



# STATE REPRESENTATIVE Joe Ciresi

146th Legislative District

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Fall 2022

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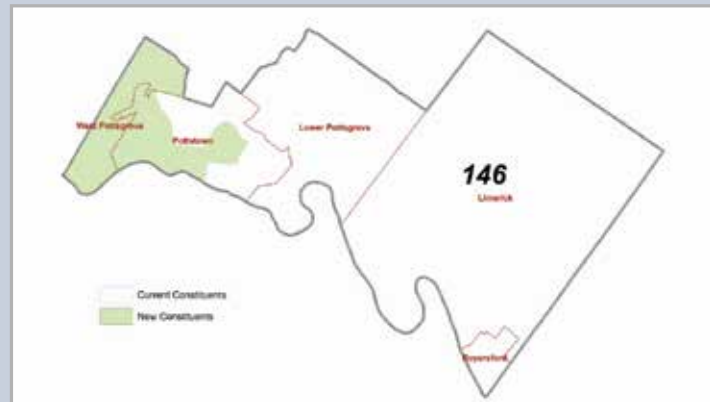
Dear Neighbor,

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family well and that you have found time to enjoy the summer.

Since my last newsletter, much has happened in Harrisburg and the district.

Of course, one of the biggest changes in the district is that it is changing! Every ten years district lines in Pennsylvania are redrawn, using data from the federal census to ensure even populations among the legislative districts. The new districts will take effect once the current legislative session ends on November 30, 2022.

The 146th District now brings all of Pottstown Borough together into one district and includes the addition of West Pottsgrove.



Perkiomen Township has been moved to the 70th District, and the Borough of Trappe has been added to the 150th District.

I look forward to continuing to meet the new residents of the 146th and hope that all will reach out to me or my staff at (484) 200-8265 or [RepCiresi@pahouse.net](mailto:RepCiresi@pahouse.net) if you need help with any state-related issues.

## Passenger Train Service Getting Closer & Amtrak Express Bus Service Launches

Momentum continues to build for the effort to bring the train back to western Montgomery County.

This spring, the counties of Berks, Chester, and Montgomery approved the formation of the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority (SRPRA): a tri-county authority that will coordinate the work to restore train service. I urged the county commissioners to support this

important step. I'm glad to have the opportunity to work with the SRPRA as a member of their Community Engagement Subcommittee.

Our transportation needs have been getting national attention, and Amtrak has identified the Reading-Philadelphia corridor as one of their vision routes in their Amtrak Connects Us plan. As an interim solution until train service

starts, Amtrak has launched express bus service linking the downtowns of Reading and Pottstown with Philadelphia's 30th Street Station, showing that Amtrak is serious about working with us. The momentum continues because of our advocacy, public support, and real transportation needs.

# Budget is a Win for Education, Students, and Taxpayers

I have long championed the need to properly and fairly fund our schools, providing the resources our students need to succeed while reducing the pressures on property taxpayers. In this budget, our advocacy paid off with significant investments in local schools. I proudly voted for a FY 2022-23 state budget that delivers \$7.5 million for our schools, including:

- Pottstown School District: **\$3,899,078**
- Spring-Ford Area School District: **\$1,843,226**
- Pottsgrove School District: **\$848,859**
- Perkiomen Valley School District: **\$902,489**

Pottstown School District, the fifth-most underfunded district in the state, saw an especially significant increase because of the “Level Up” program, dedicated funding for our most underfunded school districts to help them catch up.

In addition to this recurring funding, the budget invests \$200 million for school safety improvements and school mental health programs. Keeping our children safe in school should be a priority for all of us. To help with this, our schools will get the following for safety and mental health:

- Pottstown School District: **\$300,851**
- Spring-Ford Area School District: **\$438,262**
- Pottsgrove School District: **\$297,263**
- Perkiomen Valley School District: **\$353,663**
- Western Montgomery Career and Technology Center: **\$140,000**
- Montgomery County Intermediate Unit: **\$140,000**

The budget includes significant investments in other parts of education, including \$60 million to create 2,300 new seats in Pre-K Counts, \$29 million for Head Start and early intervention, \$6 million for career and technical education, and \$11 million for public libraries. These crucial investments will support learning and development across a variety of settings, ages, and pursuits.

And finally, the Public School Code adopted alongside the budget includes two provisions I fought for to help improve education. It included my bill to create a direct path for dance teacher certification, so that K-12 dance teachers are trained and certified in the discipline that they teach. It also created a commission to conduct a comprehensive review of our education system and plan for our future needs, instead of making piecemeal changes, which will be called the Commission on Education and Economic Competitiveness. I will continue working on improving our education system and providing relief for property taxpayers.

