



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

# JOE WEBSTER

SERVING THE 150TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

35 Evansburg Rd. | Collegeville, PA 19426 | (484) 200-8263 Hours: 9:30AM-4:30PM

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## Dear Neighbor,

With fall right around the corner, I wanted to provide you with an update from my office and Harrisburg. In July, we wrapped up session by passing a robust, comprehensive budget that will invest millions of dollars in education, infrastructure, health, veterans affairs, and environmental protections. These historic investments will spur economic development and strengthen communities across the commonwealth. Included in the budget are also a dozen new programs and initiatives for gun violence prevention, housing protections, and environmental revitalization to name a few. I am proud of the investment increases Democrats were able to achieve with this budget including the \$850 million increase to our education budget.

However, on the same night, Republican legislators forced through a bill, SB 106, with five proposed constitutional amendments, including one that would deny Pennsylvanians' right to abortion. Debate was fierce, with my Democratic colleagues and I giving passionate floor speeches in opposition to SB 106. Yet with a GOP majority, the bill passed. If the bill passes again next session, it could go before the voters as early as the May 2023 Primary Election. Constitutional amendments are approved by the voters, bypassing the formal legislative process. With this in mind, I am again reminding all eligible voters just how important it is to participate in every election.

Before November, make sure to check your voter registration and request the constitutional mail-in ballot from [vote.pa.gov](http://vote.pa.gov). You can also check your polling location here as well!

Throughout this newsletter, I will provide you with greater insight into the budget, SB 106, and other updates from Harrisburg and our community. As always, my staff and I are ready to assist you with any state-related questions.

Sincerely,

Rep. Joe Webster, Ph.D., Colonel, USAF (retired)

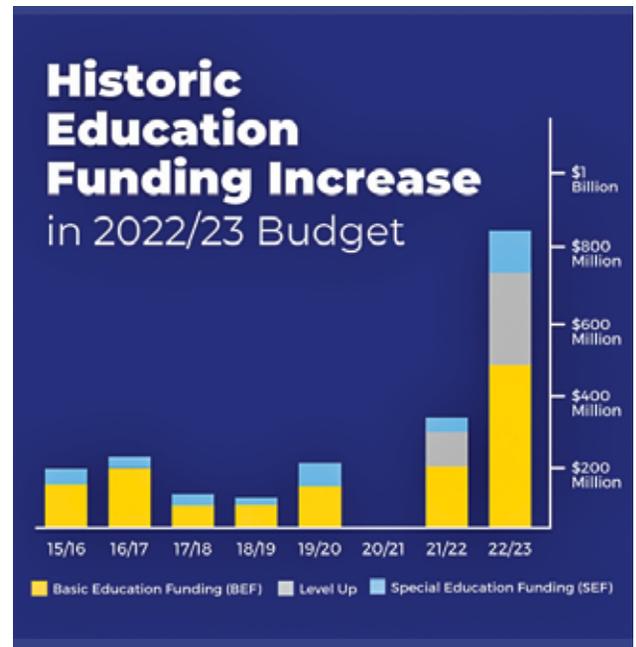
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# Education Money for the School Districts

The 2022-23 Pennsylvania budget that passed this July saw one of the biggest increases in public education funding in the past decade. An increase of \$850 million was added to PA's education fund that includes \$525 million more for basic education, \$100 million for special education, and \$225 million in Level Up funding, which helps the 100 most underfunded public school districts in the commonwealth.

We also included \$95 million for school safety grants plus an additional \$95 million in student mental health grants. These critical investments in education will support access to quality education and help our students compete nationally for better jobs that have been out of reach for so many.

Education is the quintessential silver bullet, and equitable funding is paramount to success for all. The investments we see in this budget, while imperfect, push us closer than we've ever been to securing quality education for all students in Pennsylvania.

