



**CAPITOL OFFICE:**

512E Main Capitol  
P.O. Box 202025  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2025  
(717) 783-1540

**CONSTITUENT SERVICE OFFICE:**

Commerce Building, Suite 303  
4232 Northern Pike  
Monroeville, PA 15146  
(412) 856-8284

[WWW.PAHOUSE.COM/MARKOSEK](http://WWW.PAHOUSE.COM/MARKOSEK) • [WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/REPMARKOSEK](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/REPMARKOSEK) • [TWITTER.COM/REPJOEMARKOSEK](http://TWITTER.COM/REPJOEMARKOSEK)

## Plum Borough School District PlanCon Meeting

Pennsylvania's method to reimburse school districts for construction and renovation costs, referred to as PlanCon, is outdated but is being revised.

I am pleased to serve on the PA Public School Building Construction and Reconstruction Advisory Committee reimagining PlanCon to better meet today's needs. The committee is traveling around the state to listen to what school professionals, architects, and others involved in PlanCon have to say about what is working and what is not.

Much of PlanCon has not been changed since the 1970s. But technology has changed the way we educate students in a big way, so our school-buildings-and-reimbursement program needs to support 21st century demands.

On March 24, I visited Plum Borough School District's O'Block Jr. High School. And I encouraged the advisory committee to visit us for two reasons: (1) Plum has a timely perspective because it has been very active in the PlanCon process, and (2) recent negative news about the school district are not

reflective of all of the wonderful educators at Plum and the great Plum community that I know.

I am proud to represent Plum in the state legislature, and that's why I believed it was important for us to meet in the district and listen to local educators.

Plum Superintendent Dr. Timothy Glasspool and Plum School Board Director Michelle Stepnick talked to us. We also heard great testimony from superintendents Michael Calla (Sharon City), Dr. Gennaro Piraino Jr. (Franklin Regional), Dr. Anthony Hamlet (Pittsburgh Public Schools), and Brian Jackson (West Greene), plus Dan Engen with VEBH Architects.

We talked about how Pennsylvania can employ best practices and be an accountability check for public funding in school construction.

We learned that by using a geothermal system in its new school, Sharon City School District realized a 40 percent reduction in its energy costs. Pittsburgh Public Schools said it wants to expand state reimbursement for health and safety efforts as it recently underwent a \$2 million water safety project as a proactive response to the lead issues in Flint, Mich.

The hearing concluded with a tour of Plum Borough School District's new Holiday Park Elementary School. Interestingly, Holiday Park is a near exact replica of another elementary school the district completed three years ago. Plum Borough School District's re-use of the same design saved taxpayers' money and is an example of the type of prudent management the state should encourage through its reimbursement program.

Visit the advisory committee's website: [www.plancon.pasenategop.com](http://www.plancon.pasenategop.com) to view the full Plum hearing video and see what else the commonwealth is working on to make education better.

*Students from Plum's Holiday Park Elementary School made signs welcoming the PlanCon Advisory Committee earlier this year. Pictured (left to right): Plum School Board member Michele Gallagher, PA Secretary of Education Pedro Rivera, me, and Plum School Board member Michelle Stepnick.*



## Our pets are family

I voted with the House, recently, on legislation that would update Pennsylvania's animal cruelty laws. Many of us think of our pets as family members. Those who abuse animals should be punished, and this bill increases the penalties for committing such heinous crimes.



## Money returned to the District

### SEWER UPGRADES

The Monroeville Municipal Authority is getting \$94,550 and North Versailles Township Sanitary Authority is getting \$29,115 for sanitary sewer line improvements.

The Monroeville project will improve the Dirty Camp Run sewer system in Pitcairn by rehabilitating 5,500 linear feet of line and related manholes with structural defects and eliminating ground water infiltration. The total project cost is \$482,007.

The North Versailles project replaces 523 linear feet of sewer line and related manholes, and helps to prevent storm water from entering the system while eliminating major sags that allow grease and solids to settle and block the line. Total project cost is \$148,462.

### TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Governor Wolf recently announced that Monroeville will receive funding in the amount of \$198,370 for traffic signal replacement along Northern Pike at Patty Lane. It's part of the state Transportation Department's Green Light-Go Program to help communities upgrade traffic lights.

### FIRE EQUIPMENT

The East McKeesport Volunteer Fire Dept. has received a \$20,000 grant for rescue ventilating equipment.

These state grants help make these projects a reality and will improve service for residents.



## Is the state holding your property?

You could be the next to locate forgotten stocks, uncashed checks, abandoned bank accounts, or life insurance policies!

Since August, my office has helped constituents find 632 properties valued at a combined \$150,183.52!

Call my Monroeville office, 412-856-8284, or return the form on the back of this newsletter to find out if the state is holding unclaimed money that you own.

