



State Representative

Joe Emrick

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Dear Friends and Neighbors:

I appreciate your taking time to read my newsletter during what I'm certain is a very busy time of year for most of us. I wanted to update you on some of the issues we are discussing in Harrisburg, as well as an event taking place in the district.

My first year in office has been a challenging but rewarding one. I am finding that one of the most important aspects of this job is establishing relationships among my colleagues, and working to find solutions to common problems we share. Serving in the General Assembly means not only listening to constituents, but finding how my peers feel about similar issues and then working together to best represent the people of Pennsylvania.

I also want to take time to thank you for sending me to Harrisburg. Being chosen to serve as your "voice" at the state Capitol is a humbling responsibility that I do not take lightly.

Sincerely,

Joe Emrick, State Representative  
137th Legislative District

## New District Office in Nazareth

In order to better serve constituents in the southern portion of the 137th Legislative District, I have opened a full-time district office in Nazareth. The new office is open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., in the Nazareth Borough Office Building, 134 South Main St., Nazareth.

The new office will take the place of my satellite office hours held at Memorial Library of Nazareth and Vicinity. I will, however, continue to offer satellite office hours on the first and third Thursday of every month, from 8 a.m. to noon, at the Forks Township Community Center, 500 Zucksville Road, Forks Township.

I appreciate borough officials who have been very accommodating in helping to put this move together and look forward to more efficiently meeting the needs of my constituents. I will continue to maintain my full-time district office Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., at 2165 Mt. Bethel Highway, Mt. Bethel.

Services provided by my district offices include assistance with birth and death certificates, PACE and PACENET applications for seniors, Property Tax/Rent Rebate forms, as well as many other state-related functions. For more information, please contact me through my Mt. Bethel office at (570) 897-0401, my website, [www.RepEmrick.com](http://www.RepEmrick.com), or my Facebook page, PA State Representative Joe Emrick.



**District Office**  
5 Mt. Bethel Plaza  
Mt. Bethel, PA 18343  
Phone: (570) 897-0401  
Fax: (570) 897-0140

**Harrisburg Office**  
P.O. Box 202137  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2137  
Phone: (717) 260-6159  
Fax: (717) 260-6516

[www.RepEmrick.com](http://www.RepEmrick.com)

## Follow Me on Facebook



In addition to email and visiting my website, you can receive the latest legislative news from my office and around the district by following me on Facebook. Just go to [www.facebook.com/RepEmrick](http://www.facebook.com/RepEmrick) and start following my page.

## Addressing the Toll Bridge Fare Increase

In August, I introduced a package of bills in reaction to the July 1 imposition of a toll bridge fare increase by the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission. All three have received significant bipartisan support and sit with the House Transportation Committee. I look forward to them moving to the House floor in the near future.

I am still fighting to get the commission to reconsider the fare increase they imposed without gathering input from the public or business community impacted by their decision, after originally asking for a one-year moratorium on the move. In the interim, I am going ahead with legislation that would prevent this from ever happening again.

House Bill 1873 would require an annual financial and management audit of the commission to be performed jointly by the auditor general of Pennsylvania and the state auditor of New Jersey. While provisions that call for member state auditing of the commission currently exist in the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Compact, neither Pennsylvania's auditor general nor his New Jersey counterpart has the authority to conduct such an audit, thanks to an inconsistency in state law. There is a need for greater oversight of the commission, and my bill allows the commission to be appropriately audited by an independent third party. House bills 1871 and 1872 provide for a gubernatorial veto over actions of commission members from Pennsylvania. Our friends from across the Delaware River have already enacted this provision. In order for this to take effect so that actions such as the recent toll hike are avoided in the future, Pennsylvania's veto law must mirror New Jersey's veto law.

Anyone who uses the bridges feels the effects of the fare increase in their wallet, but never had the opportunity to speak out on the matter. Businesses that use the bridges regularly will pass the toll hike along to their customers and consumers, who will be hit again. There has to be a better way.

*On Thursday, Aug. 25, I held a news conference to announce my package of bills. With me (left to right) are Pat Boynton, representing the Office of New Jersey State Sen. Mike Doherty, and Rep. Robert Freeman (D-Northampton).*



## Deadline for Property Tax Relief Approaches

The deadline to apply for the state's Property Tax/Rent Rebate program is Saturday, Dec. 31.

The program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians who are 65 years or older, widows and widowers 50 years or older, and those 18 years or older with disabilities.

Residents must provide the necessary income, property tax or rental information required to process claims. Information on eligibility income limits and claim forms are available at my district office and on my website, [www.RepEmrick.com](http://www.RepEmrick.com).

Residents of the Bangor Area, Easton Area and Nazareth Area school districts may be eligible for further property tax relief. My district office and website have information on those programs as well.

## Other Legislation I Have Introduced

- **HOUSE BILL 2021** - Designates Route 191 in Washington Township from the Bangor Borough line to the Plainfield Township line as the "World War II Homefront Heroes Highway."
- **HOUSE BILL 1823** - Allows school districts the option of contracting with private driver training school instructors or directors to provide the classroom portion of driver education instruction without obtaining a Pennsylvania teacher certification.
- **HOUSE BILL 1723** - Requires communities that impose sign removal conditions as part of the rezoning process to compensate sign owners for the lost value of the sign.

## Have Your Updates Delivered Online!

Would you like to receive an electronic version of my district update instead of a printed/mailed version? Please visit my website and register your email address.

## Senior Fair Was a Success

More than 400 people attended my Senior Fair on Friday, Oct. 21, at the Forks Township Community Center. More than 60 senior-oriented organizations and businesses were on hand for what turned out to be a great day. I would like to thank all the exhibitors and health professionals who volunteered their time, as well as my staff, Krista Dentith, Jenna Harris, Bob Kilbanks and Kathy Melnick, and volunteers Rick Dixon, Jordan Isaac, Jacqueline Kilbanks, John Pysner and Elizabeth Walter.

