

STATE REPRESENTATIVE JOE D'ORSIE

47TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

Winter 2024



Giving Students the Freedom to Excel

To give Pennsylvania students and their parents a true opportunity for educational freedom, I unveiled my legislation to create the Student Freedom Account Program.

For far too long students and parents have asked for and repeatedly been denied the unbridled freedom to excel. **The Student Freedom Account Act** will finally deliver them the opportunity they rightly deserve.

The Student Freedom Account Act would tie state education funding to students rather than systems. This would be accomplished by allowing the state portion of district education funding to follow students to their school of choice. Local tax revenue created through school property taxes would remain with the taxing school district. The state funds, which would be housed in individualized Student Freedom Accounts, would be used by students to attend the school of their choice, such as a parochial or charter school.

If my bill were passed, a child's ZIP code would no longer dictate the quality of their education. Rather, they would have the freedom to choose the school that best fits their educational needs.



Bill Would Ease Conewago Twp. Dilemma

House Bill 1907, which I've introduced while working with leaders in Conewago Township, would designate a portion of the locally maintained North Susquehanna Trail in Conewago Township as a state highway. In exchange, the township would accept a section of Bowers Bridge Road.

The portion of North Susquehanna Trail to become a state highway starts at the border with Manchester Township at the bridge over the Little Conewago Creek and runs north for 2 miles. The section of Bowers Bridge Road to become a local road is between Conewago Creek Road and Cly Road.

This a commonsense approach for the township to maintain the locally traveled Bowers Bridge Road while the more heavily traveled section of the North Susquehanna Trail would be a state highway. House Bill 1907 is in the House Transportation Committee awaiting consideration.

The More You Read, the More Things You Will Know



Rep. Justin Fleming (D-Dauphin) joined me for an episode of Legislative Report to discuss his early literacy legislation. You can watch the episode, and videos of what I'm working on in Harrisburg, on my Facebook page, [facebook.com/RepJoeD](https://www.facebook.com/RepJoeD).

Reading is fundamental to learning and thus a gateway to success in life. Unfortunately, too many Pennsylvania students are below grade level when it comes to reading. In fact, only 40% of fourth-grade students and 42% of eighth-grade students can read at or above proficiency in our state.

To bridge the reading gap, I co-sponsored **House Bill 998**, along with Reps. Justin Fleming (D-Dauphin) and Jason Ortity (R-Allegheny/Washington), to address this tragic shortfall.

The bill would create a three-stage approach to advancing early literacy. First, it would create an evidence-based reading curriculum centered on the concept of the "science of reading." Next, a universal screening would be created, beginning in the first 30 days of school, to identify struggling readers. Finally, using the screening data, schools would design and implement intervention plans to prevent children from falling behind.

Taking on a Leadership Role in 2024

Although I'm a constant learner and have much to pick up as a freshman legislator, I'm honored to have been named the deputy policy chairman for higher education by the GOP Policy Committee. This means I'll get to travel the state and host hearings on important matters in higher education, like free speech, which my **House Bill 179** would address; funding for schools; return on investment; vocational technical initiatives and more. As always, I welcome your thoughts and ideas, so never hesitate to call, email or request a one-on-one meeting with me.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

JOE D'ORSIE

47th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

DISTRICT OFFICE:

4186 LINCOLN HWY, EAST, STE. B
YORK, PA 17406
717-840-4711

CAPITOL OFFICE:

PO BOX 202047
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-2047
717-705-7167



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Saturday
APRIL
20
9-11:30 a.m.

FREE SHREDDING EVENT

I'm hosting a free paper shredding event for all district residents. The event will be held in the parking lot of Central York High School, 601 Mundis Mill.

Residents are asked to bring papers and documents in loose form. Magazines, books or trash will not be accepted. This is an event for residents only; no businesses, please.

Bill to Increase Penalty for Corruption of Minor Charges

Using a position of power to exploit the trust of a child is a serious crime that should come with serious consequences. That is why I introduced legislation to increase the grading of the corruption of a minor charge when the crime is perpetrated by someone in a position of authority.

Specifically, **House Bill 1847** would enhance the charge from a first-degree misdemeanor to a third-degree felony in instances when the accused is a police officer or school employee and is in the position of instructor or mentor of the abused child. By moving the grading to a third-degree felony, prison time would likewise increase. A first-degree misdemeanor carries a maximum sentence of five years, while a third-degree felony has a maximum penalty of seven years in prison.

It's imperative we take steps to keep our children safe from predators who abuse their position to corrupt children. Too often people with authority in our society who should serve as mentors and role models abuse their position to prey on minors. Increasing the penalty for this crime would not only ensure longer prison time but also sends a clear message to would-be perpetrators that this kind of predatory behavior won't be tolerated in Pennsylvania.

House Bill 1847 is in the House Judiciary Committee for consideration.

STRAIGHT TO THE POINT

with **Rep. Joe D'Orsie**

I get Straight to the Point in my podcast that shares Capitol news in 10 minutes or less. In each episode, a guest joins me as we examine bills and issues that impact your life. I've covered topics ranging from school choice to the budget and everything in between. You can listen on Apple Podcasts, Spotify or by visiting

RepJoeD.com/mypodcasts.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Legislative Breakfast in April**
- **Concealed Carry Seminar in May**



My popular Java with Joe events are back in 2024! