



# STATE REPRESENTATIVE **Marty Flynn** 113TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



SUMMER 2016

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## Education funding increase in 2016-17 state budget

The 2016-17 state budget received my “yes” vote because of the \$250 million pre-K through 12th grade education funding increase.

It's important that we help our local school districts by providing more funding from the state level. While I would have liked to see more dollars pushed out to the schools, this \$250 million increase is a good step forward. By allocating additional money at the state level, it is our hope that local school districts will not need to lay off teachers, cut programs or raise property taxes.

According to information provided by the House Appropriations Committee Democratic staff, school districts in the 113th Legislative District are slated to receive the following increases:

2016-17 Increases	Basic Education	Special Education
■ Abington Heights:	\$150,330, 2.5%	\$12,342, 0.7%
■ Mid Valley:	\$170,099, 4.3%	\$17,517, 2%
■ Riverside:	\$191,625, 4.1%	\$15,281, 1.9%
■ Scranton:	\$2.28 million, 5.5%	\$191,195, 3.4%

I'm encouraged by the bipartisan talks that went into crafting this budget. It's important that we work this way in other matters as well so that people understand what we can accomplish for the betterment of the entire state.

In May during National Police Week, Rep. Marty Flynn presented a Certificate of Appreciation to over 180 law enforcement officers in the 113th Legislative District, thanking them for their service, dedication and bravery for putting themselves in harm's way in defense and protection of our lives.



*L to R: Scranton Police Capt. Dennis Lukasewicz, Chief Carl Graziano and Rep. Flynn.*



*L to R: South Abington Township Ptlm. Scott Siegler, Rep. Flynn, Chief Robert Gerrity and Ptlm. Darrell Silverstein.*



*L to R: Lackawanna County Det. Brian Kosch, Det. Chris Kolcharno, Det. Renee Castellani, Rep. Flynn, District Attorney Shane Scanlon, Chief Joseph Jordan, Det. Lisa Bauer, Det. Sheryl Turner, and Det. Joseph Blazosek.*

# State battles heroin and opioid addiction

As a member of the 2014 Task Force and Advisory Committee on Opioid Prescription Drug Proliferation, I know very well that Pennsylvania is dealing with a major drug overdose epidemic.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, heroin and opioid overdose are the leading causes of accidental deaths, killing more Pennsylvanians than those involved in deadly crashes. This epidemic crosses all social, geographic and political lines.

Pennsylvania has taken several important steps to combat the heroin and opioid crisis. Dr. Rachel Levine, the physician general, signed a standing order for naloxone, making access to this crucial anti-overdose drug available to all Pennsylvanians. State troopers

are equipped with naloxone for when they arrive first on the scene of a drug overdose. This life-saving drug is also available free in public high schools. Pennsylvania has developed a prescription drug monitoring program to help detect and prevent prescription fraud and abuse.

Gov. Tom Wolf has been hosting roundtable discussions with state lawmakers, local officials, law enforcement, emergency responders and health care professionals to discuss ways to work together to combat the opioid abuse and heroin use epidemic.

In June, he also announced that he intends to call a special session of the General Assembly later this year that will focus on combating the opioid crisis facing our communities.

I applaud Gov. Wolf for his leadership on this issue and I look forward to joining my colleagues – Democrat and Republican – in continuing to work on a way to address this crisis head on. Pennsylvanians are counting on us to make it happen.



## ***You're invited to a public hearing!***

**House Policy Committees and  
PA Heroin, Opioid Prevention and  
Education (HOPE) Caucus**

**Topic: PA drug epidemic**

**Date: 10 a.m. Wednesday, Aug. 31**

**Location: Hilton Scranton &  
Conference Center**

**Electric City Ballroom  
100 Adams Ave., Scranton**

## **Scranton will be eligible for CRIZ**

Scranton will be allowed to participate in the state's City Revitalization and Improvement Zone program, under legislation that I introduced earlier this year and which became part of the 2016-17 budget package.

The CRIZ program, created in 2013, provides critical opportunities to selected third-class cities (with a population of at least 30,000) to spur new growth, revive downtowns, and create jobs for residents through the development of vacant, desolate, underused or abandoned space.

When the CRIZ program was originally created, Pennsylvania's only second-class A city, Scranton, which has a population of over 75,000, was not eligible to participate. This needed to be corrected, and I am hopeful that state regulators will approve Scranton's participation so city officials can add this economic development tool to their plans.

The CRIZ program is administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue, Department of Community and Economic Development and the governor's budget office.



