



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

JOE WEBSTER

SERVING THE 150TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY



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Dear Neighbor,

As we enter the third year of this pandemic, I want to sincerely thank each and every one of you for your resilience these past few years in our continued fight against COVID-19. Between shutdowns, school closings, and various health mandates as well as the highly collaborative efforts of government and private industry to create effective vaccines efficiently, I am hopeful we will see the transformation of this pandemic to become endemic soon, so that we may start to live with this virus. I firmly believe that vaccinations are the key to continue on this path and begin true recovery.

Efforts are already underway to strengthen our economy and workforce thanks to the generous American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funds brought forth by the Biden-Harris Administration. We have billions of dollars ready and waiting to fix our bridges, roads, and crumbling infrastructure as well as support our overwhelmed hospitals and nursing staff.

As we head into budget discussions in Harrisburg, I will advocate for more ARPA funds to be dedicated to our schools, clean energy, stormwater infrastructure, and the hospitality industry here in Pennsylvania. We must make an honest difference in the lives of Pennsylvanians for the better.

The challenges we face here in the commonwealth are not without a fair share of challenges and barriers, yet I still believe that in the face of adversity we will overcome.

I know many of us are tired and weary. Our nurses, doctors, teachers, emergency service workers, waiters, food industry employees and all others that we deemed essential have worked steadfastly throughout this pandemic and we owe them our respect, gratitude, and continued support.

In this newsletter, you will find updates from Harrisburg, resources for our community, and my plan to move us forward. As always, my staff and I are ready to assist you with any state-related questions.

Sincerely,

Rep. Joe Webster

484-200-8263 | RepWebster@pahouse.net | pahouse.com/Webster



Bills Introduced so Far*

HB
1365

Increases the death benefit paid to first responders in the state who die in the line of duty, from \$100,000 to \$300,000.

HB
1270

Seeks to prevent confusion around voting by prohibiting the mailing of multiple ballot applications to voters from parties and interest groups. Instead, the Department of State will send every voter one ballot application, unless the voter requests an additional replacement application.

HB
2083

Calls for a temporary raise in the maximum school age by one year upon approval, to ensure that students whose courses of study, interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, will be allowed to complete their education.

HB
1055

Ensures confidentiality and protects veterans from identity theft by extending the time limit for confidentiality of military service records submitted to counties.

HB
1273

Prohibits public officials from receiving gifts from any individual or entity seeking a contractual or business relationship with the state.

HB
714

Seeks to protect and repair the shores of our rivers, streams, and lakes by establishing guidelines on development and usage of riparian buffers.

* Visit my website pabouse.net/Webster for a full list of bills I've introduced.
News > Bills I've Introduced

Proposed Constitutional Amendments

To implement a new amendment to our constitution is of serious concern, as it is a chance to improve our quality of life and unite us in times of change. For this reason, the process is purposefully lengthy to ensure any proposed amendment is regarded seriously and with care as it becomes a permanent fixture in our lives. Following legislative approval, a public vote on the proposed amendment is then required to be implemented.

More than 70 amendments have now been proposed for our constitution since the start of the 2021-22 legislative session. I introduced HB 1269, All Hands On Deck, to amend the constitution to allow government employees to serve as poll workers in the jurisdictions in which they live. Amendments like this one can benefit the state and ease poll worker shortages.

However, previously failed legislative packages that did not have bipartisan support and were ultimately vetoed by Governor Wolf, are being reintroduced as constitutional amendments to circumvent the checks and balances of our legislative process.

Four proposed constitutional amendments that I find disconcerting are likely to be brought in front of voters as early as the 2023 primary, including:

1. An executive order, lasting longer than 21 days, must be approved by the legislature.
2. A simple majority in the legislature can pass a resolution that the governor cannot veto.
3. Require an audit after every election.
4. Require voter identification regardless of voting method.

These measures add governmental red tape to emergency situations, ignore checks and balances and hinder our election process. I, along with my staff, will keep you updated on news of these constitutional amendments as well as any others that might pass.



2022-23 State Budget: Supporting our Communities

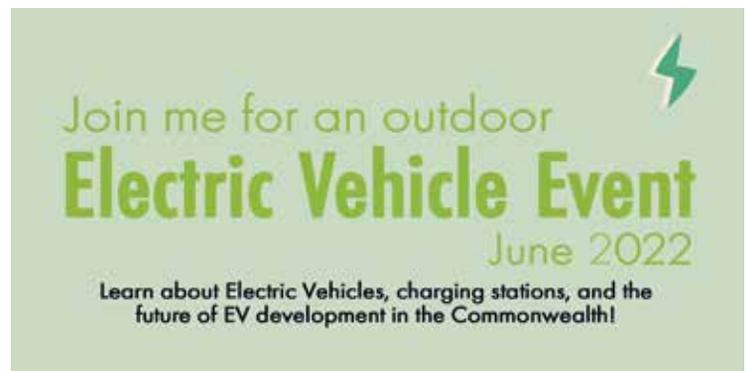
As we move towards adopting a new state budget in June, my priority is to keep us looking ahead to the future and promoting the health and well-being of our families and communities. We can best do that by committing state resources to programs and efforts that have long-lasting impacts and doing so in a way that targets those most in need of our support.

While the debate over education funding formulas continues in both the legislature and the courts, there is no argument that we have schools in need of our help. If state funding fails to meet local needs, then communities face an impossible choice between compromising our children's education and straining households by raising school taxes. I plan to fight for increased, targeted funding for schools – including many in our district – that are currently getting the short end of the stick from a funding formula that sends more money to schools with shrinking populations even as growing schools in the 150th are forced to do more with less.