# Working for Inflation Relief and Creating Jobs

We are all seeing the effects of inflation and rising prices, which have forced many to make sacrifices or changes. That is why I’m pushing a legislative package that would provide relief for my constituents from inflation now, while investing in building a stronger and more prosperous economy for all of us.

## *Relief from Rising Costs*

I’ve cosponsored two bipartisan bills to suspend the state gas tax this year, giving some temporary relief while prices are high. And to help reduce long-term demand for gas, I am working on a set of bills to make it easier for people to afford hybrid and electric vehicles and expand infrastructure for them.

Rising costs especially hurt seniors who live on fixed incomes which is why I’ve introduced HB 2721 to significantly expand the Property Tax/Rent Rebate program for the first time in over a decade. I am also working on legislation to expand our Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) which would provide more help to those struggling to afford heating costs in the winter.

## *Investing in a Stronger Economy for All*

While relief would help in the short term, I’m also committed to building an economy that creates good-quality jobs in our area. I voted for a state budget that will lower our corporate income taxes (one of the highest in the country) to make our state more attractive to businesses looking to create jobs here. We’re also investing millions in tax credits to attract biotechnology, research & development, and film jobs, while creating a child care tax credit to help working families. Our state budget invests in our state’s future, and I am proud to have fought for these important pro-growth changes.



Thanks to a generous donation, my office was able to pass out more than 120 cans of baby formula when we were facing a nationwide formula shortage.

# State Budget Moves Pennsylvania Forward

In addition to its historic investments in education and bringing jobs to Pennsylvania, I voted for a FY 2022-23 state budget that includes many investments in our communities including:

**Public safety** – The budget funds 200 new State Police troopers and creates three new grant programs totaling \$290 million to support local police departments, investigate and prosecute gun crimes, and fund community violence reduction programs.

**Infrastructure** – By continuing to reduce diverted money from the Motor License Fund for State Police expenditures, this budget frees up another \$173 million for road and bridge projects across the state. It also invests \$320 million in ARPA funds for water and sewer projects, such as repairing and maintaining Pottstown’s stormwater arch system.

**Mental health** – Providing \$36.7 million to mostly restore the 2012 cuts to county mental health services, the budget also includes my request for \$100 million in ARPA funds for mental health provider capacity.

**Environment** – Initially proposed as Growing Greener III, this budget includes a comprehensive \$640 million investment in cleaning up our state waterways, expanding and improving our state parks and trails, and repairing water and sewer infrastructure.

**Arts** – As a longtime supporter of the arts, I pushed for an \$18 million funding increase to support job creation, boost tourism, and strengthen our cultural wealth. The budget includes \$15 million in new funding for arts and culture nonprofits, local districts, and professionals.

**These are some highlights of a budget, helped by a robust state budget surplus and one-time federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars, that invests in our state’s future.**



I joined our region’s education leaders to again call for change to help our public schools.



I was honored to receive the Champion of Public Education Award from the PA School Boards Association.



When Xiyah Robinson won the 2022 PA Girls State Wrestling Championship, I was honored to recognize her hard work and achievement at the Capitol.

# Over \$28 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 \$28.7 million in state grants to the 146th Legislative District, including these recent grant awards since my last newsletter update:

- **\$500,000** to repair a collapsed stormwater arch under a building on High Street in **Pottstown**, identified as an “Immediate Priority Repair” in the Borough’s Storm Sewer Arch Inspection Report (funded by a state grant I announced in 2020).
- **\$130,000** for design and permitting to extend public sewer connection to the western portion of Ridge Pike in **Limerick Township**, an area dealing with failing on-lot septic systems.
- **\$150,000** to repair a pedestrian bridge over Manatawny Creek at **Pottstown Memorial Park**, damaged by major flooding in 2019.
- **Almost \$500,000** to support substance use treatment services, education programs, and child abuse victims’ programs in Montgomery County.

## Protecting Reproductive Rights

The Supreme Court ruling overturning Roe v. Wade upended 50 years of precedent and was devastating to women across the country. Not only did it end a woman’s constitutional right to make decisions about her own medical care, but it threatens to impact fertility treatment and treatment of women facing miscarriages and ectopic pregnancies.

The legislature is attempting to pass an amendment to the Pennsylvania Constitution to end the right to choose. As representative, I know that people have very strong opinions about this issue, but I will always stand up for a woman’s right to make their own medical decisions.



In May, I joined local officials in announcing a state grant to complete the last gap in the Schuylkill River Trail, connecting Manayunk to Reading with 40 miles of continuous trail.



