

State Representative

TIM BRIGGS

149th Legislative District



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Taking the lead on the House Health Committee

From health insurance to the opioid crisis, health care matters are some of the most challenging and important issues we face today.

So I'm honored to have been appointed as Democratic Chairman of the House Health Committee. This committee considers a number of critical health-related matters, such as women's access to reproductive health care, regulations

related to opioid prescribing guidelines, public health emergencies, cancer screening programs and more.

Everyone deserves access to quality health care. As chairman, I look forward to working to advance legislation that promotes public health and wellness.

I'm committed to working with my colleagues to better ensure a healthy future for all Pennsylvanians.

Working for you

At the start of summer, I held two constituent breakfasts to offer updates from Harrisburg and learn more about what's on your minds.

I consistently host these events, and I was happy to see new and familiar faces at both breakfasts. I represent more than 60,000 people in the 149th Legislative District, and these breakfasts offer a good chance to connect face-to-face.

During the events, we discussed a number of important topics – the state budget, efforts to create a fair redistricting system, gun safety reform, and more. I've been updating many of you by email with more in-depth discussion of these topics.

Hearing from you allows me to be the best state representative I can be and effectively serve your interests in Harrisburg.

You can find more information on several of those topics in this newsletter, and you can keep up by following me on social media – facebook.com/RepTimBriggs and on Twitter, @RepTimBriggs.

My office staff and I are always ready to help you with any state-related issue you might be having. Feel free to stop by or reach out for help with Property Tax/Rent Rebate applications, SEPTA Key Senior Cards, PACE prescription discount cards for seniors, FREE notary and many more services.



Press Conference on Gun Safety Reform

Protecting children and communities from gun violence

It's become incredibly clear that we need to do more to keep our children and others safe from gun violence.

While we have a lot of work to do, I'm pleased with some steps that were taken this summer.

As part of the 2018-19 budget, we devoted \$60 million to a school safety and security grant program. School districts, intermediate units, charter schools, area vo-tech schools, and private rehabilitative institutions will be able to apply. Grants could be used for training programs, counseling, security

planning or security-related technology, safety and emergency preparedness plans, programs to reduce community violence and more.

A new committee within the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency will administer the grants and establish school security assessment criteria. We also passed legislation to establish the Safe2Say program, which provides methods for anonymous reporting of unsafe, violent or criminal activities in school or the threat of such dangers.

Earlier in the spring, the House Judiciary Committee, of which I am a member, held a series of hearings on gun safety reform and a host of bills that have long sat unaddressed.

The good news is, the committee, in bipartisan votes, forwarded several bills for action – including H.B. 2060, a bill that would ensure domestic abusers be required to relinquish weapons to an appropriate authority in a timely manner.

Unfortunately, that's where progress stopped. The speaker of the House sent us home without voting on any of the bills, including S.B. 501, a Senate version of H.B. 2060.

I was also disappointed that H.B. 1400, which would require universal background checks, failed by one vote in the House Judiciary Committee.

Constituents of all ages have contacted me about their desire for change. I'll be pressing for swift action on the domestic violence bill and for the House to continue to push forward on commonsense gun safety reform work.

Find more updates at www.pahouse.com/PASAFE.

# Final budget invests in education, opioid fight

In June, we adopted a 2018-19 budget – on time – that makes important investments in education and our continuing fight against the opioid crisis.

Highlights include:

- \$100 million more in basic education funding
- \$25 million increase for early childhood education
- \$40 million for PA Smart – an initiative focused on workforce development, computer science and STEM training
- Maintained prior year funding for assistance to drug and alcohol programs
- \$4.5 million in new funding to provide home visiting services to about 800 families affected by substance abuse disorder

Importantly, these investments were made without raising your taxes. And, Gov. Tom Wolf made a deposit in our rainy day fund for the first time in a decade.

No budget is perfect. Gov. Wolf had proposed a bold budget to better invest in Pennsylvania, and it was watered down by the Republican-controlled legislature. We continue to be shortsighted by not adopting new sustainable revenue to help carry us forward.

A severance tax on natural gas drillers proposed by the governor would have brought in \$248 million in new revenue, the first year alone. That's significant funding that could help us invest in critical programs without placing more of a burden on taxpayers.

I'll keep fighting for budget decisions that put your needs first.

# 2018 'There Ought to be a Law' contest winners and finalists



This year, I hosted my ninth annual “There Ought to Be a Law” essay contest for fifth-graders. Students are encouraged to write an essay about a law that would improve their school, community or state. This year’s contest, which drew about 600 entries, had an environmental theme.

The contest is a great way for students to be introduced to the legislative process and to think about how they can improve their communities. It’s a wonderful opportunity for me to hear what’s on the minds of my younger constituents.

The winners and finalists were recognized at the Upper Merion Area School Board and Lower Merion School Board meetings in June. This year’s contest winners were given the opportunity to visit the state Capitol with their families for a tour and to be recognized in the House chamber. Finalists in the contest were each presented with a Pennsylvania House of Representatives citation.

