



STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**DAVE  
ZIMMERMAN**

PROUDLY SERVING THE **99<sup>th</sup>** LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

**Continuing the Fight for Election Integrity**

Election integrity is critical to the success of a healthy Republic. Voters will not have faith in their elected leaders if they do not trust the outcome of elections. That is why I continue to fight for election integrity measures that will increase voters' faith in the results of our elections.

Earlier this spring, I joined House Republicans in launching a discharge petition in hopes of passing a voter ID constitutional amendment. Unfortunately, House Democrats continue to stall this initiative.

Requiring ID each time a person casts a ballot would help restore confidence in elections and prevent election fraud, including voting under a fictitious registration, voting multiple times by registered voters in multiple states, impersonating another voter and illegal immigrant voting. There is broad support for expanded voter ID requirements, with a 2021 poll by Franklin & Marshall College showing 74% of Pennsylvanians in favor.

I am also part of a lawsuit, along with more than 20 of my colleagues, against President Biden and Gov. Shapiro to restore the authority of state legislatures over election laws and processes. The U.S. Constitution is clear that the state legislatures decide election laws, but we have seen Gov. Shapiro and President Biden overstep their authority and unilaterally decide election laws without the state legislature. The case has been appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

I will keep fighting for critical election integrity measures that restore confidence in our elections.



*I'm pictured signing a discharge resolution to move election integrity legislation for a full House vote.*



Pictured with me at a recent gun rally on the Capitol steps are Val Finnell, Pennsylvania state director for Gun Owners of America, and Stephen Willeford. Stephen is a grassroots liaison for Gun Owners of America and is known as "The Barefoot Defender" and the "Good Guy with a Gun" for confronting, trading fire and wounding a mass shooter on Nov. 15, 2017, in Sutherland Springs, Texas.

**Protecting the Second Amendment**

America's Founding Fathers believed the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms was the protector of all other rights against a tyrannical government. As our Second Amendment rights continue to come under attack, I am happy to say that I voted against every bill that infringed on those rights.

The Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution writes: "A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

Article I, section 21 of the Pennsylvania State Constitution states: "The right of the citizens to bear arms in defense of themselves and the State shall not be questioned."

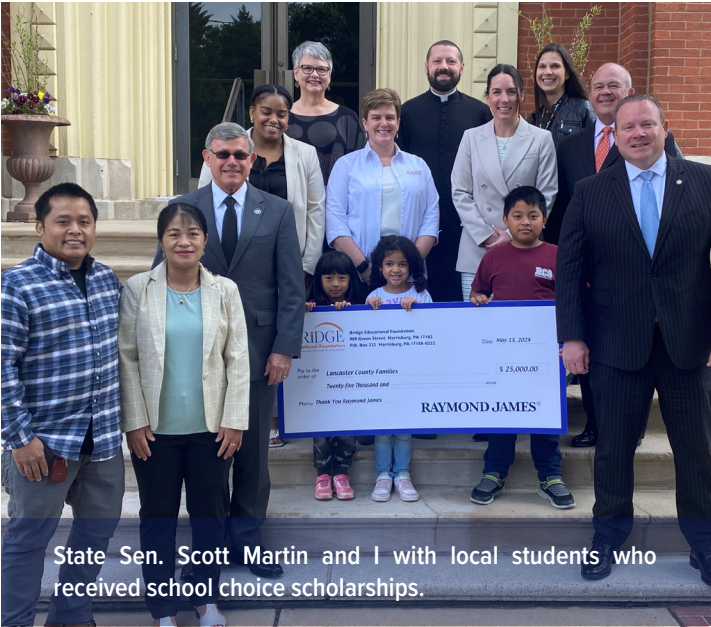
Republicans recently succeeded in defeating two more Democrat gun control bills in the Pennsylvania State House. This is a big win for gun owners seeking to exercise their constitutional rights.

As we look throughout the country, we see a pattern that cities with the most restrictive gun control laws also have the highest crime rates. I will always advocate for policies that are proven to successfully reduce crime.





# Continuing the Fight for School Choice



State Sen. Scott Martin and I with local students who received school choice scholarships.

I am a staunch proponent of providing school choice options for parents and students across the Commonwealth. Families need to be able to choose the school environment, curriculum and extracurricular opportunities that best suits their child.

We have been making strides in this area over the years, but there is still a lot of work to be done. Just this session there were three bills I supported that would help further school choice in Pennsylvania.

These bills would provide scholarships to students attending the poorest performing schools in the state; increase funding for the popular Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program and provide more scholarship opportunities for students attending economically disadvantaged schools; and amend the Pennsylvania Constitution to change the current school funding structure to one that would directly fund each child's education at the school that best fits their needs.

These changes and others would enable more students to have a better-quality education and stimulate more schools to improve their educational offerings.

# Governor's Proposed \$48 Billion Budget More Than PA Can Afford

The 2024-25 state budget process is currently underway. Following Gov. Josh Shapiro's budget address in February, the House and Senate are now trying to work out a compromise that will fund our government obligations and set Pennsylvania up for future success.

Unfortunately, we started this budget round with the governor's \$48.34 billion proposal, which represents an increase of \$3.7 billion, or 8.4%, over the current year's spending. His plan relies on a portion of the state's reserve funds to balance his proposal, which would wipe out the state's savings accounts within the next 3-4 years, virtually guaranteeing a tax increase for all Pennsylvanians in the near future.

We have an annual budget deadline of June 30; however, the prospect of having a fully completed and agreed upon budget by that time will be challenging in my opinion. Both the Senate and House Republicans are looking for a much leaner budget that will not strain our state finances and grow government.