I will also be encouraging my colleagues to expand trade apprenticeship funding to provide trained and qualified skilled tradespeople for the local workforce. Apprenticeship programs are as beneficial as they are sought-after, with nearly seven times as many applications as available spots in recent years. Every time we turn down an apprenticeship applicant for lack of funds, we are costing our state far more money in lost consumer spending, tax revenue, and business opportunities – and we also miss an opportunity to grow the number of high-wage earners in the state. At a time when building trades are in high demand, we should be doing all we can to top-grade our workforce, especially in such an obvious win-win scenario!

Likewise, I want to see the House adopt a budget that makes good use of the once-in-a-generation opportunity provided by the recently passed federal infrastructure bill. Pennsylvania has significant infrastructure development needs, as anyone who has driven our roads knows. In addition, we can address long-running challenges in our state. In recent years, flooding has become a more pronounced problem in Pennsylvania as increasingly intense storms combine with rapidly expanding land development. Recently, I introduced HR 170 to help us create a strategic solution to our flood management issues. It also would help us expand funding for existing grant programs that provide vital assistance to our hardest-hit communities. I also have a bipartisan bill in development to convert abandoned coal mines into geothermal energy producers. The low-cost and low-emissions heating and cooling potential will have an immediate impact.

Significant challenges call for hard work and big ideas, and I will work tirelessly to push my colleagues to keep looking ahead to the possibilities of our future. That work begins here and now, in the present.





COMMITTEES / CAUCUSES

APPROPRIATIONS FINANCE STATE GOVERNMENT

VETERANS AFFAIRS & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS ENVIRONMENTAL CAUCUS

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ADVISORY BOARD LGBTQ EQUALITY CAUCUS

PENNSYLVANIA MILITARY COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT COMMISSION

AUTISM & INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES CAUCUS PA SAFE CAUCUS

CLIMATE CAUCUS PASSHE CAUCUS CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM CAUCUS

Parliamentary Rules

Have you ever said to a friend, "I wish the government would stop wasting time and do something?" Me too. One thing that's frequently standing in the way of real debate and action is the rules of the House. Now, there's nothing wrong with common-sense rules, and parliamentary procedure exists for a reason, but the problem is that they can (and are) abused to prevent common sense bills with broad support from getting a debate or vote. Every bill that's introduced in our chamber is subject to being held hostage by the committee chair it's assigned to or by the Speaker, which means that we only get to debate and vote on things that a handful of people in the majority leadership allow – and that's bad for democracy. The bills I'm talking about aren't radical proposals. In fact, they're often bipartisan bills with cosponsors from both sides of the aisle on important issues and on which a majority of Pennsylvanians agree.

That's why I've proposed rule changes that would help everyone.

HR 94 would make our committees proportional. Right now, the majority party awards itself 50% more seats on every committee than the minority party, regardless of how large a majority they have in the House. My resolution would make committees proportional: If there's a 55%/45% split in the House, then there would be the same split on committees. This change would empower moderates in both parties to pass more (and better) bills.

HR 95 would prevent one committee chair from holding up bipartisan, popular bills. It would require a committee vote on any bill with 20 or more cosponsors from both parties. As it stands now, members can "cosponsor" a bill and claim credit for supporting a bill they actually oppose, because they know a friendly committee chair will keep it bottled up. My rule change would require members to put their votes where their mouths are and level with their constituents.

You won't be surprised to read that these rule changes are ... stuck in committee! Please contact my office to find out who you can reach out to in order to request action. The process matters, and you deserve a legislature that shows its work and represents us all fairly.

Dog License Event

In February, my office hosted a successful Dog License Event. We partnered with the Office of Montgomery County Treasurer Jason Salus to give our neighbors an easy way to license their dog.

Licensing your dog is the law here in Pennsylvania. All dogs three months or older must be licensed by January 1st of each year. If you weren't able to make it to the event or have a new dog, my office can help you apply for a license.

My office remains a resource hub to connect you with state resources and assistance. My staff can help with:

- Unemployment compensation issues
- Birth certificate applications
- Consumer complaints
- Problems with PennDOT
- Disability plates and placards
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems
- Requests for literature and citations

WEATHERED USA FLAG COLLECTION

State Representative
Joe Webster

My office is now collecting old and tattered US flags to be retired.

Bring old U.S. flags to my District Office at
35 Evansburg Road, Collegeville, PA 19426

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Around the Community



Team Webster and family volunteered at Mitzvah Circle for Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service to pack and sort donations.



In Harrisburg calling for action on the Patient Safety Act with my colleagues and nurses throughout PA.



Dropping off donations at St. James Outreach House as part of my Winter Collection Drive. Donations were spread equally between St. James, Mitzvah Circle, and Daily Bread Community Food Pantry.



Standing with Rep. Steve Malagari, local veterans, North Penn JROTC, Montgomery County Sheriff Sean Kilkenney, Montgomery County Recorder of Deeds Jeanne Sorg, and Shardae Wescott from the VA at our Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day Event.



Standing with some of the members of Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh who collected hundreds of pounds of food for my Winter Collection Drive. I was so impressed with their efforts to give back to their community.



HB 345 would raise the wage but has sat in committee since April 2021. With Governor Wolf and my colleagues calling for raising the minimum wage for all Pennsylvanians.



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lpo.ad.0222



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2021 Year in Review



3462

Constituent Services Provided



1465

Pounds of Food and Items Donated to Our Drives



687

Votes Cast



502

Bills/Resolution Sponsored & Co-sponsored



415

Unemployment Cases Handled



@RepJoeWebster