We were all happy to see the re-opening of the King Street Bridge in Pottstown.

## Report Potholes

**Did you find a pothole on a state road?  
Report potholes to my office at  
(484) 200-8265 or [RepCiresi@pahouse.net](mailto:RepCiresi@pahouse.net).**

# Property Tax/Rent Rebate Deadline Extended and Supplemental Rebates Coming

The deadline to file for your 2021 Property Tax/Rent Rebate has been extended to December 31, 2022. This program benefits low-income seniors, people with disabilities aged 18 and older, and widows/widowers over the age of 50. You can contact my office for help applying.

If you live in the Spring-Ford Area School District, you are also eligible for an additional rebate up to 50 percent of your state rebate amount.

Good News! As part of the budget this year, I pushed for additional property tax relief, and I am pleased to let you know that all Pennsylvanians who receive an rebate for 2021 will also receive an additional payment equal to 70 percent of what you receive in this year's rebate.

You don't need to do anything to receive this rebate and you will receive it by the same method (direct deposit or check) that you received your original rebate.



We had more than 200 seniors attend our Senior Fair.

## Upcoming Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Montgomery County will be hosting a free hazardous waste collection event on

**Saturday, September 24 at  
Spring-Ford 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Center**

400 S. Lewis Road, Royersford

RSVP online for a specific time. Box your materials to help unloading. Note: electronic waste, including televisions, will not be accepted at these events.

For more information, visit [www.MontcoPARecycles.org](http://www.MontcoPARecycles.org), or contact Montgomery County at [recycling@montcopa.org](mailto:recycling@montcopa.org) or (610) 278-3618.

## PROPERTY TAX/RENT REBATE PROGRAM

for residents who are permanently disabled,  
50+ and widowed, or 65+

Application Deadline: December 31, 2022



### What we need from you:

#### EVERYONE

- ✓ All earned income tax forms (1099 SSI, W2s, etc.)

#### HOMEOWNERS

- ✓ Copies of all paid tax bills

#### RENTERS

- ✓ Signed form from the landlord



**\$35,000**

household income  
for homeowners

&  
**\$15,000**

household income  
for renters

For those on Social Security:  
half of SSI/SSD income is  
excluded for eligibility



I attended the dedication of the Lenape Arboretum, welcoming the Lenape people back to the community to honor their history, culture and legacy in the Perkiomen Valley.

## 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/emailsingup](http://www.RepCiresi.com/emailsingup). You also can follow me on social media which is regularly updated with information from Harrisburg and local events right here in Montgomery County.



**STATE REP. JOE CIRESI**  
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 Harrisburg, PA 17120-2146

lpo.kd.0822

## Upcoming Events

### Telephone Town Hall

**Tuesday, September 6 · 7pm**

*Look for a call to your phone just before 7 pm Simply remain on the line to be connected. Contact my office to have your phone number added to our list.*

### Paper Shredding & Electronics Recycling Event

*Co-Hosted with West Pottsgrove Township*

**Saturday, September 17 · 12pm – 3pm**

*(or until the truck is full)*

*No monitors, televisions, or anything containing freon will be accepted.*

*Off Upland Square Dr. behind the Upland Square Shopping Center's Target*

*For traffic purposes, we recommend turning onto Upland Square Dr. from Sell Rd., with event entrance on the right.*

*Limit of five boxes of paper per household.*

### Free Electronics Recycling Event

**Saturday, October 1 · 9am – 11am**

*Western Montgomery Career and Technology Center  
 77 Graterford Rd., Royersford*

*Small electronics only; no monitors, televisions, or anything containing freon will be accepted.*

### Unclaimed Property & SEPTA Senior Key Card Sign-Up Event

*Apply to get a SEPTA Senior Key Card and check to see if you or anyone in your family has unclaimed property sitting in the State Treasury! 1 in 10 Pennsylvanians have unclaimed funds.*

**Tuesday, October 4 · 1pm – 3pm**

*Pottstown Regional Public Library, 500 E. High St., Pottstown  
 SEPTA Senior Key Cards allow free travel on SEPTA trains and transit for seniors (65+); please bring ID showing proof of age.*

*If you would like us to check you and your family for unclaimed property in advance, please email RepCiresi@pahouse.net with names and current/previous addresses in PA.*

### Veterans Discount ID Card & FraudSleuth Sign-Up Event

*Co-Hosted with Montgomery County Recorder of Deeds Jeanne Sorg*

**Wednesday, October 12 · 10am – 12pm (noon)**

*Rep. Ciresi District Office · 301 N. Lewis Rd., Ste. 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.*