

STATE REP. PERRY STAMBAUGH

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- **NO MILEAGE**
- **NO PENSION**
- **NO PER DIEM**
- **NO TRAVEL EXPENSES**

Keeping in mind that legislative pay and perks come from **YOUR** tax dollars, I have honored this four-part pledge when it comes to compensation:

No Mileage: I don't request any payment for driving to the Capitol on session days or for hearings, going to my district offices, or traveling on legislative business. I see travel as a regular part of my job, just as you commute to work without being paid mileage for it.

No Pension: I am among a handful of Pennsylvania legislators who have refused accepting a state pension, which I believe is clearly prohibited by Article II, Section 8 of the state constitution: With Pennsylvania burdened by \$60 billion and counting in pension debt, not taking a pension is the responsible thing to do.

No Per Diem or Travel Expenses: I don't receive "extra" pay by taking per diems, which in many ways have been abused and become something of a racket. I further don't seek reimbursement for any travel costs (hotel rooms, meals, etc.) when attending legislative hearings around the state. Again, this is part of my job, and my salary (your tax dollars) can cover it without any need to double-dip into more tax dollars.

Always Ready to Serve the 86th District!

LEGISLATURE WRAPS UP WORK ON 2023–24 PA BUDGET

The House and Senate in December passed several code bills, largely putting the finishing touches on the 2023–24 state budget process. The moves ended a more than 160-day standoff that started when the June 30 budget deadline was missed.

In early August, Gov. Josh Shapiro signed the \$45.55 billion 2023-24 General Appropriations bill, which marked about a 6 percent bump over 2022–23 spending levels. The action delivered about 80 percent of budget funding for schools, counties, and low-income support services.

The remaining 20 percent of work required passage of accompanying code bills — complicated legislation dealing with tax, fiscal, education, human services, and administrative policies that provides authorization and instructions on how or where to spend (or not spend) money, especially for new programs. The code bills got stalled when Shapiro reneged on his promise and line-item vetoed \$100 million in new school choice funding.

Some highlights of the approved code bills:

Under the Fiscal Code contained in **House Bill 1300**, state transportation dollars are prohibited from being used for the maintenance of dirt, gravel, and low-volume Pennsylvania Game Commission roads. In addition, payments made to counties, townships, and school districts in lieu of taxes on state park, state forest, and Game Commission lands are raised from \$2 to \$2.40 per acre (all coming from the PA Gaming Fund).

The Public School Code (House Bill 301 and Senate Bill 843) includes a \$150 million boost in the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) and Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit (OSTC) programs, bringing the combined total for those school choice offerings to more than \$555 million (\$470 million EITC; \$85 million OSTC). In the 2021-22 school year (the last year full reports are available), Pennsylvania organizations awarded 77,640 K–12 EITC and OSTC scholarships (an average of \$2,583 per student for EITC and \$1,853 for OSTC). Almost 139,000 scholarship applications were received, the highest on record, but more than 60,000 went unfunded due to program caps.

Overall, the 2023–24 state budget blueprint swells basic education funding for Pennsylvania school districts by **\$567 million**. State support of public education (comprising about 34 percent of the state budget) has grown more than \$6 billion over the last decade. It further authorizes \$46.5 million for universal free breakfasts to 1.7 million K-12 students.

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Kennedy's Corner Safety Improvements Planned

In October, my office initiated a meeting between PennDOT officials and supervisors from Spring and Tyrone townships to discuss safety concerns involving the Rtes. 74-274 intersection at Green Park. Over the last six months, a rash of serious accidents have occurred at this location, in the vicinity of West Perry High School and West Perry Middle School (formerly Green Park Elementary School).

Normally in such situations townships are responsible for purchasing and installing safety measures. However, PennDOT announced at the meeting it would buy and put in various safety measures, such as:

- Flashing warning devices on Route 274 where the existing “Cross Road” alert signs now stand (plans being finalized).
- Closing the passing zone on Route 74 before the intersection (likely to take place this spring).
- Doubling up on “Stop” signs and “Stop Ahead” signs on both sides of Route 74, and installing reflective strips to the posts to boost conspicuity (installation took place after Thanksgiving).
- Adding “Optical Speed Bars” on the Route 274 approaches, which create the illusion of lanes narrowing (completed before Thanksgiving).



