

Summer 2020



State Representative **Joseph C. Hohenstein**

177th Legislative District

Capitol Office: 121A East Wing • P.O. Box 202177 • Harrisburg, PA 17120-2177 • (717) 783-4087

District Office: 4725 Richmond St. • Philadelphia, PA 19137 • (215) 744-2600

www.RepHohenstein.com •  /RepHohenstein •  @RepHohenstein •  @RepHohenstein

“*What we need in the United States is not division; what we need in the United States is not hatred; what we need in the United States is not violence or lawlessness, but is love and wisdom, and compassion toward one another, and a feeling of justice towards those who still suffer within our country, whether they be white or whether they be black.”*

Dear Neighbor,

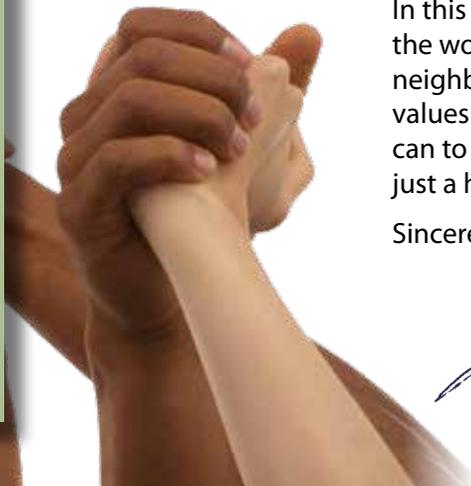
These words were spoken by Robert F. Kennedy on the day that Martin Luther King, Jr. was killed, April 4, 1968. I do not remember the day because I was not even a year old, but the events of that summer, including Kennedy's own murder two months after King's, shaped a generation. Through assassinations, foreign war, and civil unrest, our country forged forward. Our solutions were not perfect, but we maintained our basic character as a country, one based on concepts of equality for all and the need to take care of the most vulnerable among us.

I believe we are going through a similar time now. How we respond to a global pandemic, stay-at-home orders, and civil unrest will either re-establish or further erode our identity as a country that embraces both individual freedom and social responsibility. I am hopeful that we can stay unified and focused on our common values, rejecting messages of division.

I have been doing my part by reporting for work in Harrisburg and here in the neighborhoods. Even though our office closed for in-person visits in early March, my staff have been in regular contact with constituents. They have handled hundreds of unemployment compensation cases, completed rent rebates, and supported the Bridesburg Food Pantry in delivering meals to its most vulnerable senior and disabled participants. Providing services to the community, especially when it is in need, is the first and foremost priority.

In this newsletter, you'll see how we have been doing the work I was elected to do – providing service to neighborhoods in the district while I also reflect the values of community in Harrisburg. I am doing what I can to show that #WeAreAllinThisTogether is more than just a hashtag...it reflects who we are.

Sincerely,



Bridesburg Park set to begin construction with \$1.4 million from state

Riverfront and meadow views, unstructured play areas, a great view of the Betsy Ross Bridge, parking and restroom accommodations are just a few of the early features of the new Bridesburg Riverfront Park scheduled for construction beginning next year.

Just a few weeks ago, the state supplied the final \$1.4 million needed to begin the first phase of construction on this long-awaited park in our community. The funding was awarded to the Riverfront North Partnership from PennDOT's Multimodal Transportation Fund.

A second phase of park development will include building a stage pavilion, picnic pavilion, terraced lawn seating and a river boardwalk.

It is great to have the state partner with our local community to get construction off the ground. Congratulations to everyone involved in helping to bring this project full circle so that residents and visitors alike can enjoy this 10-acres of greenspace and peaceful recreation in the 177th District's backyard.