***Rep. Flynn held a "Diaper Drive" to benefit local charitable organizations that help mothers and families. The office received a generous amount of disposable diapers and baby wipes, providing mothers with the basic necessities for their young children.***



# Medical marijuana legal in Pennsylvania

With the signing of Senate Bill 3 by Gov. Tom Wolf in April, Pennsylvania became the 24th state in the country to legalize medical marijuana.

Once the regulations are in place, doctors will be able to prescribe certain forms of cannabis to people who meet the proper requirements and suffer from one of the approved medical

conditions. Under the new law, medical marijuana cannot be smoked, but can be prescribed in pill, oil, topical or liquid form.

Legalizing medical marijuana is a commonsense way to help all of those people who are suffering in their daily lives – from children who are experiencing daily seizures, to veterans enduring post-traumatic stress disorder and many others who need this medication to relieve their pain.

Statistics show that states that have legalized medical marijuana

have shown a decrease of nearly 25 percent in annual prescription drug overdose deaths. The statistics also show that there have been zero overdose deaths from marijuana.

This was an easy vote to make because at its very basic core, it's about helping people.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health is in the process of developing the regulations and infrastructure for the program, a process the governor said could take approximately 18-24 months.



***Rep. Flynn makes a point during the House debate about legalizing medical marijuana.***



## Industrial hemp research program now law

The state House of Representatives unanimously passed, and Gov. Tom Wolf signed into law, legislation including my amendment that would establish an industrial hemp research pilot program in Pennsylvania.

The 2014 federal farm bill only allows pilot programs initiated and performed by colleges and the state Department of Agriculture to cultivate industrial hemp for research purposes. This new law creates such a program.

With favorable research, it's our hope that more government leeway will occur, which can lead to a real market for the product, creating jobs and adding diversity to Pennsylvania's agricultural portfolio.

When the House originally passed the bill in April, I amended it with language that authorizes contracts between the Agriculture Department or a college to grow or cultivate industrial hemp as part of an agricultural pilot program, but only with U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration permission and other parameters.

Beyond being one of the world's most durable fibers for textiles, hemp also can be used to manufacture biodegradable plastics, building materials, food, paper, environmental and energy products. Some companies overseas are switching out potentially dangerous fiberglass insulation with hemp insulation. Farmers are cultivating the plant in between growing seasons as a cover crop for its ability to keep valuable nutrients in the soil.

Being part of the cannabis family, industrial hemp has garnered some undeserved stigmas. Unlike marijuana, industrial hemp has a very low – almost undetectable – level of tetrahydrocannabinol and has zero psychoactive effects.

It's time for our state to address the false stigmas surrounding this agricultural product that has so many meaningful applications and opportunities for farmers, manufacturers, consumers and the environment.



***L to R: Lackawanna County Sheriff Mark McAndrew, Rep. Flynn and Lackawanna County District Attorney Shane Scanlon participated in a Gun Safety Seminar in May at The Mall at Steamtown.***

# Real estate tax exemption for deceased veterans' spouses

Under current law, veterans who are injured during active duty service and no longer able to perform their duties are subject to an evaluation period in which it is determined whether they are able to perform any other duties within the military or is deemed to be 100% disabled.

However, if the veteran dies as a result of the injury or disability before the evaluation period is complete, the veteran's spouse does not qualify for the real estate tax exemption the spouse would have otherwise received. Legislation that I introduced in May would allow the spouse to receive the tax exemption if it is determined that the deceased veteran would have been deemed 100% disabled had the veteran survived the evaluation period, and died as result of the evaluated injury or disability.

In addition, the bill would extend a real estate tax exemption to the unmarried surviving spouse of either a veteran who was killed in the line of duty or a veteran who was killed during active service duty.

Because many veterans make the supreme sacrifice to defend our freedoms, we should ensure that they and their loved ones receive every benefit to which they are entitled.

House Bill 2061 awaits action by the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee.

## Monthly veterans outreach

My monthly veterans support program is from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday at my office in Scranton. A representative from the American Legion Service Office Outreach program is in the office to provide information on services available to veterans and their families. Legion membership is not required to take advantage of the help. Please call my office at 570-342-4348 to make an appointment.



