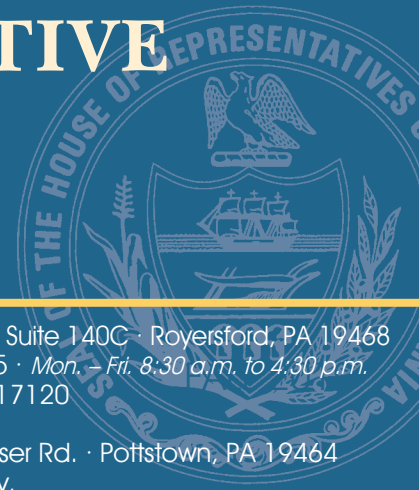




STATE REPRESENTATIVE Joe Ciresi


146th Legislative District



Constituent Services Office: Park Towne Plaza, 301 N. Lewis Road · Suite 140C · Royersford, PA 19468
P: (484) 200-8265 · F: (484) 200-8275 · *Mon. - Fri. 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.*
Capitol Office: 125A East Wing · P.O. Box 202146 · Harrisburg, PA 17120
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Pottstown Satellite Office: TriCounty Active Adult Center · 288 Moser Rd. · Pottstown, PA 19464
Open Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
Office hours may vary: please call (484) 200-8265 to confirm hours

Spring 2022

Email: RepCiresi@pahouse.com · Website: www.RepCiresi.com

   Follow me on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @RepCiresi

Happy March! As we move into this season of renewal, I wanted to take a few minutes to update you on some of the work that we have done over the past few months as well as upcoming events and programs available to you. With spring on the horizon, I am looking forward to getting out more and meeting you to better understand your needs.

This year we are also expecting to see changes to state legislative districts. Every 10 years, following the U.S. Census, the boundaries of state House and Senate districts must be redrawn to account for changes in population. These new maps are expected to take effect starting with the 2022 elections.

At the time this newsletter went to print, the Legislative Reapportionment Commission, tasked by the Pennsylvania Constitution with drawing state legislative districts, had voted to adopt its Final Reapportionment Plan for the Pennsylvania State House and State Senate. These maps can be viewed on the Commission's website: www.redistricting.state.pa.us. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court is expected to rule on pending legal challenges to these maps in March 2022. My fall newsletter will include a description of the changes in the final maps.



2021 Year in Review

- \$8.1M** Grants Awarded
- \$770K** in COVID-19 relief secured for local restaurants and hotels
- \$100K+** in Unclaimed Funds Returned to Constituents
- 4,868** Constituent Services Provided
- 33** Bills Introduced
- 831** Legislation Co-Sponsored
- 1,738** Unemployment Issues Resolved

   @RepCiresi

Paper Tax Forms Available

Tax season is here again, and my office has paper tax forms available to help you file. My Royersford District Office has state and federal tax forms and schedules, state PA-40 instruction books, and a limited supply of federal Form 1040 instruction books. Feel free to stop by my office to pick up what you need.

PA-1000 Property Tax/Rent Rebate books are also available now. Please stop by my Royersford office to pick up an application

and instruction book, or contact my office if you would like us to complete your application for you. The Property Tax/Rent Rebate provides a rebate on paid property taxes or rent to income-eligible seniors, widow(er)s, and people with disabilities. If you received a rebate last year and live in the Spring-Ford Area or Perkiomen Valley school districts, but did not apply for a local supplemental rebate, please contact my office for more information.



Making Pennsylvania Schools Safer

As the Vice Chair of the Pennsylvania House Democratic Policy Committee, I host and participate in hearings and roundtable discussions that highlight important issues facing our state. During the week of the fourth anniversary of the tragic school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, I co-hosted a joint hearing of the PA House and Senate Democratic Policy committees on how to prevent similar tragedies here in Pennsylvania.

As someone who knows Parkland and the community around the school there, I hope we never have such a heartbreaking occurrence here. At our hearing we heard testimony from two parents, Max Schachter and Tony Montalto, who lost children in that shooting. They shared their personal stories and research on what other states are doing to make schools safer.



We also heard from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General, the Spring-Ford Area School District School Police Department, and other school officials on the need to improve our system for school reporting of red flags and instances of bullying. The information we learned in the hearing provides a roadmap for what we can do in the legislature to make sure our students have the safe learning environments they deserve.

Expanded Eligibility for Senior Prescription Drug Assistance

Older Pennsylvanians living on fixed incomes should never have to choose between affording medicine and affording food, rent, or heat. As a result of legislation that I was proud to co-sponsor and support, more than 100,000 Pennsylvanians have become newly eligible for Pennsylvania's prescription drug assistance programs for older adults, PACE and PACENET: these programs offer low-cost prescription medication to qualified residents age 65 and older.