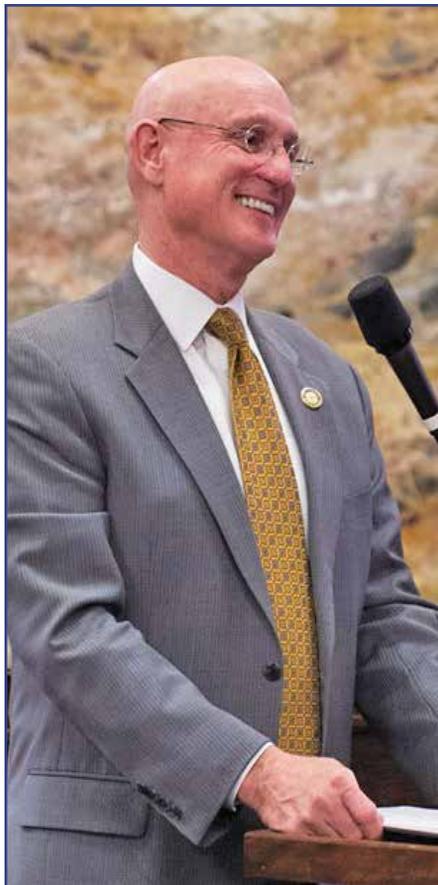


**Norristown Area School District**  
will receive  
**\$21.1 M**  
29.6% more  
than last year!

**Perkiomen Valley School District**  
will receive  
**\$7.5 M**  
9.8% more  
than last year!

**Spring-Ford Area School District**  
will receive  
**\$12.2 M**  
15% more  
than last year!

**Methacton School District**  
will receive  
**\$7.8 M**  
9% more  
than last year!



## What We've Passed

I was proud to see Governor Tom Wolf sign several bills that I supported over the past few months.

Act 53 reduces the Corporate Net Income Tax rate in Pennsylvania from the second highest in the country to one of the lowest! We already have outstanding universities and a key place in the high-impact northeast corridor, and this reduction will provide even more incentive for global leaders and local startups to come to the Keystone State.

Act 54 increases compensation at skilled nursing facilities while also guaranteeing accountability. Medical Assistance-enrolled nursing facilities will now be required to spend at least 70% of their total costs on resident care and resident related care.

We also proactively addressed the nursing demand in the state, as Gov. Wolf signed HB 889, which makes it easier for trained nurses from out-of-state to take our state licensing exams.

We also saw recognition of the efforts of our emergency medical teams during the pandemic, with Act 10 providing financial support to EMS companies. These and other medical professionals have gone above and beyond the call of duty for the last two years, and I always push for Harrisburg to ensure that they have our support – not just our thanks.

My bill, HB 1055, is a bipartisan bill that helps safeguard the confidentiality of veterans' service records. As a veteran myself, I was happy to see this bill pass the House unanimously, and I'm doing all I can to encourage the Senate to take it up before the term ends so that the Governor can sign it into law!

This is just a small sample of my office's legislative action. If you have policy ideas us, please don't hesitate to share them with me at [RepWebster@pahouse.net](mailto:RepWebster@pahouse.net).

## Save the Date!

My staff and I are looking forward to attending and hosting these upcoming community events.



### September

#### Keep PA Beautiful

September 9th  
Myself, staff, & volunteers will be picking up trash and litter to beautify parts of the district

#### FraudSleuth & Veteran ID

September 28th  
Partnering with the Montco Recorder of Deeds to help you protect your property

### October

#### Watershed Policy Hearing

October 3rd  
Public hearing with experts on the Perkiomen watershed and storm management.

#### Veterans Breakfast

TBD  
Veterans are invited to stop by for coffee and breakfast and speak with the Representative.



*In June I stood with Rep. Ben Sanchez, Rep. Nancy Guent, Sen. Maria Collett, Sen. Art Haywood, Attorney General Josh Shapiro, and representatives from Manors College to reaffirm our support for Ukraine in their fight for democracy against Russia.*

## Perkiomen Watershed Initiatives

In the past 18 months, our area of Montgomery County has encountered record flooding on three different occasions, along the Schuylkill River and Perkiomen Creek. The storm water caused enormous damage to homes, businesses, flood plains, and riparian buffers here and in surrounding communities.

Climate change is of course the reason Pennsylvania is experiencing an increase of flood days, higher flood levels, and extreme weather events overall, as is the entire east coast and other parts of our country. We also know that the current storm water infrastructure in the Perkiomen Watershed was installed over 80 years ago and is not built for this much water. And while reducing carbon and pollution will help to reduce some climate threats, we must also find ways of adapting to our changing climate, including updates to infrastructure.

I have started to meet with local experts with knowledge of the Perkiomen Watershed and our current infrastructure plans to begin a project aimed at implementing updates and newer technologies to improve how we collect and manage storm water. It is my hope that this will include watershed restoration, rain gardens, sewer updates, retention basins, and removal and replacement of non-permeable surfaces to start. There will be federal dollars available if we're prepared to use them.

In October I will host a policy hearing, open to the public, that will begin to address this issue. Keep a look out for updates regarding location and time.

## SB 106 / Constitutional Amendments

SB 106 originated as a single proposed amendment to the PA Constitution to reform Lieutenant Governor elections. However, the majority party expanded the legislation in the 11th hour to include four additional amendments.

These amendments would:

1. Declare that there is NO constitutional right to abortion in Pennsylvania.
2. Prevent the Governor's executive branch from exercising its full authority to veto legislation or issue executive orders when necessary.
3. Require voters to provide additional identification each time they vote.
4. Transfer the power to audit elections from the nonpolitical office of the PA Department of State to the elected PA Auditor General.

