

Arch Rock Exit Dedicated to Slain Trooper



In a ceremony held in late March at the PA State Police Troop G Lewistown barracks in Fermanagh Township, the interchange where U.S. Routes 22/322 meet Arch Rock Road was dedicated to Pennsylvania State Police Trooper Jacques F. "Jay" Rougeau Jr., who died in the line of duty last summer.

Naming of the Trooper Jacques F. Rougeau Jr. Memorial Interchange resulted from passage of Act 17 of 2023, which included a resolution I was proud to introduce that commemorated the Arch Rock exit — home of Troop G Lewistown — in his honor.

Trooper Rougeau, a three-year state police veteran, was participating in the search for a gunman in the Mifflintown vicinity when he was shot and killed on June 17, 2023. He was off duty when the firing spree started, but he didn't hesitate to come to the aid of local first responders and his brothers and sisters in uniform.

In presenting the family with a framed copy of the highway-naming bill signed by Gov. Josh Shapiro (see photo), I noted Jay's heroics are remembered by residents of Juniata County and the Commonwealth every day. "Signs at the interchange provide just one more way to reflect on his commitment and sacrifice."

Trooper Rougeau was the 104th member of the Keystone State's rural constabulary to give his life while serving since 1905. Approximately 750 motorists use the Arch Rock exit of U.S. 22/322 daily.

A PA State Police contingent, community leaders including all three Juniata County commissioners and Mifflintown Mayor Roxann McGinnis, and emergency service personnel participated in the dedication.

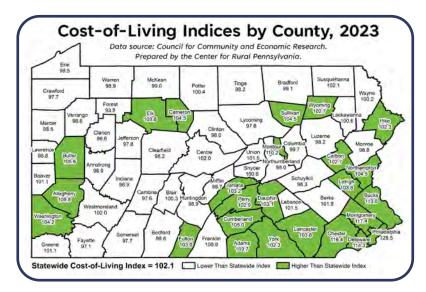
Please continue to offer prayers of comfort and healing for everyone affected by the June 17, 2023, incident, especially for Trooper Rougeau's widow, Chloe; his mother, Angela Hunt Gervasio; his siblings, grandparents and in-laws; and PA State Police Lt. James A. Wagner, who continues his recovery after being seriously wounded that day and graciously attended the ceremonies at the interchange.



The Keystone State has unveiled new license plates and
"Welcome to Pennsylvania" highway signs featuring the
slogan "Let Freedom Ring." The tagline highlights the
Commonwealth as the birthplace of American independence and
its leading role in upcoming U.S. Semiquincentennial (America250)
celebrations honoring formation of the United States.



Still Cheaper to Live in Rural PA



According to a recent study by the bipartisan Center for Rural Pennsylvania, on average it cost 6.3 percent more to reside in one of the Keystone State's 19 predominately urban counties compared to a rural one during 2023.

Statewide, Forest County boasted the lowest cost of living (6.2 percent below the national average), while Philadelphia County had the highest cost of living (28.5 percent above the national average).

Juniata and Perry counties also had higher-thanaverage cost-of-living hikes at about 3 percent each.

The Center for Rural Pennsylvania examined data related to prices for groceries, housing, utilities, transportation, health care, and other miscellaneous expenses. With a statewide index of 102.1, the cost of living across Pennsylvania stood 2.1 percent greater than the national average, placing the Commonwealth dead center among all of the states as 25th most costly.

Since the Center for Rural Pennsylvania's last study (2018), prices in PA have skyrocketed 25.3 percent.

Property Tax/Rent Rebate Deadline Extended to Dec. 31

Older adults and Pennsylvanians with disabilities can now apply for rebates on rent and property taxes paid in 2023 until the end of this year.

Those eligible for the Property Tax/Rent Rebate (PTRR) program are encouraged to file online by visiting *mypath.pa.gov*.

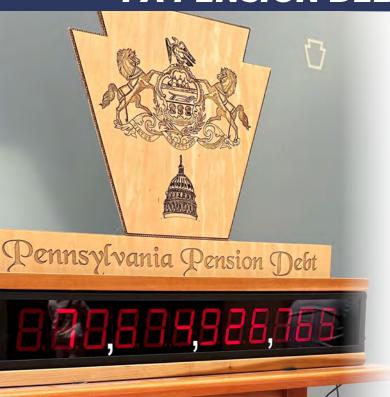
PA had received approximately 445,000 rebate applications through the end of May — roughly 100,000 more than last year at this time — including nearly 80,000 first-time filers. About 92 percent of PTRR applications received have been processed for payment, which were distributed beginning July 1, as required by law.

The PTRR program benefits Pennsylvanians ages 65 and older; widows and widowers ages 50 and older; and people with disabilities ages 18 and older. The table below shows how much homeowners and renters are eligible for, depending on their annual income:

If your income is:	Your maximum rebate is:
0 - \$8,000	\$1,000
\$8,001 - \$15,0	00 \$770
\$15,001 - \$18,0	000 \$460
\$18,001 - \$45,	000 \$380

Exclude 50 percent of Social Security when determining your annual income.

PA PENSION DEBT KEEPS CHURNING



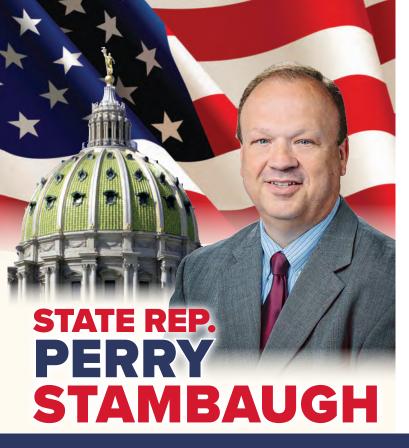
The pension debt clock in the Capitol East Rotunda recently rolled past \$70 billion. That's the amount of unfunded liabilities all PA taxpayers are on the hook for when it comes to obligations owed by the Public School Employees' Retirement System (PSERS), which serves more than 500,000 school system annuitants, and the State Employees' Retirement System (SERS), managing pension benefits of nearly 240,000 state employees and retirees.

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.

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: 717-582-8119 | 1-800-959-8119

18 West Main St., New Bloomfield, PA 17068

Open: Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (except holidays)

Juniata County: 717-436-6001 28 Industrial Circle, Mifflintown, PA 17059

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

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

204 North Front St., Liverpool, PA 17045

East Waterford - Remaining dates for 2024: September 11, October 9, November 13, and December 11

Liverpool - Remaining dates for 2024: September 18 and November 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.
- Handicapped 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!

