

State Representative

MIKE STURLA

www.pahouse.com/Sturla

REPORT

to the 96th

Working Hard for Lancaster

CAPITOL OFFICE:
414 MAIN CAPITOL BUILDING
P.O. BOX 202096
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-2096
(717) 787-3555
REP.MIKESTURLA@PAHOUSE.NET
TWITTER: @REPMIKESTURLA

CONSTITUENT SERVICE OFFICE:
150 E. KING STREET
SUITE B
LANCASTER, PA 17602
(717) 295-3157



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Dear Neighbor,

The 2015-16 Legislative Session marks my 13th term as your state representative. I am honored and proud to serve you in our community and in Harrisburg. As Chairman of the House Democratic Policy Committee, I have the unique opportunity to be a leader in updating and improving policies that impact all Pennsylvanians.

In this report to the 96th Legislative District, you'll find information on the 2015-16 budget proposal, Medicaid expansion, the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program and upcoming events. Be sure to mark your calendars and join in the community celebrations.

As always, please contact my Lancaster office at 717-295-3157 for help with any state-related matter. You can also email me at RepMikeSturla@pahouse.net.

Sincerely,

Mike Sturla

Mike Sturla

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Rep. Sturla on Social Media

Visit my website to sign up for email updates. You'll receive periodic email updates from me on what's happening in Harrisburg and our community.

Twitter: @RepMikeSturla

Facebook: www.facebook.com/RepMikeSturla

Legislative website: www.pahouse.com/Sturla

Committee website: www.pahouse.com/PolicyCommittee



Gov. Wolf's Budget Proposal

Gov. Tom Wolf's proposed 2015-16 state budget provides meaningful solutions to the state's budget problems. He goes back to the basics by focusing on jobs that pay; schools that teach; and government that works.

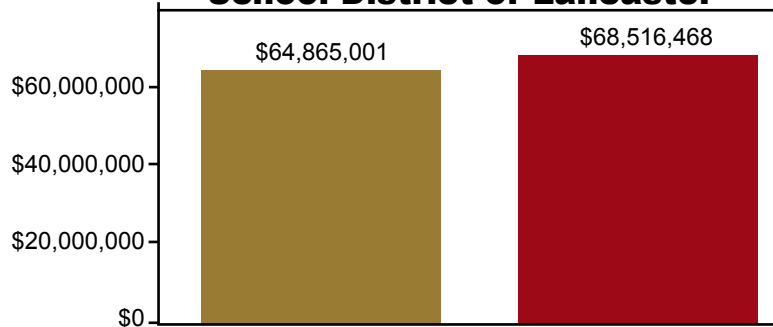
Highlights of the Governor's proposal include:

- Providing \$3.8 billion in school property tax relief for homeowners and renters, and completely eliminating school property taxes for 270,000 senior households by increasing the state sales and personal income taxes;
- Restoring devastating cuts to public education by investing \$400 million more in basic education, \$100 million more in special education, \$120 million more in early childhood education and saving schools \$160 million on charter costs;
- Expanding home- and community-based long-term care to enable more older Pennsylvanians to obtain care in their homes; and
- Restoring the Lottery Fund so the money is available to support programs for older Pennsylvanians.

The Governor's plan is a comprehensive and sustainable plan that moves Pennsylvania in the right direction. It does not rely on accounting gimmicks or harmful cuts to our state's most vulnerable citizens.

Gov. Wolf's budget lays a foundation for a thriving future, an educated workforce, and jobs that offer competitive wages. Rep. Sturla is eager to work with his colleagues and Gov. Wolf to make sure that the state is a quality place to live and work.

School District of Lancaster



2014-15 Estimated Funding

2014-15 Estimated Basic Education Funding	\$55,954,916
2014-15 Estimated Special Education Funding	\$8,910,085
2014-15 Combined Basic and Special Ed Funding	\$64,865,001

2015-16 Proposed Funding

2015-16 Estimated Basic Education Funding	\$58,733,583
2015-16 Estimated Special Education Funding	\$9,782,885
2015-16 Combined Basic and Special Ed Funding	\$68,516,468

2015-16 Proposed School Funding Increase: \$3,651,467

Estimated Residential Real Estate Tax Reduction: 79.45%

Estimated savings to the School District of Lancaster from Cyber Charter Funding Reform: \$761,379

Policy Committee Update

The House Democratic Policy Committee continues to hold public hearings and meetings across the state and serves as a catalyst to enacting major policy initiatives set forth by the members of the House Democratic Caucus. Rep. Sturla has been selected by the caucus to lead the committee since 2009.