Spring Township (where the intersection lies) will only be responsible for future maintenance. Tyrone Township has also offered to financially assist with the upkeep.

There are no firm conclusions why more wrecks at this location are taking place. One issue seems to be vehicles going north on Route 74 running the stop sign (apparently, more drivers unfamiliar with the road are traveling from Carlisle, perhaps rerouted by GPS to avoid construction on I-81 and U.S. 322). Distracted or speeding drivers and motorists not following the “left-right-left look” rule when pulling out from Route 74 or misjudging the quickness of approaching cars remains a factor.

The safety measures proposed offer a good first step. If problems continue, other options will need to be pursued. Be safe and go slow!

Boosting Medicaid Subsidies for Ambulances

Emergency medical services (EMS) companies across the Commonwealth will see a significant and much-needed boost in reimbursement rates under legislation I supported that has now been signed into law.

Act 15 of 2023 ties the state’s Medicaid reimbursement rates for ambulance services (such as basic life support and advanced life support ambulance trips) to federal Medicare rates, and pays whichever amount is higher.

Medicare reimburses at a rate of more than \$8 per mile in both urban and rural areas and \$13 for the first 17 miles in “super rural” areas. This will result in reimbursement rates more than double the current \$4 per mile paid by Medicaid.

The language also ensures EMS units are reimbursed by Medicaid for 100 percent of the miles they travel with a Medicaid patient on board. That removes the previous 20-mile exemption before payment began, which impacted EMS transport to Harrisburg or West Shore hospitals from the Duncannon and Marysville areas (and certain other spots in the 86th Legislative District).

Overall, the law boosts Medicaid reimbursements for ambulance services, including ground and air transportation, by a projected \$126 million per year in federal and state aid.

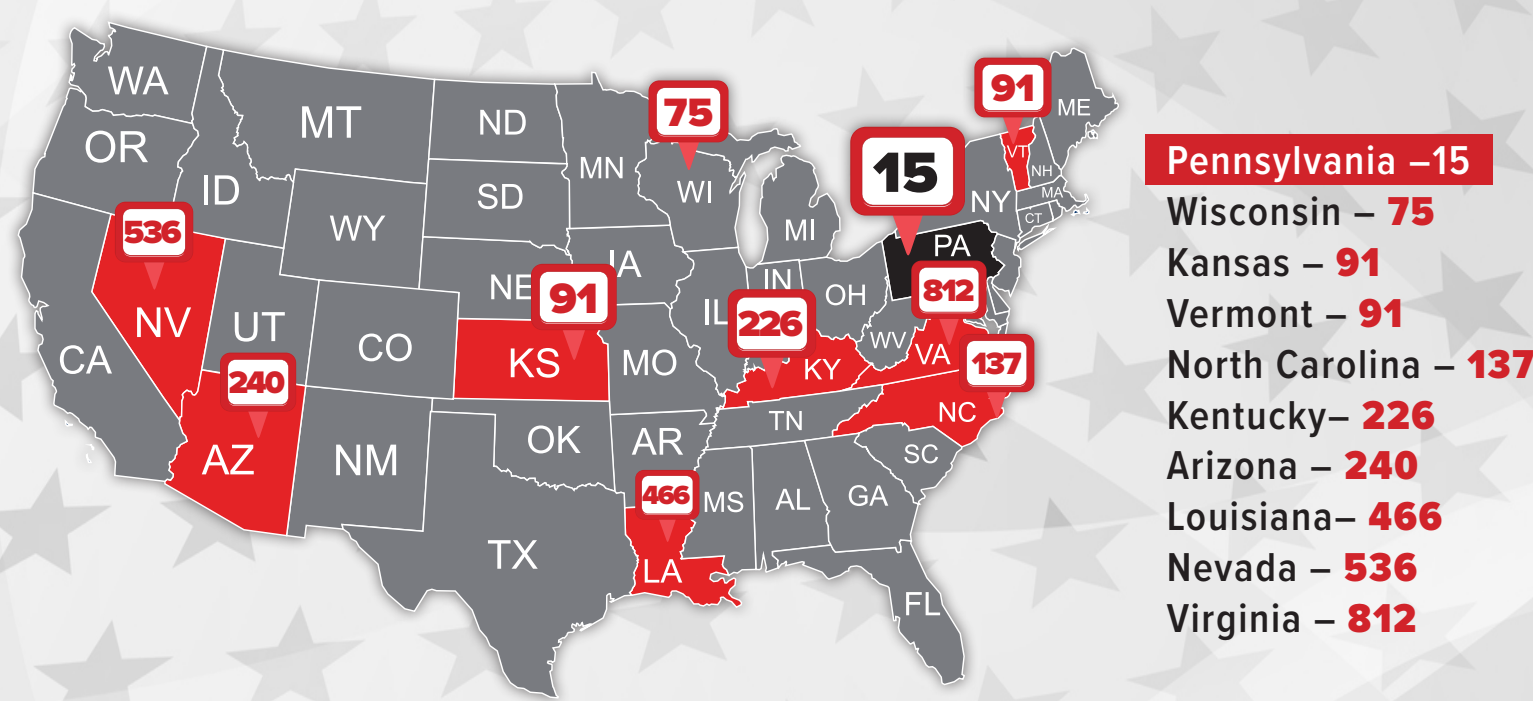
The increased reimbursement took effect Jan. 1, 2024.

PA LEAST PRODUCTIVE STATE, LEGISLATIVELY

The Commonwealth Foundation reports that the first six months of 2023 set some very unwelcome records: Pennsylvania ranks as the least productive state (from a legislative standpoint) among those with divided government. (See chart.)

The study further states that the Democrat-led PA House of Representatives has only scheduled 48 session days during 2023, the fewest since 1964 and least under our current (1968) state Constitution.

Despite having divided government, the following states passed considerably more bills than Pennsylvania from Jan. 1, 2023, through June 30, 2023:



OUT AND ABOUT IN THE 86th DISTRICT

The collage features Representative Perry Stambaugh in various settings: receiving the Diamond Clover Award, presenting awards to a scoutmaster and a woman, participating in a group photo with a large group of people, and standing next to a large bear mascot. Other photos show him at a podium, with a group of young women, and with a group of men in front of a fire truck. He is also seen with a group of people holding a banner for the 2023 USBANDS Group 1 Open State Champions, and with a group of people in front of a house. The collage concludes with him standing next to a blue sports car and with a group of people in front of a sign for Farm Family.

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STATE REP. **PERRY STAMBAUGH**

Always Ready to Serve You

Out of 203 PA State House districts, the 86th Legislative District is the 14th largest in area. To bring services closer to all constituents, I offer office hours at the following locations:

Perry County Legislative Office

18 West Main St., New Bloomfield, PA 17068 • **P: 717-582-8119**

Open: Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (except holidays)

Juniata County Legislative Office

28 Industrial Circle, Mifflintown, PA 17059 • **P: 717-436-6001**

Open: Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (except holidays)

Lack-Tuscarora EMS Social Hall – Second Wednesday of the month (9 a.m. to 2 p.m.)

9320 PA-75, East Waterford, PA 17021

East Waterford office dates during 2024: Jan. 10, Feb. 14, March 13, April 10, May 8, June 12, July 10, Aug. 14, Sept. 11, Oct. 9, Nov. 13, and Dec. 11.

Shine Coffee Company – Third Wednesday, every other month (9 a.m. to 1 p.m.)

204 N. Front St., Liverpool, PA 17045

Liverpool office dates during 2024: Jan. 17, March 20, May 15, July 17, Sept. 18, and Nov. 20.

You can get a full range of services at all locations, such as:

- Car registration, special tags, and license applications.
- PACE/PACENET applications.
- Birth certificate applications.
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate applications.
- Handicap license plates and placards.
- Fishing and hunting information.
- Report issues with state road conditions.
- Free road maps.
- Pennsylvania income tax forms.
- Arranging tours of the State Capitol for individuals or groups.

And much more!