The new income limits starting this year are \$33,500 for a single person and \$41,500 for a married couple. My office is ready to assist with applications and answer any questions you may have about the program. To find out more visit www.aging.pa.gov or call my office.

Ensuring Resources for Disaster Relief

Last year many families in our community were hit hard by Hurricane Ida, which caused over \$100 million in public infrastructure damage and destroyed hundreds of homes and businesses. In response to a trend of worsening natural disasters hitting our state, I've introduced legislation to create a State Emergency Supplemental Grant Program to provide a safety net for Pennsylvanians when disaster strikes.

As we've seen too often, federal assistance isn't enough and has significant gaps: not every natural disaster meets the thresholds for FEMA assistance, many types of losses aren't eligible, and sometimes the amount of assistance provided doesn't come close to the actual

losses. My legislation would fill in some of these gaps and be funded through a portion of the state's liquor tax, returning it to its original purpose when it was created in 1936 to help victims of the Johnstown flood.

Since introducing this legislation, I was pleased to see Governor Wolf's 2022-23 budget proposal include a new \$10 million State Disaster Assistance initiative that would accomplish this vision, providing disaster assistance to individuals in need and improving our readiness for future disasters. I look forward to continuing work on getting this important program enacted so that we're ready for the next one.

SEPTA Senior Key Cards Extended Into 2023

SEPTA Key Senior ID cards allow seniors (65 years or older) to ride for free on all SEPTA service lines within Pennsylvania. SEPTA has announced another extension for all expiring SEPTA Key Senior cards. Cards with printed expiration dates of 2020, 2021, and 2022 will now remain effective through the end of the month printed on the

card in 2023. For example, this means that a card with a printed expiration date of January 2021 will now continue to be valid for travel through January 2023. This extension is automatic.

If you are 65 years or older, you can apply for a new SEPTA Key Senior ID card in-person at my Royersford

District Office with identification containing a date of birth, such as a Pennsylvania driver's license or non-driver ID. Senior Key cards take approximately 4 to 6 weeks to be processed and mailed out by SEPTA. My office will communicate information about the renewal process when it becomes available.

Over \$27 Million in State Grants Delivered

I continue to advocate for my constituents by seeking out and supporting state grants and other funding to help our residents, businesses, schools, and local governments. Since taking office in January 2019, I am proud to have helped deliver over \$27.4 million in state grants to the 146th Legislative District, including these recent grant awards since my last newsletter update:

- \$320,400 for renovations to the former PNC Bank building, vacant for over 15 years, in Pottstown's downtown business district for redevelopment and return to productive use.
- \$423,833 to install sidewalks and pedestrian crossings along Main Street in downtown Trappe.
- \$1 million to develop former industrial brownfields into the mixed-use Riverfront at Royersford development, with living, restaurant, entertainment, and retail venues.
- \$727,800 for trail construction, including extending the Schuylkill River Trail in Lower Pottsgrove Township and Pottstown Borough to connect to Chester County, and the construction of a new ¾ mile trail along the Schuylkill River in Royersford Borough and Limerick Township.
- \$189,975 in Fire Company and Emergency Medical Services grants for the district's 11 fire and EMS companies.
- \$100,000 in Career and Technical Education Equipment Grant Program awards for Pottstown School District and the Western Montgomery Career and Technology Center
- \$250,000 for continued improvements to Limerick Community Park, including softball fields, pedestrian walkways, parking, stormwater management, and other site improvements.
- \$37,290 for pedestrian signal safety improvements at 10th Avenue and Main St in Limerick Township.

Upcoming Household Hazardous Waste Collections

Montgomery County will host several free hazardous waste collection events throughout 2022. You must register in advance for a specific time. Upcoming events in the area include:

Saturday, April 30

**Boyertown Middle School East
2020 Big Road, Gilbertsville**

Saturday, May 7

**Indian Valley Middle School
130 Maple Avenue, Harleysville**

Saturday, May 21

**Temple University – Ambler Campus
Enter at 1431 E Butler Pike, Ambler**

Saturday, June 18

**Norristown Area High School
1900 Eagle Drive, Norristown**

Materials should be boxed for event staff to unload from the trunk of a car, cargo area of an SUV, or bed of a truck. Note that electronic waste, including televisions, will not be accepted at these events. For more information, visit www.MontcoPARecycles.org, or contact Montgomery County at recycling@montcopa.org or (610) 278-3618.

Photos from Around the District



During American Education week, I was proud to stand with the teachers, administrators, and staff who do so much for our children.



This Chukar Partridge spent a week hanging outside our office before we called an animal sanctuary to care for him.



