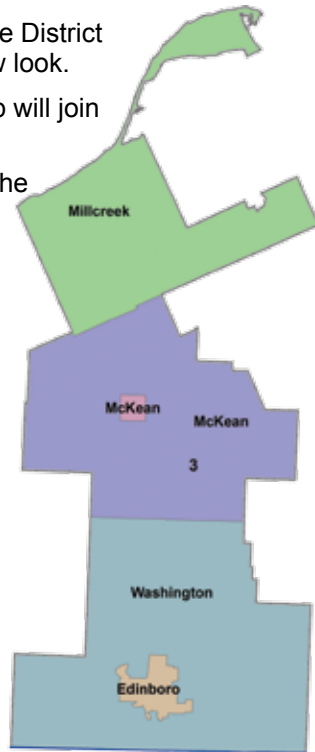
The changes do not affect your township, borough or school district affiliation. Again, the transition will take effect in December 2014.

No matter the changes, I remain committed to providing the best of service to ALL citizens. My legislative website, www.pahouse.net/Bizzarro, features news releases and links to an employment center and a variety of key state resources, and my offices are available for any questions you may have.

All the best,



Ryan Bizzarro



UPMC/Highmark town hall

I joined other area lawmakers to serve as host for a town hall meeting in February to discuss House Bills 1621 and 1622, which would protect patient access and choice in the health care marketplace. The bills were introduced by state Reps. Jim Christiana and Dan Frankel, who participated in the town hall. It is vital that our hospitals are open to everyone, regardless of the insurance card they carry, especially in local UPMC and Highmark service areas. The sponsors of the town hall are determined to keep the public informed on the issue.

Committees

Aging and Older Adult Services
(Appointed to Subcommittee on Programs and Benefits)

**Veterans Affairs and
Emergency Preparedness**
(Democratic secretary)

**Gaming Oversight
Policy**

Caucus Member

Northwest Delegation, treasurer
Alternative Energy
Bipartisan Reform
Cancer
Early Childhood
Firefighters & Emergency
Services
Homelessness
Oil & Gas
PA Legislative Sportsmen's
PA State System of Higher
Education

Legislative Insights

- Opposed massive increase in gasoline tax
- Support job creation and job training
- Proposed legislation to crack down on elder abuse in thefts of prescription meds
- Oppose privatization of Pennsylvania Lottery
- Support property tax reform
- Support adequate funding of public schools and higher education
- Support community involvement and community service
- Support child protective services
- Support middle-income student debt reduction
- Proposed legislation to prevent elder abuse via power of attorney
- Prime sponsor of National Epilepsy Awareness Month legislation
- Prime sponsor of Leukemia/Light The Night legislation
- Prime sponsor of legislation that would allow private companies to administer the road-test portion of driver license examinations, establishing a public-private partnership

Standing up for safety



At left, state Rep. Ted Harhai and I welcome state Fire Commissioner Ed Mann to a briefing I sponsored for fire, police and emergency personnel. The session focused on financial assistance for our volunteer first responders and was held in November at the Westlake



Fire Department Social Hall. Earlier this year, I was proud to announce that fire companies and volunteer ambulance squads in Erie County were approved to receive more than \$420,000 from the Pennsylvania Fire Company and Volunteer Ambulance Service grant program.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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State Representative
**Ryan A.
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Rep. Bizzarro takes stand against elder abuse

I have introduced two bills aimed at protecting a growing segment of Pennsylvania's population, its senior citizens.

My House Bill 2006 takes aim at the increasing thefts of prescription medications from older adults. The legislation would create new categories of theft offenses – and create mandatory minimum sentences – for those convicted of stealing, extorting or deceiving seniors of their medications.

The second measure, House Bill 2007, would make financial transactions made on behalf of an incapacitated individual through a power of attorney agreement to be more readily used as evidence.

Amazingly, current law does not enable investigators to petition courts to secure such financial documentation if an older adult is unable to provide their consent because of their incapacitation.

H.B. 2007 also would insert into power of attorney documents a warning that a failure to comply with the documents' directives could result in criminal charges.

Both bills are before the House Judiciary Committee for consideration and would help protect older and vulnerable Pennsylvanians from abuse.

Lighting the night

As honorary chairman of the Sept. 19 "Light the Night" walk at Jerry Uht Park in Erie, I was elated to help raise more than \$100,000 for leukemia and lymphoma research. Last year, the state House of Representatives unanimously approved my House Resolution 403 to spotlight support and recognize September as "Light the Night Walk Month" in Pennsylvania.

