

Jason Ortitay

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

State Budget **UPDATE**

Pennsylvania's new state budget is now law, and it holds the line on taxes while making room for new investments in education and public safety. The final package totals \$50.85 billion, an increase of roughly \$1.8 billion, or 3.7%, over last year. It includes no new broad-based taxes and no new revenue sources, and it spends about \$2.4 billion less than the governor's original proposal from February.

For families across the 46th District, this budget means no new taxes out of your paycheck, more resources to help kids learn to read, safer and better supported schools, and roads and bridges getting fixed without added cost to taxpayers.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- Education spending statewide increased by more than \$925 million.
- A \$775 million fund for shovel-ready road and bridge projects across the Commonwealth.
- A cost-of-living adjustment for state employees who retired prior to July 1, 2001 (15-24.5% increase).
- A \$12 million increase in funding for rape crisis programs.
- A \$10 million increase in the student teacher stipend.
- An additional \$10 million for Grow PA Scholarships.
- A nearly 36% increase in funding to combat human trafficking.
- Adds \$10 million to Pennsylvania's evidence-based literacy efforts

Fighting for Domestic Violence Survivors

In June, a survivor of domestic violence from my legislative district, and her friend, came to Harrisburg to talk to legislators about my bipartisan bill package, which offers domestic violence survivors further protections, enhances offender accountability, and better prevents repeat and escalating violence.

As a result of their visit, House Bill 2344 advanced out of committee and now is before the full House for consideration. The bill would cancel coerced debt incurred as a result of a domestic violence offense, fraud, duress or intimidation.



Blocking Online Gambling and Sports Betting on School Grounds

Students in K-12 schools are unfortunately gaming during the school day, using online gaming and sports wagering platforms instead of focusing on their schoolwork. This issue was brought to my attention by a constituent, Raymond Mikesell Jr. of South Fayette, whose son struggled with gambling addiction that began while a student. That addiction followed him for years and ultimately cost him his life.

Currently, Pennsylvania authorizes interactive gaming and sports wagering for adults under a licensed and regulated framework. That framework was never meant to reach classrooms. However, with a smartphone in nearly every student's pocket, the line between a regulated adult activity and the school day has blurred. In some cases, minors are using a parent's account and credentials to place bets and play casino games while sitting in class.

House Bill 2631 would require licensed operators to use geospatial technology, the same kind of location software they already use to keep gambling inside state lines, to draw a digital boundary around school property. Inside that boundary, the platforms simply will not function, regardless of whose account is being used.

Our schools should be a place for learning, not a place to lose your future one bet at a time. The technology to stop this already exists. We are simply asking the operators who profit from gaming to make sure their products cannot be used by a child sitting in a classroom. This is common sense, and it is long overdue.

The bill now awaits consideration in the House Gaming Oversight Committee.

46th District Celebrates America 250

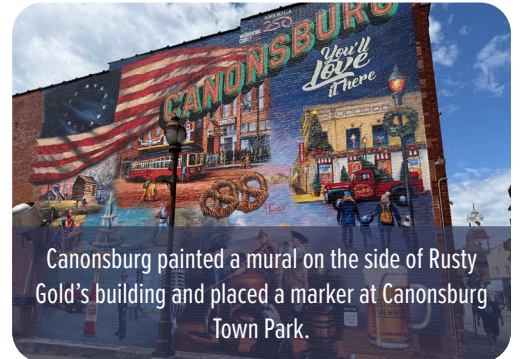
In honor of America's semiquincentennial in 2026, municipalities in the 46th District celebrated with projects and events to commemorate this historic occasion.



Mount Pleasant Township held an event to open a time capsule buried in 1976.



Houston Borough purchased a clock tower and placed it in the center of town.



Canonsburg painted a mural on the side of Rusty Gold's building and placed a marker at Canonsburg Town Park.



Chartiers Township built a shade pavilion at Arnold Park.



McDonald Borough built a band stage at Heritage Park.



Oakdale Borough held a commemorative two-day town celebration on July 3 and 4.



Cecil restored a two-cell jail opened in 1907 near North DePaoli Road as the only non-county jail in the area.

Marking Our Nations Birth with a Local Student

As part of Pennsylvania's America 250 celebration, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives held a legislative session in Congress Hall in Philadelphia returning the institution to its meeting place in 1776.

In addition to the legislative session, each member was invited to bring one high school student to represent their district to participate in a civic learning initiative.