## Attention Veterans!

If you have served in the defense of your country or know someone who has, the PA Department of Banking and Securities has a personal finance guide designed to serve current and former members of the U.S. military.

The "Financial Field Manual" also contains information especially important for Pennsylvania residents who joined the U.S. Armed Forces after 2006 or will do so before the end of this year.

Download the manual at [www.dobs.pa.gov](http://www.dobs.pa.gov).

Men and women who joined the Armed Forces during the current timeline will have to decide whether to stick with

the retirement system that has been in place for decades or choose a new, blended plan that includes a pension and contributions to the federal government's Thrift Savings Plan.

Those who enlist in 2018 and beyond will automatically go into the blended pension system.

If you have questions, contact the Department of Banking and Securities at 1-800-600-007. The agency also fields complaints about financial transactions, companies, or products.





# Property tax or rent rebate time

Your hard-earned money goes toward a lot of property tax and rent. Why not get some of that back, if you qualify?

The deadline for filing with the 2016 Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program is June 30.

The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians 65 or older, widows and widowers 50 or older, and people with disabilities 18 or older. The maximum standard rebate is \$650, but supplemental rebates can boost rebates to \$975.

Get Property Tax/Rent Rebate claim forms (PA-1000) and related info at [www.revenue.pa.gov](http://www.revenue.pa.gov) or by calling toll free, 888-222-9190. Forms and assistance are also available from Department of Revenue district offices, the Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging, senior centers and my office. We are ready to help you understand the program, complete the application, and get some money back.

Please don't assume you are not eligible. The income limit is \$35,000 a year for homeowners and \$15,000 a year for renters. Half of Social Security income is excluded. Spouses, personal representatives or estates may also file rebate claims on behalf of claimants who lived at least one day at the residence and meet all other eligibility criteria.



## Your opportunity to save on past-due taxes

Owing money can be troublesome. Owing a lot of money can keep you awake at night. If you are someone who has been surprised by a large tax bill but have not had the chance to pay it, PA's new tax amnesty program could help.

**But hurry, the PA Tax Amnesty program expires June 19.**

If you qualify, or if your business qualifies, you may be able to pay past-due taxes with all penalties and half of the interest waived.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR TAX AMNESTY?

Individuals and businesses with unpaid or underpaid PA taxes as of Dec. 31, 2015.

Taxpayers who did not file for tax periods due on or before Dec. 31, 2015.

### WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR TAX AMNESTY?

Any taxpayer who participated in the 2010 PA Tax Amnesty program.

Taxpayers under criminal investigation, criminal prosecution, or criminal restitution for allegedly violating a tax law.

Taxpayers in bankruptcy unless the bankruptcy court grants permission.

Taxpayers with a current voluntary disclosure agreement for periods eligible for the program.

### FOUR SIMPLE STEPS TO TAX AMNESTY:

1. Visit [backTax.pa.gov](http://backTax.pa.gov) or call 844-PA-STATE-Tax (1-844-727-8283).
2. File a tax amnesty application by June 19.
3. File all delinquent returns and make the required payment before tax amnesty ends. (Withdraw all related active administrative or judicial appeals.)
4. Make the required payment by midnight on June 19.



## Medical Marijuana Program Update:

It may seem like it's been a long time since the General Assembly approved medical marijuana legislation, but progress is being made.

The PA Department of Health is working to implement the medical marijuana program and is on schedule to have the drug available to eligible patients this time next year.

The Health Department has published numerous temporary regulations, which outline policies and procedures that apply to the development and initial execution of the medical marijuana program, including:

- Established six medical marijuana regions across Pennsylvania, which will initially allow for up to 2 grower/processor permits per region and a total of 27 dispensary permits across the state;
- Issued 231 safe harbor letters to parents, legal guardians, caregivers, and spouses of eligible minors certifying that they may lawfully obtain and transport medical marijuana from other states into the commonwealth for approved use;
- Selected consultant MJ Freeway to develop the state's "seed-to-sale" tracking system, which will follow marijuana from the time a seed is planted to the final form dispensed to patients;
- Received more than 500 application packages to grow/process and/or dispense medical marijuana (details of these applications will continue to be posted as they are received, [www.health.pa.gov](http://www.health.pa.gov)), with the intent to issue permits at the end of June;
- Issued guidance for physicians interested in issuing patient certifications and prescribing under the medical marijuana program, with a focus on continuing education and proper procedures.

I am encouraged by the process and progress of this roll out. Despite the significant interest and input from stakeholders, the Health Department has adhered to the timeline to get this drug to patients in need. If you are interested in learning more about medical marijuana in PA, visit [www.health.pa.gov](http://www.health.pa.gov), and reach out to my office with any additional questions or concerns.

