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State Representative

**TIM BRIGGS**

149th Legislative District



302 Main Capitol • P.O. Box 202149 • Harrisburg, PA 17120-2149 .....(717) 705-7011

554 Shoemaker Road, Suite 149 • King of Prussia, PA 19406.....(610) 768-3135

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Dear Neighbor,

It's an honor to serve as your representative!

As your state representative, I serve as your progressive voice in state government by introducing and voting on legislation and advocating for our community in Harrisburg.

But constituent services are also a top priority for me. My staff and I have assisted thousands of community members and are ready to help you with a variety of state services. We can also help connect you with any state government agencies.

Here are some examples of services we help with:

- SEPTA Key Senior ID card applications
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate applications
- PennDOT paperwork, such as applications for disability placards or vehicle registration
- LIHEAP (heating assistance) applications
- Free notary service for state-related documents (appointments preferred)

You'll find more information on several of those programs in this newsletter. Call my office at 610-768-3135 if you need assistance with these or any other state-related matters.

Throughout the year, I also hold many community events, including free document shredding events and legislative breakfasts, as well as an essay contest to get local students interested in government.

To make sure you are informed on those and other issues, you can visit my website, [www.pahouse.com/briggs](http://www.pahouse.com/briggs), to sign up to receive my email updates. You can also follow me on social media – [Facebook.com/RepTimBriggs](https://www.facebook.com/RepTimBriggs) or on Twitter, [@RepTimBriggs](https://twitter.com/RepTimBriggs). I'll also keep you up to date on legislative issues.

Sincerely,

*Tim Briggs*



**Scan to learn more about  
how my office can serve you!**

## 2020-21 budget process gears up

In February, Governor Wolf will make his budget address, laying out his priorities for the 2020-21 state budget.

The House Southeast Democratic Delegation met with the governor in November to share our priorities with him.

We must continue to invest in education – not only at the pre-K-12 level, but higher education as well. The Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education's Board of Governors, of which I am a member of, froze tuition last year, and we must continue to reduce the burden on our students. The only way to do that is to continue to reform the operations of the system, as well as increase the state's investment in the state-owned system.

Last year, the state budget that was adopted missed opportunities to raise the minimum wage or enact a fair severance tax, and it cut emergency aid to vulnerable populations. We should correct that in this next budget, while making smart investments to grow our commonwealth in the 21st century.

After the governor's budget address, there will be a series of budget hearings. I'll keep you updated as the process unfolds.

## Funding emergency school repairs to protect children's health

Our schools shouldn't make our children and teachers sick.

In December, I attended a rally in the Capitol Rotunda to demand emergency funding to fix unsafe and unhealthy school buildings.

I've co-sponsored House Bill 2147 to establish the \$125 million Public School Building Emergency Repair and Renovation Grant Program. These funds, the bulk of which would be directed to Philadelphia, would be solely for emergency repairs, such as lead or asbestos abatement, that present a health or safety issue.



## Justice Reinvestment Initiative 2: Getting smart on crime

As Democratic chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, I stood with Governor Wolf in December as he signed two bills – the Justice Reinvestment Initiative 2 – that mark the next steps in our smart-on-crime approach to the judicial system and away from the failed tough-on-crime era.

Senate Bills 500 and 501, now Acts 114 and 115, will address the high cost of incarceration in Pennsylvania, strengthen support for county probation programs, fix inadequate sentencing guidelines, and ensure we are working to help individuals re-enter society.

These reforms will result in lower crime rates, lower recidivism rates, safer streets and substantial savings.

Punishment without rehabilitation doesn't work. These bills required bipartisan compromise, and I was proud to see them signed into law.



## Need help with heating this winter?

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program is available for families and individuals who need help staying warm this winter.

Contact my office at 610-768-3135 for help.



# 11th annual 'There Ought to Be a Law' contest

My 11th Annual "There Ought to be a Law" essay contest for fifth-grade students is happening now!

This contest challenges students to write an essay promoting laws they think would make their schools, community or state a better place. My office is working with school districts to distribute contest forms.

All fifth-grade students who live in the 149th Legislative District are welcome to participate. Call my office at 610-768-3135 if you have a student who needs an entry form.

The winner will receive an official citation from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and be invited, along with his or her family, to visit the Capitol.



## Voting Reforms: Mail-in voting on its way

In October, Governor Wolf signed legislation that will make some very positive changes to how our elections work – but will also make it more difficult for some people to make their voices heard.

Act 77 includes many positive reforms that have been priorities for years. The law creates a secure mail-in voting process, and it moves the voter registration deadline to two weeks before Election Day – giving people more time to register.

Unfortunately, the law also eliminates straight-party voting – a move that is proven to have a much heavier impact on people with lower income and people of color. It could create longer lines for voting and increase the burden on working people trying to cast their votes.

I appreciate the governor's work for a bipartisan compromise, but I voted no because of the possibility of disenfranchising some voters.

Visit the Montgomery County Voter Services website at [www.montcopa.org](http://www.montcopa.org) or the state's voter information website at [www.votespa.com](http://www.votespa.com) for more information on mail-in voting, starting with the next election.

These new reforms will need a lot of work to be implemented well. If you have any questions, please call my district office at 610-768-3135.

## Get your SEPTA Key Senior ID Card at my office

Seniors who present a SEPTA Key Senior ID Card ride for free on all SEPTA service lines within Pennsylvania.

My office can help complete the application and take your photo. Just bring a form of identification with a date of birth on it, such as a Pennsylvania driver's license or non-driver ID card, U.S. passport, or birth certificate.