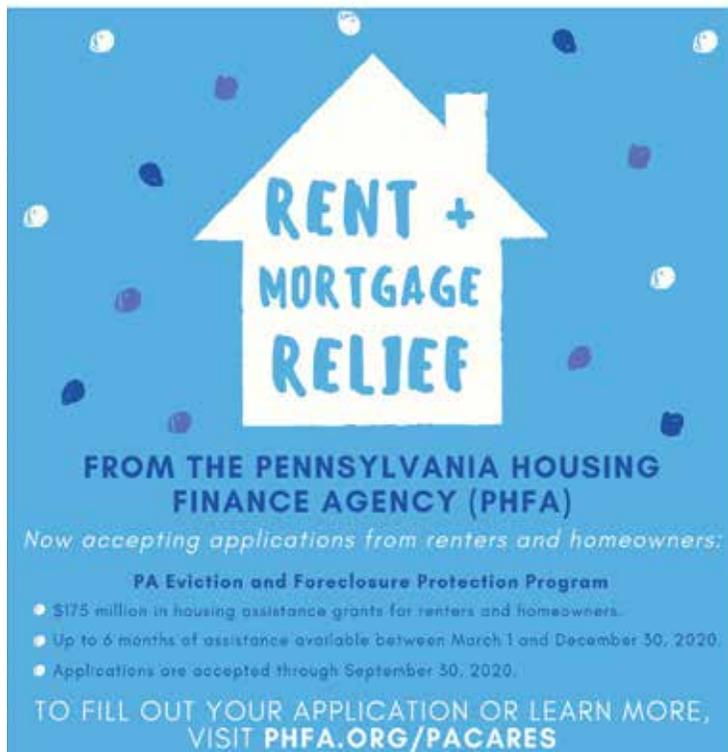


Rendering of future Bridesburg Riverfront Park lawn



Birdseye of Lower Park

Courtesy of Riverfront North Partnership



RENT + MORTGAGE RELIEF

FROM THE PENNSYLVANIA HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY (PHFA)

Now accepting applications from renters and homeowners:

PA Eviction and Foreclosure Protection Program

- \$175 million in housing assistance grants for renters and homeowners.
- Up to 6 months of assistance available between March 1 and December 30, 2020.
- Applications are accepted through September 30, 2020.

TO FILL OUT YOUR APPLICATION OR LEARN MORE, VISIT PHFA.ORG/PACARES



REP. HOHENSTEIN'S OFFICE BY THE NUMBERS

- OVER **2,500** CONSTITUENTS SERVED SINCE START OF COVID-19
- 300** UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION CLAIMS ESCALATED
- \$2MIL** IN GRANTS FOR LOCAL PROJECTS

960 FOOD DELIVERIES



COVID-19 RESPONSE

Our lives changed in March, but our spirit has not. COVID-19 has upended our way of life and new challenges arise seemingly every day. From March through now, my staff served as a lifeline for our communities, hand delivering hundreds of bags of food to families in need. This is how we

keep our neighborhoods strong – by making sure that no one is left behind. I want to specifically say thank you to the staff and volunteers at the Bridesburg Food Pantry and Feast of Justice who continue to feed our families.

Hohenstein Hosts 2 Policy Hearings for DISABILITY PRIDE Month

Thirty years ago, a Democratic Congress and a Republican president came together to pass the Americans with Disabilities Act. The July 26, 1990 signing of the ADA was the culmination of decades of work by advocates and family members of people living with disabilities. As part of Disability Pride Month in July, I hosted two public policy hearings to highlight the contributions and needs of the disability community in Pennsylvania. On July 16 we addressed the needs of the disabled and senior populations at risk in nursing homes and long term care facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. State officials and advocates discussed the best way to protect this vulnerable population and improve services. On July 23 we discussed my inclusive disability curriculum legislation to integrate students with disabilities into the standard K-12 curriculum and to teach all students about the contributions of people with different abilities and disabilities to recognize the values of everyone in our community. American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters were provided for both hearings.



**DISABILITY
PRIDE
MONTH**

#ONEACCESSIBILITY

Navigating unemployment compensation

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a historic surge in the number of people seeking unemployment compensation (UC). Since mid-March, more than 2 million Pennsylvanians filed for unemployment benefits, more than ever before in history.

In addition to regular unemployment, the federal CARES Act expanded unemployment benefits through new programs. My office can help you to understand them.

For more information and the latest updates, visit the state's UC website at www.uc.pa.gov.

My office has helped many of our neighbors navigate the UC process. If you need help with your UC benefits, please call us at 215-744-2600.



Fireworks Safety

As summer heated up, my office received dozens of complaints about nighttime fireworks adding even more stress to people's already stressful lives.

For many, fireworks are a fun way to celebrate Independence Day. But too many are making it a hazard instead of a holiday. Property damage, injuries, diverting law enforcement and emergency services and threatening people's and pet's mental health are the consequences.

Fireworks are available for legal purchase by Philadelphia residents, so the nuisance and havoc they are creating will not disappear unless sensible changes are made.

I am working with my colleagues in Harrisburg to address this issue and have co-sponsored legislation (H.B. 1687) to give municipalities like Philadelphia tighter control over pyrotechnics. I also am introducing legislation that would prohibit using fireworks between 10 p.m. and 8 a.m. every day, except designated holidays, as well as penalize multiple violations with fines.

Working together, I know we can find a balanced answer that emphasizes safety.

"The near-constant barrage of M-80s and professional-grade fireworks from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m. is exacting a toll on this community. We cannot go on like this."

Constituent of the 177th District

Fraud prevention and troubleshooting

There's a widespread identity theft fraud ring targeting COVID-19 unemployment compensation benefits programs across the nation. The federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program is the primary target of this sophisticated scam.