## Catch any luck?

Much to the excitement of anglers across Pennsylvania, April 15 marked the opening day of trout season. Fishing is an excellent way to enjoy the outdoors and the beautiful waters of our commonwealth.



Of course, you need a license to fish. The price of a resident annual license is \$22.90, non-resident annual \$52.90, and senior resident annual \$11.90. Trout permits are \$9.90.

Anglers can also buy multi-year licenses. A 3-year resident license is \$64.90, 5-year permits are \$106.90, and 10-year licenses are \$211.90 (All quoted prices include fees). Multi-year trout/salmon, Lake Erie and combo permits are also available.

For more information, visit the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's website or download the free "FishBoatPA" smartphone app from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.

## Monroeville Interfaith Ministerium's 'Unity Day'

Besieged by daily stories and rumors of hate and separation, the Monroeville Interfaith Ministerium worked to bring community members together during a "Unity Day" gathering Sunday, April 30. I was honored to deliver the keynote address. Following are some highlights from the address.

"We are not here today to fight. We are not here to unseat a public official. And we are not here to declare some us-versus-them movement."

"Unity asks us to be mindful. It requires us to consider the opinions and feelings of others and to realize we are not that different from each other."

"This gathering means people are not as aware of their neighbors as they could be. They are, as Ralph Waldo Emerson said, 'disunited with themselves.' It means some people feel threatened by what they are reading, seeing and hearing. Rumors are causing rifts in places where there should be none."

"We are doubting each other in unprecedented ways that are confounding and frustrating."

"When I started as a state lawmaker in 1983 to represent the good and hard-working people of this community, we had the advantage of not seeing or reading every thought, word or provocation uttered by Republicans and Democrats – every minute of every hour of every day."

"We disagreed, but we worked together. We were unified in making Pennsylvania better. We were less concerned about party politics. We better understood the context."

"Efforts like this fellowship on unity are what we need to get us back to cooperation and good will. It's about realizing that we must always work together to produce the life and the livelihoods we dream about. Lives and livelihoods that include everyone, not just people like us."

The goal of the Monroeville Interfaith Ministerium is to celebrate the region's diversity and "provide opportunities for people of faith to fellowship together, learn from each other and to serve side by side to achieve understanding, compassion and social justice in the Monroeville area and in the world."



# Around the Capitol and the 25th District



Speaking to PCN about the governor's 2017/18 budget proposal.



Franco Harris and Bruce Baumgartner came to the Capitol to urge greater support for pre-K in Pennsylvania.



Questioning PA Treasurer Torsella during 2017 budget hearings.



I was pleased to meet with Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney.



It was a great thrill to meet with Sarah Rumcik, Kirsten Coyle and Frank Straub as part of Pennsylvania Pharmacy Legislative Day.



Leigh and Caitlin Weiss enjoyed their day at the Capitol in March advocating on behalf of the American Heart and American Stroke associations.



Thank you! I took the oath of office in January to once again serve Pennsylvania's 25th Legislative District. I've not missed a session day for over 34 years!



The Allegheny Intermediate Unit hosted an open and informative discussion in March about education.



Honored to be named a Pre-K 4 PA Champion! High quality Pre-K & other early childhood development programs are one of the most important investments we can make. Funding these programs is vital to ensuring a successful future for Pennsylvania residents of all ages.



Enjoyed visiting with students from CORO Pittsburgh in March.

STATE REP. JOSEPH F. MARKOSEK  
P.O. Box 202025  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2025

lpo.jc.0517



## State Representative JOSEPH F. MARKOSEK

**Constituent Service Office:**  
Commerce Building, Suite 303  
4232 Northern Pike  
Monroeville, PA 15146  
(412) 856-8284

**Capitol Office:**  
512E Main Capitol  
P.O. Box 202025  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2025  
(717) 783-1540

**Email:**  
jmarkose@pahouse.net  
**Website:**  
www.pahouse.com/markosek

**Follow me on social media:** [www.facebook.com/RepMarkosek](http://www.facebook.com/RepMarkosek) • [twitter.com/RepJoeMarkosek](https://twitter.com/RepJoeMarkosek)



**Cut out and return the form below to my Constituent Service Office to find out if the state is holding unclaimed money that you own!**



## UNCLAIMED FINANCIAL PROPERTY...

***IS THE STATE HOLDING MONEY THAT BELONGS TO YOU?***

The state is in custody of over \$2.3 billion worth of unclaimed property accumulated from forgotten stocks, uncashed checks, abandoned bank accounts, life insurance policies, etc.  
We can see if you may be eligible for any of this unclaimed property.

**Please fill out the information below. If I find any unclaimed money for you, I will be in touch!**



Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Current address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Maiden name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Representative Joe Markosek, 4232 Northern Pike, Suite 303, Monroeville, Pa. 15146 – 412-856-8284**