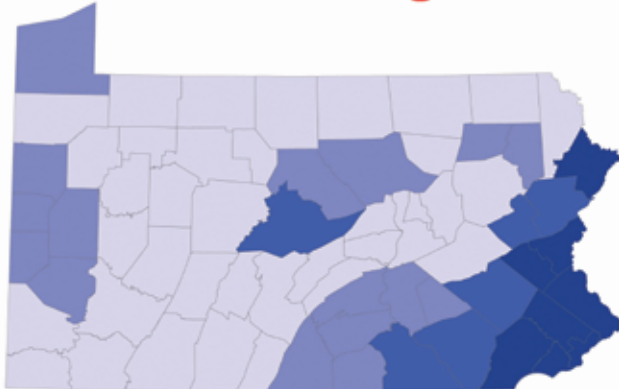
The House Democratic Policy Committee has examined various topics so far this session, including:

- Education funding
- Jobs
- Economic development
- Increasing the minimum wage
- Environmental issues



Education Committee Democratic Chairman James Roebuck, Rep. Jason Dawkins, Rep. Sturla and Rep. Eddie Pashinski take part in a policy hearing on education funding.

#RaisetheWagePA



Ready to punch the clock?

In Lancaster County, it takes more than 137 hours of work at the minimum wage to pay average rent and utilities alone.

- 60-85 hours/month
- 86-105 hours/month
- 106-120 hours/month
- 121-177 hours/month

Rep. Sturla is a co-sponsor of House Bill 250 that would help Pennsylvania's struggling families by increasing the minimum wage to \$9 per hour and then to \$10.10 per hour one year after enactment. The bill also includes a cost-of-living increase to ensure the state's minimum wage keeps up with inflation.



Rep. Sturla takes the House Democratic Policy Committee to Erie for a discussion on economic development and job growth with Rep. Ryan Bizzarro.



The policy committee hears from business leaders in Allentown to discuss Pennsylvania's economy.

Helpful updates to Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program

The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program is one of the commonwealth's most popular programs. It allows eligible Pennsylvanians age 65 or older; widows and widowers age 50 or older; and people with disabilities age 18 or older to apply for a rebate on their rent or property taxes.

Thanks to Act 156 of 2014, which Rep. Sturla supported, income eligibility guidelines for the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program have changed so Social Security cost-of-living adjustments no longer disqualify those applying for a rebate. The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program would be increased under Gov. Wolf's budget proposals.

If you receive Social Security and received a property tax/rent rebate last year, you should apply for the program this year.

The income guidelines for applying are \$35,000 a year for homeowners and \$15,000 a year for renters, with half of Social Security, and now Social Security COLAs, excluded. The deadline to apply is June 30. More information is available at <http://www.revenue.pa.gov>. **Please ignore any solicitation that seeks payment for help filing. Free filing assistance is available at Rep. Sturla's office. Call 717-295-3157 for an appointment or drop in at 150 E. King Street.**



Rep. Sturla tours Tec Centro with Kathy Manderino, acting secretary of the Department of Labor and Industry and state Senator Lloyd Smucker. Tec Centro is Lancaster's first and only bilingual vocational training school.

Rep. Sturla and Acting Secretary Manderino also visited Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology. Stevens educates Pennsylvania's economically and socially disadvantaged, as well as other qualified students, for skilled employment in a diverse, ever-changing workforce and for full effective participation as citizens. The college provides a well-rounded, two-year education and is well-known for connecting more than 95 percent of students with gainful employment.

Keeping PA kids healthy with CHIP

The legislature made a smart investment in its children and future by voting to extend Pennsylvania's Children's Health Insurance Plan, also known as CHIP. The program will ensure that nearly 150,000 kids will get the health care coverage they need.

CHIP provides low-cost health insurance to all uninsured children and teens who are not eligible for medical assistance. The law extends CHIP through Dec. 31, 2017. Without this legislation, the program would have expired at the end of this calendar year.