After helping serve lunch at Pottstown Middle School, I got a chance to really talk to the students about the issues that concern them the most.



After the Rally for Fair Funding in Harrisburg, I was happy to take members of the Pottstown education community on to the floor of the House.



We had 120 veterans (and their guests) attend our veterans breakfast on December 7, 2021 (Pearl Harbor Day).



I welcomed Girl Scout Troop 41926 to Harrisburg. We sat down to talk about government and more. I arranged a tour of the Capitol and was even able to introduce them to Governor Wolf!

I Want to Meet You

As we look to put the winter behind us and the weather improves, I'm excited to restart our "Walk with Joe" program this year, where you can join me for a walk around one of our beautiful local parks. Join me at Limerick Community Park or Pottstown's Riverfront Walk so we can get a chance to chat, learn about the issues that are important to you, and, of course, get some exercise. Contact **RepCiresi@pahouse.net** or call (484) 200-8265 to set up a time.

I am also planning on bringing back the "Cup of Joe with Joe Ciresi" meet-and-greet events, an opportunity for constituents to interact with me in small groups at one of our district's local coffee shops. Stay tuned through my office's social media, website, and email updates for information on these events as they are scheduled.

Are you at risk
of having your
water shut off?

Help is available. Learn if you qualify at
dhs.pa.gov/WaterHelp



Free Notary Services

Most official documents can be notarized for free at my district office. No appointments are necessary, but it is recommended to call ahead to make sure a notary is available and your document is able to be accommodated. My office cannot notarize certain types of documents, including wills, powers of attorney, car titles, and the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9. The person whose signature is to be notarized must sign the document in person, in the presence of the notary and provide proof of identity such as a valid driver's license, photo ID card or passport.

Improving Access to At-Home COVID Tests

The rollout and availability of at-home COVID-19 tests provided a convenient and timely way for individuals to keep others safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. I was surprised to discover that these tests – vital to public health – were subject to Pennsylvania's sales tax, despite it being our policy to encourage testing as a tool against the spread of the virus. That is why I, along with my colleague Rep. Melissa Shusterman (D-Chester/Montgomery), introduced legislation to exempt these at-home COVID-19 tests from the state sales tax. This

legislation is simple common sense: our state should not be creating financial barriers to important and convenient diagnostic testing.

If you need an at-home COVID-19 test, each household is eligible to order up to 4 free tests from the federal government at www.covidtests.gov. Starting in mid-January 2022, the federal government is also requiring private insurers to offer coverage for the cost of a limited number of rapid at-home COVID-19 tests each month.

Pottstown PennDOT Photo Center Reopens

In my last newsletter, I noted that the Pottstown Photo License Center had closed. PennDOT terminated their contract for the location at Commonwealth Auto Tags on High Street "for cause," shutting down the PennDOT Photo License Center effective October 4, 2021 (Commonwealth

Auto Tags remained operating at that location).

I remained in contact with PennDOT and urged them to quickly reopen a Pottstown-area center, to ensure convenient access to photo services for my constituents. I was glad to

announce that PennDOT acted quickly and found a new location at 204 Shoemaker Road in Pottstown, less than 2 miles from the previous location. The new Pottstown Photo License Center opened in mid-December and is available to serve the public.



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STATE REPRESENTATIVE
Joe Ciresi
 146th Legislative District



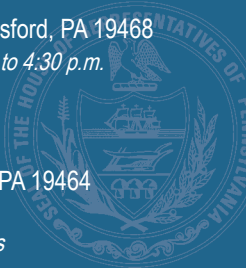
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Join My Email Update List

I maintain an email list for those who wish to receive periodic updates from me, including legislation updates, event announcements, traffic updates, state and local program information, and more. You can sign up on my website at www.RepCiresi.com. You also can follow me on social media, which is regularly updated with information from Harrisburg and local events right here in Montgomery County.

Upcoming Events

Veterans Discount ID Card and Homeowner FraudSleuth Sign-Up Event

Co-Hosted with Montgomery County Recorder of Deeds Jeanne Sorg

Wednesday, April 6 | 10 a.m. – Noon
Rep. Ciresi District Office

301 N. Lewis Road, Suite 140C, Royersford

For Veterans: Bring your DD-214 discharge paperwork to be recorded with the County and receive a Veterans Discount ID Card, accepted at over 500 county businesses.

For Homeowners: Sign up for FraudSleuth, a free County-run property fraud protection service, which will alert you if someone attempts to record a document matching your property with Montgomery County.

Paper Shredding Event

Sunday, May 22 | Noon – 3 p.m.
 (or until the truck is full)

Pottsgrove High School
1345 Kauffman Road, Pottstown

Please keep to a limit of five boxes of paper per household.