Constitutional amendments like SB 106 do not require the Governor's signature, cannot be prevented through the Governor's veto power, and partisanship in an already divided nation.

## Midterm Election Dates

**Oct. 24**

Last day to register to vote.

**Nov. 1**

Last day to request Mail-In or absentee ballot.

**Nov. 8**

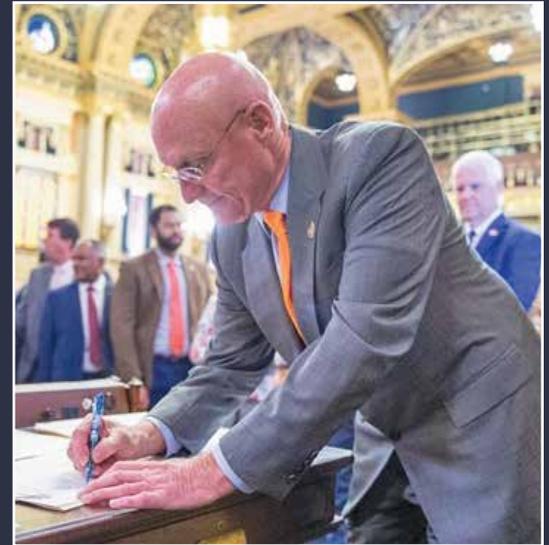
Election Day.

# Addressing Gun Violence

Before the summer began, our country witnessed another devastating mass shooting at an elementary school in Texas that left 21 individuals dead and another 17 wounded. The heartache and anger I felt as I learned of the mass murder that occurred at Robb Elementary in Uvalde was visceral. Yet again, political inaction and excuses instead of gun reform created an environment in which accessible weapons of war led to the deaths of school children and their teachers.

After Uvalde, we Democrats in the PA House took decisive action to move gun reform legislation out of committee and to the full House for votes. Yet Republicans denied debate and votes at every corner, signaling their disregard for this gun violence crisis.

As a veteran who was trained with the exact same style of weapons during my service, I know that there is no justification for weapons of war in civilian hands, on our streets, near our schools, houses of worship, grocery stores, or movie theaters. I am committed to seeing the passage of real gun reform in Pennsylvania to protect lives and end gun violence.



## HB 2083 Update

As many families are aware, the COVID-19 pandemic caused significant disruptions in education, especially among special education students. In 2021, my colleagues and I passed a bill to extend eligibility for public special education programs by one year to help bridge that gap, but I wanted us to go further: after all, it might be years before we know all of the ways the pandemic impacted our children.

That's why I introduced HB 2083, which would have increased the eligibility age for public special education programs by one year for all students who were enrolled during the terribly uncertain and challenging school year of 2020-21. Our districts and teachers did outstanding work in an incredibly difficult time, but even their very best efforts in those months bound to have left gaps.

The 2021-22 school year was in many ways a return to normal, but to help alleviate many parents' and educators' concerns, the governor signed an amendment to PA Act 55 that allows a student with a disability who was enrolled and turned 21 during the 2021-22 school to attend school during the 2022-23 school year and receive services under their current IEP. This is a good patch, but still doesn't do enough for some of our most vulnerable students.

HB 2083 is still in the Education Committee, and I promise to keep pushing for Chairman Curt Sonney (R-Erie) to take it up. This is a bill that will let every parent in the commonwealth sleep a little easier knowing their students won't be forced out of school before their education is complete. If you'd like to help (and I'm most grateful for it), please contact the chairman's office and let him know your thoughts!

### 2022-2023 Budget Highlights

 **3 New State Parks**

**\$155 M**   
**Gun Violence +  
Violence Prevention**

**Whole-Home Repair**  
 **\$125 M**

# Around the Community



*With my friend and colleague, Rep. Ben Sanchez, at the Montco PRIDE Fest in Abington.*



*Standing with nonpartisan group CeaseFire PA and state and county officials on the county steps to call for gun reform.*



*John Han (Navy) and I (Air Force) walking in the July 4th parade.*



*My office partnered with Rep. Matt Bradford to host a cleanup event on Earth Day along Skippack Creek. Volunteers from IBEW and the community were kind enough to help!*



*Dropping off donations from my collection drive at Mitzvah Circle with staff!*



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**State Rep. Joe Webster 2022 so far**

<b>Money Brought Back</b> <b>\$6.1M</b>	<b>10</b> <b>Bills and Resolutions Introduced</b>
<b>15</b> <b>Community Events Hosted and Attended</b>	<b>870</b> <b>Legislative Conversations with Constituents</b>
<b>1,200</b> <b>Constituent Cases Solved</b>	