*Rep. Flynn presents a 100th birthday citation from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives to Helen Magas at the Little Sisters of the Poor's Holy Family Residence in the Green Ridge section of Scranton. Mrs. Magas has spent her entire life residing in Green Ridge. Her husband Edward was a member of the Greater Scranton Sports Hall of Fame and was remembered for striking out – in order – the New York Yankees' fabled "Murders Row." While she was widowed in her early 40s, she raised five children: Robert, Barbara, Helene, Patricia and Kathleen; and has 14 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.*

## Senior Fair planned for Friday, Aug. 26



*Rep. Flynn and his District Office Manager Angela Rempe Jones with Parish Life Coordinator Jessica Fazzi (right) discussing plans for Flynn's annual Senior Fair. It will take place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday, Aug. 26 at St. Joseph's hall at Divine Mercy*

*Parish on Davis Street in Scranton. The free event will feature over 30 vendors providing information on various services offered to area senior citizens.*



*Every Friday from noon to 2 p.m., District Office Manager Angela Rempe Jones of Rep. Flynn's office is at the Scranton Co-op Farmer's Market providing assistance and information on state-related issues.*



# Monthly outreach events

Every month, my office hosts several outreach events to help you access state programs and services. To schedule an appointment for any of these efforts, please call my office at 570-342-4348. My regular office hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at Jay's Commons, 409 N. Main Ave., Scranton.

## **Medicare – 2nd Monday**

I host a Medicare outreach session on the second Monday of the month where an Apprise counselor is available from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in my office to help answer questions about Medicare, Medicare Advantage, Medigap, Medicare drug plans, PACE/ PACENET and various other low-income assistance programs, such as the Medicare Savings Program and Extra Help.

## **Mobile Constituent Service – 3rd Wednesday**

My staff holds constituent outreach visits, alternating between South Abington Township and Clarks Green, from 9 a.m. to noon on the third Wednesday of the month. They will be at the Clarks Green Borough Building, 104 N. Abington Road, in September and November; and at the South Abington Township Building (2nd floor meeting room) 104 Shady Lane Road, Chinchilla, in August, October and December.



***In addition to the monthly outreach offered in Rep. Flynn's office, an "Are You New to Medicare" seminar was presented at the Marketplace at Steamtown. This annual event is presented by APPRISE and Voluntary Action Center, in cooperation with the Lackawanna County Area Agency on Aging.***



***At Rep. Flynn's annual free Shredding Event are, L to R: Flynn, staff members Thom Welby and Nolan Trently, shredding engineer Don Hartpence, and staff members Angela Rempe Jones and Joseph Triano.***

# Recycling more electronics focus of new bill

Legislation that I will introduce soon would require electronics manufacturers to recycle more of their devices.

As you may know, Act 108 established a mandatory manufacturer and retailer-based recycling program for covered devices, which include televisions, computer monitors, and laptop and desktop computers. Many of these products are manufactured with components that contain heavy metals such as lead, cadmium, and mercury, which pose a significant environmental risk if they are disposed of improperly.

In recent years, community-based electronic recycling programs have become increasingly cost prohibitive and, in many cases, have stopped accepting covered devices or now charge a fee based on the total weight of an item. This has led to an increase of illegal dumping, most often along rural roadways. As a device degrades and is exposed to weather conditions, toxic substances sometimes leak out, contaminating the soil, surface waters, and ground water.

Under Act 108, registered manufacturers of newly covered devices are required to recycle a specific amount of old covered devices based on the total weight (in pounds) of covered devices they produced during a year, multiplied by the manufacturer's market share during the previous year. However, a problem recently has developed with the current weight-based method used for the recycling of covered devices. Specifically, new covered devices, particularly televisions and computer monitors, weigh much less than older models. Therefore, a greater number of covered devices are entering the consumer market than are being recycled on a yearly basis.

My legislation would amend state law to provide a graduated scale to require that manufacturers recycle more of their covered devices.

It is imperative that we assist our local communities by further requiring manufactures to bear a portion of the financial burden associated with the recycling of covered devices. Manufacturers of covered devices should have a social responsibility to assist in the recycling of their products that pose a potential risk to the environment as well as to the health and welfare of the residents of Pennsylvania.



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*You're invited!*

# Legislative Family Day

**Montage Mountain Water Park**

**11 a.m. to 7 p.m.**

**Wednesday, Aug. 24**

**All residents of the 113th District can enjoy the use of all water attractions for \$5 per person.**

**Flynn's staff will be there providing information on state and legislative services.**



*Rep. Flynn and District Office Manager Angela Rempe Jones at Montage Mountain Water Park.*

## My office can help you with:

- PennDOT issues – vehicle registrations, special tags, handicap placards, titles and driver's license applications
- Obtaining and completing state forms
- Voter registration and absentee ballot applications
- Unemployment compensation, disability and workers' compensation
- Birth and death certificates
- Problems with the Department of Human Services (food stamps, medical and income assistance)
- Requests for literature – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information
- Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding accomplishments and family milestones
- Complaints or questions about utilities and the Public Utility Commission
- Complaints and problems with insurance companies
- Renewal of state-issued licenses or certifications
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions
- PACE prescription-drug cards for senior citizens
- Consumer complaints
- Liquor Control Board concerns or questions
- Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups