



50TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

STATE REPRESENTATIVE **BUD COOK**

IT'S TIME FOR **TAX CUTS!**

Earlier this summer, I joined the House Republican Policy Committee in Loretto, Cambria County, for a hearing about our historic tax cuts proposal.

While Gov. Josh Shapiro and majority House Democrats continue pushing to grow state spending well beyond what we can afford, my fellow House Republicans and I have offered a plan that would return about \$3 billion annually to the pockets of hard-working taxpayers.

House Bill 2388 would help all residents deal with the ongoing burden of inflation by cutting the Personal Income Tax (PIT) rate from 3.07% to 2.8% and eliminating the Gross Receipts Tax on energy. The bill mirrors one recently passed by the state Senate. Rather than grow the size and cost of government, we should return taxpayers' hard-earned money to them to spend as they see fit.



FIGHTING THE ONGOING DRUG EPIDEMIC

Working to ensure law enforcement has the tools it needs to keep another dangerous drug off the streets, the General Assembly passed a new law that permanently classifies xylazine, a powerful animal tranquilizer commonly known as tranq, as a Schedule III drug under the Controlled Substances Act.

Xylazine mixed with narcotic compounds and used in illicit drug trafficking has been identified as an emerging public health threat. However, it is also a common animal sedative used by veterinarians to facilitate safe handling and treatment of many species, especially large animals.

While the new law criminalizes illicit possession of xylazine, it allows for continued use by licensed veterinarians and requires them to safely store xylazine to protect from theft or improper access.

NEW LAW SUPPORTS DISABLED VETERANS

Recognizing the service and sacrifice of disabled veterans across the state, a new law will exempt 100% of their benefit payments from income calculations for any Commonwealth programs or benefits.

Act 27 of 2024 ensures veterans who receive disability compensation will not have those payments counted against them when applying to programs such as the Real Estate Tax Exemption, Education Gratuity Program, Veterans Temporary Assistance Program and Military Family Relief Assistance Program. It also extends the exclusion of the veterans' compensation benefits to their unmarried surviving spouses.

The law will take effect in mid-August.

DEADLINE EXTENDED FOR 2023 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 2023 has been extended to **Dec. 31**.

Income limits for the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program increased this year to \$45,000 for both homeowners and renters. If you were earning too much to qualify before, you may be eligible now. Remember to exclude 50% of Social Security when determining your income. The law I supported to expand the program also increased the maximum rebate to \$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 my.path.pa.gov, or contact my office for help. Additional information about the program is available at www.revenue.pa.gov.

Rebates began being distributed July 1, as required by law.



I was pleased to take part in the Youth Traffic Safety Teen Expo at Jefferson Morgan School District in the spring.



This year marked the 20th anniversary of the Keystone Paralyzed Veterans Bass Tournament held at the West Brownsville American Legion. Congratulations, Steve Shawley, for catching the five biggest fish. Pictured with me, from left, are Tom Strang, coordinator; Larry Freeman, coordinator; and Steve Shawley.

Waynesburg District Office

1640 E. High St., Waynesburg, PA 15370

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Monday–Friday: 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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California District Office

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By Appointment only.

West Greene District Office

1367 Hargus Creek Road, Waynesburg, PA 15370

Phone: 724-929-2661

Monday–Wednesday: 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

 **RepBudCook.com**

  **/RepBudCook**

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF THE

50th District

STATE REP. BUD COOK



I had the opportunity to join state Sen. Camera Bartolotta and Rep. Elizabeth Fiedler in visiting West Greene School District to discuss the possibility of building a solar array on West Greene's campus. We had a great discussion about how solar may help with the school's energy costs.



Mapletown High School celebrates 100 years this year! It was an honor to join the celebration and present a citation in recognition of the school's rich history.

HOW May We Help You?

To best serve everyone in the 50th Legislative District, I operate three local offices in Waynesburg, West Greene and California.

Here are just a few of the services we can provide:

- ★ PennDOT paperwork, including driver's license and vehicle registration applications and renewals.
- ★ Information and applications for senior citizen benefit programs, including Property Tax/Rent Rebate and PACE/PACENET prescription drug programs.
- ★ Information and applications for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).
- ★ Help with securing birth and death certificates (photo identification required).
- ★ Information about legislation.
- ★ Assistance with resolving matters relating to state agencies.

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