I asked each school district in my legislative district to nominate a student. After reviewing the highly qualified nominees, who were all outstanding, I chose Leah Perchinsky from Chartiers-Houston High School.

Leah has distinguished herself as one of the most exceptional student leaders at her school. She serves as the senior class president, president of the school's Civic Affairs Club, assisted in organizing the school's voter registration drive in partnership with the League of Women Voters, assisted with planning the school's annual Veterans Day Celebration, and participates in the Bridge the Pond Program by collaborating with students from the International School of Breda in the Netherlands and other Pennsylvania schools to address global issues such as human trafficking and the impact of artificial intelligence.



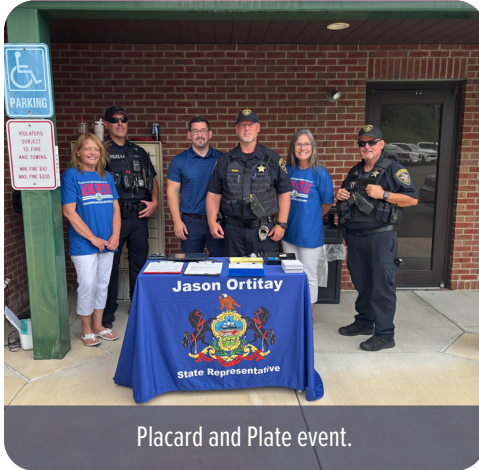
Around the District



Sarris Candies ribbon cutting for its new factory store.



Canonsburg Fourth of July Parade.



Placard and Plate event.



McDonald McSummerfest Parade.



Chartiers Township Community Day.



Houston's 125th anniversary.



Noelle Miller, 127-pound weight class champion at the 2026 Pennsylvania Junior Wrestling Championships.



Flag Retirement Ceremony.

Application Deadline Extended for 2025 Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program

The deadline for senior citizens and Pennsylvanians with disabilities to apply for rebates on rent and property taxes paid in 2025 has been extended to Dec. 31.

Income limits for the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program increased again this year to \$48,110 for both homeowners and renters. Remember to exclude 50% of Social Security when determining your income. The maximum rebate is \$1,000.

The program is open to residents age 65 years and older; widows and widowers 50 years and older; and people with disabilities 18 years and older.

Remember – you do not need to pay anyone for assistance to apply for the rebates. Apply online at mypathpa.gov, or contact my district office for help. Additional information about the program is available at pa.gov/agencies/revenue/ptrr.

Rebates began to be distributed on July 1, as required by law.

What My Office Can Do For You...

- Driver's license and vehicle registration applications and renewals.
- Assistance with PennDOT paperwork (senior reduced car registration, lost cards, changes, corrections, special registration, vanity plates and handicapped placards).
- PACE and PACENET applications for seniors.
- Property Tax and Rent Rebate applications.
- Unclaimed property.
- Voter registration, absentee ballot and mail-in applications.
- Educator resources.
- Free state maps.
- Copies of legislation.
- Assistance with state licenses.
- Coordinate with state agencies to resolve state-related matters.

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46th Legislative District

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12th Annual Veterans Luncheon

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Hilton Garden Inn, 1000 Corporate Drive, Canonsburg
While this event is free and open to all veterans of the 46th Legislative District and their spouses, space is limited. RSVPs must be received by Tuesday, Oct. 13. No late registrations will be accepted. Please call my district office at 412-221-5110 or visit my website at RepOrtitay.com/events to register.

PRT Senior ConnectCards Available

Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT) Senior Citizen ConnectCards are available for processing at my district office in Canonsburg by appointment only. PRT will continue to accept blue or yellow Pennsylvania Senior Transit Cards indefinitely.

The Senior Citizen ConnectCards permit adults, 65 or older, to ride for free on PRT vehicles, including buses, light rail and inclines, during all hours of operation. Those who register will need to bring valid proof-of-age documentation to the district office. My office can accept a photo driver's license, Pennsylvania identification card, passport, PACE identification card, armed forces discharge/separation papers or a birth certificate.

Cards will be ready for pickup within four weeks.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call my office at 412-221-5110.

Veterans Assistance Available

On the first Thursday of every month, a Veterans Administration service officer from the American Legion is available for appointments at my Canonsburg district office.

The officer assists veterans for FREE in securing benefits and services from the U.S. Veterans Administration, including the following:

- Compensation.
- Education.
- Health care.
- Pension.
- Death benefits.
- Veterans' benefits.

An appointment is necessary to meet with the service officer. Please call 412-221-5110 to schedule.