

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  105TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

JUSTIN C. FLEMING



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THE 2023-2024 BUDGET

In a bipartisan vote, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives passed the 2023-24 budget in early July, which the governor signed into law in early August.

I'm pleased that this budget addresses some of your priorities by making significant investments in the areas of public safety, health care, job creation, and community and economic development.

Most significantly, the budget includes a \$717 million increase in education funding. This increase in education funding is being made without an increase in taxes.

The investments in K-12 education funding will provide some relief to our schools that are struggling financially. The \$717 million combines the increases of \$567 million in the basic education subsidy, \$100 million for Level Up districts (the 100 most under-funded districts), and \$50 million for special education.

This is a smart investment in our most precious resource — our kids. It was critical that we allocated this money, so our deserving, talented students get the skills and experience they need to succeed in a highly competitive and rapidly changing world.

The following funding is allocated for our area school districts:

- Central Dauphin – \$3,914,039 (12.8% increase).
- Susquehanna Township – \$724,437 (10.2% increase).

I want to also highlight a few of the budget's funding increases and new investments that will benefit our region:

- An additional \$23.5 million for Career and Technical Education, including increasing equipment grants to CTE programs by 170%.
- A \$10 million increase in Violence Intervention and Prevention grants funding to help community-led efforts to improve public safety.
- \$3.5 million for the Schools-to-Work program, which grows partnerships between career and technical education at schools and employers to create opportunities for students.

Additionally, H.B. 1100 was signed by the governor. This law raises the income eligibility limits for the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program from \$35,000 to \$45,000 and provides for larger rebates for eligible participants. This will bring relief for thousands of seniors across the Commonwealth.

DEAR NEIGHBOR,

When I was sworn in, I became part of the House Democratic majority that has used its influence to pass meaningful legislation for residents, such as expanding the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program which enables more seniors and people with disabilities to qualify. Additionally, commonsense bills to protect the public from gun violence, raise the minimum wage, expand the childcare tax credit, provide medical debt relief, and reform cyber charter schools have all passed the House of Representatives.

There's more to do and I'm not wasting a minute.

It is also an honor to serve on the House Aging & Older Adult Services, Children & Youth, Local Government and Appropriations committees. The Appropriations Committee is the most powerful of the House committees, and it is a privilege to serve on these committees on behalf of the residents of Penbrook, Lower Paxton, and Susquehanna townships.

Each committee engages with policy experts and individuals with impactful personal experience to determine which proposed legislation makes the most sense for Pennsylvania. Before we were in the majority, most Democratic bills would be stalled in committee. Now, Democratic bills are more likely to be considered. I am using my seat on these committees to advocate for and refine legislation that will improve the quality of life for individuals and families in our district and across the commonwealth.

I am very proud to serve with House Speaker Joanna McClinton (D-Philadelphia), who is the first woman and the second African-American to serve as House Speaker. Speaker McClinton is a brilliant leader who is fiercely committed to passing legislation that will benefit all Pennsylvanians.

It has been an exciting first seven months in office, and we're just getting started!

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

THE FOLLOWING BILLS HAVE ALL PASSED THE HOUSE AND ARE IN THE SENATE FOR CONSIDERATION.

RESTRICTIVE RACIAL COVENANTS BILL

I am pleased that in June my bill (HB 1289) passed the House nearly unanimously. I wrote this bill to make it easier for property owners to repudiate discriminatory deed covenants.

Although racially discriminatory real estate covenants were struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1948 under the Shelley v. Kraemer decision and discriminatory deed covenants against protected classes are prohibited by the federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, harmful and discriminatory language still exists in many property deeds.

The shameful legacy of restrictive covenants and practices like redlining have created massive inequality in wealth and home ownership rates among people of different races. My legislation would make it easy and affordable to repudiate discriminatory language from these documents by enabling an owner or homeowner association to file a form with the county's recorder of deeds office to repudiate a restrictive covenant at little or no cost.