Access to quality health insurance is an important tool to maintain health and wellness. With insurance coverage, children can receive regular physicals, vaccinations and other types of preventative care, ultimately reducing costly emergency room visits.

Additional information about CHIP is available at www.chipcoverspakids.com/ or by calling my office at 717-295-3157.

Just say no to head injuries

Bike helmets are required by state law for younger children and a good idea for everyone. Wearing a bike helmet while riding can reduce the risk of head injury by up to 85 percent.

Pennsylvania law requires children 12 or younger to wear a bike helmet. The law is supported by statistics that show that helmets are the single-most effective safety device available to reduce head injury and death. Non-helmeted riders are 14 times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash than helmeted riders.

Visit Rep. Sturla's office for a bicycle safety brochure.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Rep. Sturla's 4th Annual Backpack Giveaway

Saturday, Aug. 22

11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Rep. Sturla will host his fourth annual Back-to-School Giveaway on Saturday, August 22 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Lancaster Rec Center, 525 Fairview Avenue. The event will give Lancaster students the tools they need to have a successful school year. Students in kindergarten through fifth grade will receive backpacks, school supplies and lunch.

If you are interested in volunteering or would like to donate supplies, backpacks or food for the event, please contact Rep. Sturla's office at 717-295-3157.



Does the state have something that belongs to you?

Nearly one in 10 Pennsylvanians is estimated to have unclaimed property with the Pennsylvania Treasurer's Office. This property includes any financial asset that may have inadvertently been left with a bank, insurance company, business or organization.

Those entities are required to transfer such property to the state Treasurer's Office, where it will stay until the owner claims it.

To find out if the state is holding on to your unclaimed property, contact Rep. Sturla's office at 717-295-3157. You can also call 1-800-222-2046 or visit www.patreasury.gov/unclaimed/search.html to search the database. There is no charge to reclaim your property. Please ignore any solicitation from companies or individuals that attempt to charge you a fee to retrieve your property from Treasury.

Open Streets Lancaster

Sunday, May 17

11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

On Sunday, May 17, Rep. Sturla will co-sponsor Open Streets 2015 Lancaster. The second annual event is held in collaboration with the Lancaster Rec, Lancaster Bikes! and the City of Lancaster. Water and Chestnut Streets will be closed to cars for a day filled with healthy snacks, arts and crafts, music, entertainment, sports and activities. Rep. Sturla and staff will be at the event and prepared to help you with any state-related issues. Registration for the event is not required. If you have questions, please contact Rep. Sturla's office at 717-295-3157.





Help available in Spanish

Rep. Sturla is fortunate to have two staff members who are bilingual and prepared to help with any state-related issues. You can call the office at 717-295-3157 or stop by 150 E. King Street in Lancaster. You can also reach Belky Herrera at bherrera@pahouse.net or Mena Rodriguez at mrodriguez@pahouse.net.

Ayuda disponible en Espanol

Tengo la fortuna de tener dos miembros bilingües en mi personal las cuales están preparadas para ayudarles con cualquier problema relacionado con el estado. Puede llamar a la oficina al -717-295-3157 o pasar por la oficina localizada en el 150 E. de la calle King, Lancaster. También puede contactar a Belky Herrera por correo electrónico al bherrera@pahouse.net o a Mena Rodriguez al mrodriguez@pahouse.net.

MY OFFICE CAN HELP YOU WITH:

- Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions
- PACE prescription-drug cards for senior citizens
- Car registrations, special tags, handicap placards, titles and driver's license applications
- Information on financial assistance for higher education
- Assistance in obtaining and completing state forms of all kinds
- Voter registration and absentee ballot applications
- Unemployment compensation, disability and workers' compensation
- Birth and death certificates
- Issues with the Department of Human Services (food stamps, medical and income assistance)
- Pennsylvania income tax questions or problems
- Requests for literature of all kinds – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information
- Inquiries about utilities and the Public Utility Commission
- Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding accomplishments and family milestones
- Issues with insurance companies
- Renewal of state-issued licenses or certifications
- Questions about the state lottery
- Consumer complaints
- Liquor Control Board concerns or questions
- Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups

Call 717-295-3157 for assistance with these or any other state-government related matters.