SEPTA has informed my office that it is providing a one-year extension of all SEPTA Key Senior ID Cards expiring in calendar year 2020. Seniors with a card expiring in 2020 will be able to continue to ride SEPTA using their current card for 12 months beyond the printed date of expiration. For example, cards with a May 2020 expiration date will continue to be valid for travel through May 2021.

Even though the cards won't expire in 2020, those who have a card with a 2020 expiration date can renew them at SEPTA Headquarters or the SEPTA Accessible Travel Center in Philadelphia. In the coming year, I will be working with SEPTA as they develop a process that will allow my office to handle card renewals in the future.

Contact my office at 610-768-3135 for help or visit [septa.org](http://septa.org).

## Fill out the 2020 Census

Every 10 years, the United States conducts a census. This count of U.S. residents helps determine how \$675 billion is spent by the federal government and how Pennsylvania is represented in Congress for the next 10 years.

**Filling out the census is required by law, and it's critical if you want:**

- **better roads and bridges.**
- **kids to have better access to quality schools.**
- **better access to restaurants and shops.**
- **better public safety.**

This year, it will be even easier to make sure you and your family are counted. Respond online, by paper or over the phone. The census will be printed in English and Spanish, accommodations are available for those with visual or hearing impairments, and telephone assistance will be available in 13 languages.

# Addressing Transportation and Infrastructure Needs

Did you know that an estimated 100,000 vehicles travel the 422 corridor each day? Route 202, I-476 and I-76 are not just as travelled, and it's only expected to increase.

It's critical that we take care of our highly traveled roads, so that community members can travel safely and efficiently. Transportation funding and infrastructure improvements are some of our highest priorities in Harrisburg.

Governor Wolf has proposed that we invest \$4.5 billion in infrastructure, funded through a commonsense severance tax. Despite the grave concerns I have on fracking, I have co-sponsored that legislation, known as Restore PA, because it's essential that we find new funding mechanisms to support needed improvements. Restore PA would provide funding for local road and bridge upgrades, combat blight, expand broadband access

## Report a Pothole

See a pothole that needs to be repaired? Report it on my website, [www.pahouse.com/briggs](http://www.pahouse.com/briggs).

across the state, and more.

I was proud to have played a role in the passage of Act 89 of 2013, but while we needed \$7 billion to best address our failing roads and bridges, we were able to only come up with \$2.3 billion. And we've continued to raid these funds to pay for state police complements and mass transit.

We must address ALL of our needs responsibly. The condition of our roads will only get worse, and our congestion will continue if we don't do something soon.

## Driving Reminders

Pennsylvania law requires that when your windshield wipers are on, your headlights are on, too.

In winter, remember to clear snow and ice from your vehicle – if snow or ice from your vehicle strikes a vehicle or person and causes death or injury, you will be breaking the law.

Find more driving tips at [psp.pa.gov](http://psp.pa.gov), under Safety Resources.

## DO YOU NEED A REAL ID?

Beginning Oct. 1, 2020, Pennsylvanians will need a REAL ID-compliant driver's license, photo ID card, or another form of federally acceptable identification (such as a valid passport or military ID) to board a domestic flight or enter a secure federal building or military installation.

I toured the new PennDOT center at 143 S. Gulph Road in King of Prussia in the fall, and it is a very convenient and

efficient location to take care of your needs. The center offers over-the-counter REAL ID service.

Information about REAL ID can be found on PennDOT's website, under the REAL ID section: [www.dmv.pa.gov/REALID](http://www.dmv.pa.gov/REALID). Please contact my office at 610-768-3135 for help obtaining your REAL ID or with any questions or concerns.

## Planning for the future of state parks

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is planning for the future of our state parks.

It's been 25 years since the last strategic planning effort for the Bureau of State Parks. The new process, called "Penn's Parks for All," aims to cover the next 25.

Our state parks are a great investment in the quality of life for all commonwealth residents, and we have neglected them for far too long. I will continue to advocate for smart and responsible steps to allow these parks to thrive for all residents for generations to come.

You can read the draft plan at [dcnr.pa.gov](http://dcnr.pa.gov). Click on the "State Parks" icon on the left, and then the "Penn's Parks for All" link.





*I was honored to participate in a Wreaths Across America ceremony organized by Girl Scout Troop 7021 at St. Matthew Cemetery in Conshohocken in December. This annual program is a great chance to remember veterans who have died and show our gratitude for their sacrifice.*



*At the PA Farm Show, I stopped by the Penn Vet booth and heard how the Working Dog Center is leading the way in the research and training of detection dogs. Pictured with me from left are Michael Smith, from University of Pennsylvania, Andrew Hoffman, Dean of the School of Veterinary Medicine, Rep. Mary Jo Daley and Rep. Jeanne McNeill.*



*I was happy to help Montgomery County Recorder of Deeds Jeanne Sorg with a donation drive to benefit veterans countywide. My office was a drop-off location for personal care items that were then donated to organizations that serve veterans. Thank you to the many constituents who helped make this a successful effort.*



*I'm proud to be chairman of the Arts and Culture Caucus. This bicameral, bipartisan caucus helps lawmakers access the latest research, education and policy developments on arts and culture.*

*The arts are an integral part of our community, schools and economy, and the caucus works to keep arts and culture as a priority in legislation.*



*I was pleased to be invited to visit Narberth Ambulance company in November and discuss ways we can support our emergency responders.*



*Rep. Mary Jo Daley and I recently hosted a screening of the documentary "Backpack Full of Cash," an impactful movie that highlights the need for more appropriate public education funding and charter and cyber charter reform in Pennsylvania. I'm pleased we were able to highlight this important issue.*



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## My Office Can Help You With:

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

***Any issue with state government!***

### Notary services

**Free notary services are available for constituents at my district office! Appointments are recommended. Call 610-768-3135.**