Be aware of the following scam warning signs related to UC benefits:

- You have not applied for unemployment benefits but receive a check or direct deposit.
- You receive correspondence about unemployment assistance for which you did not apply.
- Someone comes to your home and tells you that their unemployment assistance check or debit card was mailed to you by mistake.
- Someone asks you to use your bank account to deposit their unemployment assistance.
- Someone, in person or electronically, tells you that you are entitled to unemployment assistance and requests your personal identifying information.
- Someone offers to help you file for unemployment benefits for a fee.
- Someone claims to be from a government office and asks for a fee or personal information to complete your application for PUA or other benefits.
- An employer receives notice that a claim has been filed for one or more employees who continued working and were not laid off or otherwise unemployed.

If any of these suspicious activities happen to you, do not confront the fraudster. Call the PA Fraud Hotline at 1-800-692-7469 and visit www.uc.pa.gov/fraud to determine your next steps.

Register to vote and request a mail-in ballot now!

It's important that you use your influence to shape our community, our commonwealth and our country. Your voice and your vote matters!

If you aren't registered to vote, you have until Oct. 19 to register before the Nov. 3 general election. If you are registered, you can also take advantage of using a mail-in ballot, which provides you a safe and secure option to vote without having to go to the polls on Election Day.

Learn more about registering to vote, applying for your mail-in ballot and finding your polling place at www.votespa.com, or reach out to my office if you have any questions.

PHILADELPHIA VOTES BY MAIL!

In this year's primary election, Philadelphians requested double the number of mail-in ballots than all Pennsylvania voters did in 2016. No-excuse voting by mail is a new option for our state, so there were a few hiccups, where some voters did not receive their ballots in enough time to mail them back. Luckily, Gov. Tom Wolf signed an order to allow municipalities more time to count ballots and the Philadelphia elections bureau created several no-contact drop-off boxes in secure locations throughout the city.



MAIL-IN BALLOTS BY THE NUMBERS

2016, all Pennsylvanians:
170,000

2020 Primary, all Philadelphia voters:
237,519 *180,808 returned

2020 Primary, 177th District voters:
5,946 *4,288 returned



2020 GENERAL ELECTION IMPORTANT DATES

SEPT
14

First day to register for mail-in ballots at county election offices.

OCT
19

Last day to register to vote for the general election.

register.votesPA.com

OCT
27

Last day to apply for a mail-in or absentee ballot.

votesPA.com/ApplyMailBallot

NOV
3

Voted mail-in and absentee ballots must be received by the county by 8pm.

votesPA.com/County

NOV
3

General election day. Polls are open from 7am to 8pm.

votesPA.com/Polls

VotesPA.com

✓ *Modernizing the vote for*
2020



More ways to vote



No-excuse mail-in voting
New option to vote by mail
Without providing an excuse



Permanent mail-in ballot list
Receive applications for
mail-in or absentee ballots
for all elections

More accessible elections



More time to register
Deadline to register to vote is
now 15 days before
an election

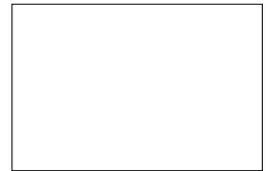


Extended voting period
Request a mail-in or absentee
ballot up to 50 days before
an election

Extended deadline
Submit mail-in or absentee ballot
by 8 p.m. on Election Day



STATE REP.
JOSEPH C. HOHENSTEIN
 121A East Wing
 P.O. Box 202177
 Harrisburg, PA 17120-2177



Inside:

- COVID-19 resources
- Bridesburg Park update
- Mail-in voting

lpo.kaf.0820



Wearing my mask at the Capitol during a public policy hearing. Can you see me smile?

Mask up and smile, Philly!

We all want to get back to the way life was before the COVID-19 pandemic. While life for many people, including those who have lost loved ones to this virus, will never be the same, we can defeat this virus by stopping its spread.

One of the easiest and most effective ways is to wear a mask every time you're in public. Doing so will dramatically lessen the spread of this deadly airborne virus, which is why Gov. Wolf issued a statewide mask mandate in mid-July.

We can all get through this if everyone does their part.

www.RepHohenstein.com

 /RepHohenstein
 @RepHohenstein
 @RepHohenstein

Phone: 215-744-2600

Email: RepHohenstein@pahouse.net

Hover your camera over the QR code and click the link that appears



YouTube Playlist

Morning Joe

Catch up with what's happening in Harrisburg and here at home by watching my "Morning Joe" video series on my YouTube channel and social media pages. Each week I discuss the issues impacting our state and our community.

If you have questions or need help for you, your family or our community, please reach out. I'm only a phone call or email away. I hope to see you soon!

