

STATE REP. PERRY STAMBAUGH



WINTER 2024/2025

Always Ready to Serve the 86th District!

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New Bloomfield Legislative Office Finds New Home



My Perry County Legislative Office has moved about one-half mile west to the Rice Building at 417 West Main Street, New Bloomfield, adjacent to the PennDOT shed.

Our vacated location at 18 West Main Street had been employed as 86th State House District legislative offices since 1987. However, demands for security enhancements (unfortunately, a statement on the times we live in), communications improvements, and modern office amenities forced us to begin searching for new digs. Construction of the Rice Building on the west end of the borough offered a perfect opportunity to address long-term legislative needs and help staff more efficiently serve residents.

The late Rep. Fred C. Noye opened the first "full-time" New Bloomfield legislative office in the Eagle Building directly behind the courthouse in November 1975. Legislative functions were shifted to the front rooms of 18 West Main Street after Mother Hubbard's #2 restaurant, based on the first floor, closed in 1986. (The back of 18 West Main Street continued as kitchen/storage areas for catering.)

When the catering operation closed in 1989, the entire first floor was occupied for 86th District legislative services.

Please stop by 417 West Main Street and check out our next generation Perry County "headquarters." It sits on the site of the old Rice Memorial Works shop — a facility erected in 1948 by the late Samuel Rice that manufactured (mostly) granite tombstones and monuments through 1985.

Leadership Changes Coming to House



From left: Rep. David Rowe, Rep. Martina White, Rep. Tim O'Neal, Rep. Jesse Topper, Rep. Clint Owlett, Rep. Sheryl Delozier, and Rep. James Struzzi.

In the Nov. 5 general election, Democrats retained their slim 102-101 majority in the state House. Not one House seat flipped parties — an unprecedented event in PA political history that all but ensures Rep. Joanna McClinton (D-Philadelphia/Delaware) will remain House Speaker.

House Republicans selected a largely new leadership team for 2025-26:

- **Leader:** Rep. Jesse Topper (R-Bedford/Fulton; first seated Feb. 2014)
- **Appropriations Chairman:** Rep. James Struzzi (R-Indiana; seated Jan. 2019)
- **Whip:** Rep. Tim O'Neal (R-Washington; seated June 2018)
- **Caucus Chairman:** Rep. Martina White (R-Philadelphia; seated April 2015)
- **Caucus Administrator:** Rep. Sheryl Delozier (R-Cumberland; seated Jan. 2009)
- **Secretary:** Rep. Clint Owlett (R-Tioga/Bradford; seated June 2018)
- **Policy Chairman:** Rep. David Rowe (R-Union/Juniata/ Mifflin/ Snyder; seated Sept. 2019)

In a nod to divided government, Republicans maintained control of the state Senate by a 28-22 margin. The GOP has held a PA Senate majority since late April 1994.

Republicans also swept all three statewide row offices for the first time ever — Dave Sunday as Attorney General (the position became an elected office in 1980); Stacy Garrity as Treasurer; and Tim DeFoor as Auditor General.

Planting the Seeds of Liberty

In October, I joined representatives from the Pennsylvania Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial (America250PA), Union Masonic Lodge #324 in Mifflintown, as well as the Masonic Grand Lodge of PA in planting the official Juniata County Liberty Tree. The ceremony, which I spoke at, took place at Westminster United Presbyterian Church Cemetery in Mifflintown.

Perry County also planted a certified Liberty Tree in the Butterfly Garden at the Shoaff's Mill Day Use Area of Little Buffalo State Park.

Over the next two years, America250PA will plant a Liberty Tree in each of Pennsylvania's 67 counties.

During the Revolutionary War, those opposed to British rule often convened under an American elm in Boston to discuss independence. The spreading giant became a beacon of hope and was dubbed the "Liberty Tree."

When English troops destroyed the Boston Liberty Tree, patriots across the 13 colonies began to designate new Liberty Trees of all types. The last of those Revolutionary War-era Liberty Trees still standing — a tulip poplar on the campus of Saint John's University in Maryland — was destroyed by Hurricane Floyd in 1999. Fortunately, grafts from that fallen specimen were secured, with direct descendants now thriving and making their way across the nation in time for America's 250th birthday on July 4, 2026.





OUT AND ABOUT IN THE 86th DISTRICT





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: 417 West Main Street, New Bloomfield, PA 17068 • 717-582-8119 | **Open:** Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (except holidays)

Juniata County: 28 Industrial Circle, Mifflintown, PA 17059 • 717-436-6001 **Open:** Monday-Friday, 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 dates for 2025: January 8, February 12, March 12, April 9, May 14, June 11, July 9, August 13, September 10, October 8, November 12, and December 10.

Shine Coffee Company: Third Wednesday, every other month (9 a.m. to 1 p.m.) 204 N. Front Street, Liverpool, PA 17045

Liverpool office dates for 2025: January 15, March 19, May 21, July 16, September 17, and November 19.

Pension Debt Clock Times Out



In September, the pension debt clock located by the Capitol East Wing fountain was retired. That's when Barry Shutt, 76, former director of the PA Department of Agriculture Bureau of Food Distribution, finally gave up

his increasingly hopeless eight-year crusade of getting lawmakers to address our state's roughly \$70 billion unfunded pension debt.

Yes, \$70 billion! That's the amount in liabilities PA taxpayers (like YOU) are on the hook for when it comes to obligations owed by the Public School Employees' Retirement System (PSERS), which serves more than 500,000 school system annuitants, and the State Employees' Retirement System (SERS), managing pension benefits of nearly 240,000 state employees and retirees.

Shutt was quoted as saying members of the General

Assembly told him they fixed the debt problem in 2017 when traditional defined benefit pension plans were eliminated as a retirement savings option for most new employees. Shutt noted correctly that move didn't address the debt; it just quit adding as much to it.

The clock, updated twice a year, marked the value of the pension systems' assets as they grew or declined in response to financial markets. It also silently tolled the collapse of PA's once proud and successful state pension plans.

In 2000, SERS and PSERS boasted a \$20 billion surplus, but by 2015 — due to the 2008-2009 economic meltdown and poor investing by the plans — that surplus had become a crippling deficit.

I am among a handful of Pennsylvania legislators who have refused a state pension. With the Commonwealth burdened by such huge amounts of school and state employee pension debt, not taking a pension is the responsible thing to do.