This year’s winners are:

- Katie McCullough, from Penn Valley Elementary School, who suggested reducing road salt that pollutes waterways by having the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation use “smart plows” to target salt amounts where needed; and
- Emma Menke, from Upper Merion Area Middle School, who wrote about combating deforestation by mandating replanting of a tree or plant when one is removed or face a fine.

**In addition to the winners, we had 17 finalists this year.**

## Upper Merion Area Middle School

- Jasmine Bidy
- Autumn Hawthorne
- Reva Segireddy
- Jordan Swenda
- Oliver Rosas Vazquez
- Nathan Uhl
- Lizzy Cooke
- Raven Albrecht

## Penn Valley Elementary School

- Rory Douglas
- Elsa Gauen
- Clara Leigh
- Eve Halbert
- Drew Shapiro
- Shrikari Ramanathan

## Gladwyne Elementary School

- Augustin Lucq
- Owen Newman
- Jasper Conway

**Thanks to all the students who participated and the teachers who encouraged them!**



# Reducing the impact of Styrofoam on our environment

Did you know that the Styrofoam container that holds your take-out food for a matter of minutes could then spend hundreds of years – or even a million years – in our environment?

It can take that long for polystyrene, commonly known as Styrofoam, to break down, because it is not biodegradable. And in the meantime, it clogs our local waterways and poses a threat to birds and marine life.

Because of that, I'm taking steps to reduce the amount of Styrofoam we put into the environment. I've introduced H.B. 2560, which would prohibit food establishments from dispensing prepared food to customers in both foam and solid polystyrene containers.

The organization No More Styrofoam estimates that 50 billion pounds of polystyrene foam is put into landfills each year. It's time we stopped that and took more responsibility for the pollution in our environment.



We have to do more to keep our air and water clean. I joined PennEnvironment at a waterway clean-up event in July to advocate for this legislation, and I'll continue to look for ways we can reduce our impact on the world around us.

## Diocese cover-ups send shockwaves through state

Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro unveiled a statewide grand jury report on child abuse and related cover-ups in August regarding six of the eight Roman Catholic Church dioceses in the state. Philadelphia and Johnstown were in previous reports.

In the wake of these unspeakable acts against children, I want to send my love and support to all of the victims of these crimes. While this is an extremely sensitive subject, I also want to let you know that I co-sponsored legislation that would lift the statute of limitations on child abuse cases and create a two-year civil window for past child sex abuse victims to file lawsuits. This bill passed the House but stalled in the Senate over key provisions, including the two-year window aspect.

When the House returns to session in September, it is my hope that addressing this issue will be a top priority, that we will provide solutions to the report's

recommendations, and that the Senate will revisit and pass the bill.

I support the following four clear goals in any legislation, as outlined by the Pennsylvania Attorney General.

- Eliminate the criminal statute of limitations for sexually abusing children.
- Create a two-year "civil window" for child sex abuse victims who couldn't file lawsuits before.
- Clarify the penalties for a continuing failure to report child abuse.
- Prohibit "non-disclosure" agreements regarding cooperation with law enforcement.

The attorney general's office has established a hotline for people who want to report instances of abuse by clergy. The number is (888) 538-8541.

## Voting deadlines coming up

I wanted to remind you that Oct. 9 is the last day to register to vote in the Nov. 6 election, and you can do it online at [www.votespa.com](http://www.votespa.com).

If you need to vote by absentee ballot, you must request, via mail or in person, an absentee ballot by Oct. 30.

Absentee ballot applications are available online at [www.votespa.com](http://www.votespa.com) or you can apply in person at the Montgomery County Voter Services office – find more at [www.montcopa.org/753/Voter-Services](http://www.montcopa.org/753/Voter-Services).

The county office must receive your completed absentee ballot by Nov. 2, and in previous elections there have been delays. I encourage you to not wait until the last minute.





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# RESIDENTIAL SHREDDING AND DRUG TAKEBACK EVENT

I am partnering with District Attorney Kevin Steele to collect unwanted and expired prescription drugs during the document shredding. Look for the DA's office staff during the shredding event.

You can bring confidential documents to be shredded for free, on site, to help protect yourself from identity theft.

## SATURDAY, SEPT. 22

11 A.M. – 1 P.M. (or until trucks are full)

UPPER MERION AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL

Parking lot

440 Keebler Road

King of Prussia

Space is limited in trucks, so we request to keep it to three bags or boxes per car.

Call my district office at 610-768-3135 with any questions.

## My office can help you with:

- 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 Human Services (food stamps, welfare)
- Requests for literature of all kinds – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information, student aid information, etc.
- Complaints or questions about utilities and the PUC
- Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding local accomplishments and family milestones
- Consumer complaints
- Complaints about state road conditions
- Problems or questions about PennDOT
- Disability plates and placards
- Tours of the State Capitol for individuals or groups
- PACE cards for senior citizens
- Complaints and problems with insurance companies
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions
- Problems or questions about the state lottery
- Local government officials' problems with state agencies

***Any problem with your state government!***

**FREE  
NOTARY  
SERVICE**