THE FAIRNESS ACT

This June, history was made with the House passage of the Fairness Act (HB 300), which would prohibit anyone in Pennsylvania who identifies as LGBTQ+ from being denied housing, education, or access to public accommodations simply because of who they are or who they love. These long overdue protections would help make Pennsylvania a fairer society for everyone.

I have also signed onto a package of anti-hate crime bills (HBs 1024-1027) that would expand Pennsylvania's ethnic intimidation statute, provide more training for law enforcement and educators on how to identify and report hate crimes, and require offenders to complete diversity classes and allow community impact statements during sentencing. My hope is that this legislation will help curb the disturbing upward trend of hate crimes in our commonwealth.

GUN VIOLENCE BILLS (EXTREME RISK PROTECTION ORDER AND ENHANCED BACKGROUND CHECKS)

At the end of May, the House passed two commonsense gun safety bills (HBs 714 & 1018) making it possible for the first time in a decade to pass legislation that respects the Constitutional rights of every Pennsylvanian while still preventing gun violence. It's time that popular, life-saving practical solutions to the scourge of gun violence become law in PA. We owe it to our kids, owe it to our neighbors, and owe it to ourselves.

DEPARTMENT OF AGING KICKS OFF OUTREACH FOR 10-YEAR MASTER PLAN

As a member of the House Aging & Older Adult Services Committee, I was present for the PA Department of Aging's kickoff for outreach of its Master Plan for Older Adults in Harrisburg.

The Master Plan for Older Adults is a first-ever, 10-year, state-led and stakeholder-driven strategic plan to help transform the infrastructure and coordination of services for older Pennsylvanians. The master plan will also reflect the needs and preferences of this population to live where they choose and access the supports they need to thrive and age in place.

The Department of Aging has created a webpage dedicated to the Master Plan for Older Adults, www.aging.pa.gov/MasterPlan, which provides information on why a master plan is needed, the core tenets, how the department will gather input for the plan, resources, and more.

If you would like to submit input on the plan, you can either email AgingPlan@pa.gov, provide feedback through an online form or mail the Pennsylvania Department of Aging, c/o Master Plan, 555 Walnut St., 5th Floor, Harrisburg, PA 17101.

THE CROWN ACT

In July the House passed the CROWN Act (HB 1394), which would update Pennsylvania's anti-discrimination law to prohibit discrimination based on hair type, hair texture, or hairstyle.

This is incredibly important legislation that would help protect Pennsylvanians of color—particularly Black women—from discrimination in the workplace. Too often people haven't gotten jobs or have been denied access to social venues simply because they've chosen to wear their hair naturally.

With the CROWN Act, that discrimination would end in Pennsylvania.



AROUND THE DISTRICT...



Rep Fleming visits Kids Academy, Hansel & Gretel, and GoldFinger, three early learning centers in the 105th District.



Former Rep. Sue Helm visits the Capitol to be recognized for her 16 years of service in the 104th District.



Rep. Fleming serves as Speaker Pro Tempore on July 5th.



Rep. Fleming speaks to a student from Covenant Christian Academy on a visit to the Capitol.



Rep. Fleming tours the Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 520 training center.

...WITH REP. FLEMING



The entire Dauphin County Delegation attends a veterans breakfast hosted by the Dauphin County Commissioners.



Rep. Fleming tours the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank located in Susquehanna Township.



Central Dauphin East graduates Lunden McClain & Favour Okiye are awarded Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus James R. Roebuck scholarships to attend Indiana University of Pennsylvania and Penn State University, respectively.



Rep. Fleming visits Central Dauphin High School for the Junior Achievement STEM Summit.



Rep. Patty Kim and Rep. Fleming at the Linglestown Memorial Day Parade.

MORE LEGISLATION: SUPPORT FOR WORKING FAMILIES

PTRR EXPANSION/PTRR APPLICATIONS EXTENDED TO DEC. 31

The state Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program is accepting applications for rebates on property taxes or rent paid in 2022 until Dec. 31. The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program is for residents who are 18+ and permanently disabled, 50+ and widowed, or 65+. The income limit for homeowners is \$35,000 a year and \$15,000 annually for renters, and half of Social Security income is excluded.