# Supporting PA Small Businesses

With more than 1 million small businesses in Pennsylvania employing over 2.5 million individuals, we need to do more to support growth in this sector. The best way we can do this is to get government off their backs by reducing regulations, eliminating burdensome fees and decreasing business taxes.

Pennsylvania needs to focus on becoming more business friendly, so more entrepreneurs want to come here and grow. We need to capitalize on our competitive advantages, like our research universities, countless natural resources, proximity to major transportation hubs and quality workforce.

I will continue to advocate and vote in favor of legislative initiatives that seek to support our small business community.

# Bill Would Expand Sale of Raw Milk Products



In an effort to help boost farmers and promote natural food products, I recently introduced legislation that would expand the raw milk products farmers can sell with a raw milk permit.

Under current Pennsylvania law, only raw milk and raw milk hard cheese can be sold with the appropriate permits. My legislation would allow holders of a raw milk permit to sell additional raw milk products.

We are seeing an ever-increasing consumer demand for organic and natural food products, including raw milk and raw milk products. This legislation would allow for greater access to such foods without compromising any of the raw milk safety standards set by the Department of Agriculture.



## Property Tax Legislation Update

Property taxes continue to be a top issue for residents across my district and much of Pennsylvania. In fact, a report from the Tax Foundation graded Pennsylvania as having the sixth highest property taxes in the country. In an effort to help ease that burden, there have been several legislative measures proposed this session.

**House Bill 459**, which I co-sponsored, eliminates the School Property Tax by amending the PA Constitution and compelling the Legislature to enact a more equitable alternative to fund public education.

**House Bill 91** is a Senior Citizen Property Tax Freeze. This would allow the local taxing authority to freeze an eligible senior's property taxes at their base year amount for as long as they remain eligible.

**House Bill 907**, another bill that I co-sponsor, eliminates the age requirement for widows and widowers to be eligible for the Property Tax/Rent Rebate program. Currently, only widowers and widows ages 50 and older are eligible.

**House Bill 1670**, the Property Tax Freedom Act, would allow school districts to determine how they fund their schools at the local level; maintain local control; make it illegal for the state to take your house if you do not pay property taxes; require a voter referendum if additional funds are requested by the school board; and require every school board to reduce property taxes by a minimum of 10% in the first year to help lessen the burden of property taxes.

Each of these bills are currently in a committee. So far, Democrat leaders who control the House have shown no willingness to even bring these bills up for a vote.

## Chaplain Legislation Would Support Students and Teachers

It is time that we provide school teachers and students with the support they need to succeed. This is why I recently introduced the **Student and Teacher Support Act** to allow public school boards to employ, or approve as a volunteer, a certified school chaplain.

Data from more than 30,000 schools in 23 countries show, on average, a 37% increase in high school graduation rates, an 80% decrease in teen pregnancies and a virtual elimination of suicides when a chaplain is present in school.

Schools with chaplains show an increase in student grades, teacher retention, school safety, respect for authorities and student-teacher relations. Additionally, schools with chaplains result in decreased alcohol and drug consumption, school violence, discipline issues, and bullying.

Throughout America, certified chaplains are already employed by airports, hospitals, U.S. Department of Defense, federal and state prisons, U.S. Congress, fire departments, police departments and the CIA. Now is the time to also give our teachers and students access to chaplains.

## Touring the State Capitol

One of my favorite opportunities as a state representative is providing school tours of the State Capitol to students in my district. This past school year, over 900 students and teachers visited the building that President Theodore Roosevelt called "The handsomest building I ever saw."



Students from Blue Ball Elementary School

## 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Citation

I had the pleasure of presenting Hazel Yelk with a House citation for her 100th birthday. As the citation said, Hazel "has demonstrated the highest ideals of citizenship throughout the years and truly deserves special recognition." Happy birthday, Hazel!



Hazel Yelk with her sons, Robert and Richard, and her granddaughter, Tammy.





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## OFFICE LOCATIONS

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## SIGN UP FOR MY WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER

Every week, I publish a short email that includes updates from the state Capitol and at home in the 99<sup>th</sup> District. Legislation and local events are typical topics you can read about. If you would like to sign up to automatically receive my regular E-newsletters, visit [RepDaveZimmerman.com/email-signup](http://RepDaveZimmerman.com/email-signup).

## ★★★ATTENTION VETERANS!★★★

*A service officer from the Berks County Veterans Affairs Office will be available to assist veterans with variety of issues!*

**THE SECOND  
TUESDAY  
OF EACH MONTH**

**11 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

### **Issues the service officer can help with include:**

- ★ VA claims for disability compensation.
- ★ Disability increase and rating decision appeals.
- ★ Veterans or surviving spouse pension.
- ★ Burial and death benefits.
- ★ Addition of dependents.
- ★ Dependency and indemnity compensation.
- ★ Other veterans' benefits.

**To schedule an appointment, please call my office at 717-556-0031.**

## Celebrating Agriculture with a *Blessing of the Balers!*

Agriculture continues to be Pennsylvania's biggest industry. I recently joined Rep. Bud Cook, colleagues, farmers and agriculture advocates at the state Capitol Tuesday for the Second Annual Blessing of the Balers and May is Beef Month Celebration.

The event celebrates the state's hard-working farmers and related agriculture operations that help keep food on our tables. We prayed for the balers in hopes of a productive farming season, and a proclamation was presented to the Pennsylvania Beef Council in recognition of the state's growing beef industry.