As part of the budget negotiations, we worked to increase the income limit to \$45,000 a year to boost the financial security of more Pennsylvanians, which will

go into effect with next year's program. The bill was signed into law by Gov. Shapiro in early August.

If you haven't applied, don't forget that you can contact my office to set up your appointment or visit my.path.pa.gov to electronically submit your application.

\$15 MINIMUM WAGE

The minimum wage should be the bare minimum wage on which people can live but since PA hasn't raised the minimum wage since 2009, thousands of people are struggling to survive in Pennsylvania.

In June, the House stood in solidarity with our workforce by voting to raise the minimum wage.

This legislation would increase the minimum wage in Pennsylvania to:

- \$11 per hour effective Jan. 1, 2024.
- \$13 per hour effective Jan. 1, 2025.
- \$15 per hour effective Jan. 1, 2026.

There would be annual cost-of-living increases beginning in 2027. The bill would also set the minimum wage for tipped workers at 60% of the hourly minimum wage – which has been stuck at \$2.83 per hour since the 20th century.

The bill has been sent to the Senate for consideration.

CHILDCARE TAX CREDIT (HB 1259)

As childcare costs have exploded exponentially, many parents have been forced to make tough financial decisions about whether they stay home for their families or pursue their careers. In PA, childcare for ONE child averages nearly \$12,000 per year; in some areas, it can be more than double.

HB 1259 would expand the PA Child Care Tax Credit and ensure it keeps pace with inflation. More than 50 chambers of commerce across Pennsylvania have signed a letter supporting this legislation because easing the burden of childcare costs would enable business owners to hire or keep much-needed workers employed.

The bill has been sent to the Senate for consideration.

MEDICAL DEBT RELIEF (HB 78)

Getting sick or suffering an injury shouldn't destroy your finances or credit rating.

The Medical Debt Relief Act would establish the Medical Debt Relief Program within the state Department of Health to discharge medical debt of eligible residents by contracting with a medical debt relief coordinator. Pennsylvanians would be eligible for relief if they have a household income at or below 400% of the federal poverty guidelines or medical debt equal to 5 percent or more of the individual's household income.

The bill has been sent to the Senate for consideration.

CYBER CHARTER REFORM

Before we left for the summer, the House passed legislation (HB 1422) that would modernize Pennsylvania's charter school law to specifically address cyber charter schools to ensure transparency, accountability, and fiscal responsibility.

We expect our cyber charter schools to be held to the same standards as anyone else who receives public funds. HB 1422 would end \$455 million in overpayments and includes increased transparency, ethical standards, and greater oversight of spending. This would ensure that taxpayer dollars are being properly spent on their intended purpose – educating students.

The bill would set a single statewide tuition rate for non-special education students at cyber schools that better aligns with the actual cost of cyber education and applies the existing three-tier special education funding formula currently used for school districts, which sets funding based on the student's special education needs, to cyber charter schools.

By making sure cyber charter schools operate openly and with proper oversight, we will help our students – regardless of what type of school they go to – and our taxpayers.

The bill has been sent to the Senate for consideration.





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WE CAN HELP!

- Voter registration forms and absentee ballot applications
- PACE (pharmaceutical assistance for qualified senior citizens)
- Information regarding PHEAA (PA Higher Education Assistance Agency)
- Information on PA's 529 College Savings Plans
- CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program)
- Questions or problems with any state agency

lpo.km.0823

STATE REPS. JUSTIN C. FLEMING & DAVID A. MADSEN SHREDDING EVENT

August 26
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

John Harris High School
2451 Market St., Harrisburg, PA 17103
Enter and Exit from S. 25th Street

Let us help you get organized and
give you a greener sense of security!

Bring your:
Old documents ▪ Folders ▪ Correspondence



Senior Fair

HOSTED BY
STATE REP. JUSTIN C. FLEMING

THURSDAY, SEPT. 14
10 A.M. – 12 P.M.

RCCG LIVING SPRING
3600 VARTAN WAY | HARRISBURG, PA 17110

CONNECT WITH ME ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

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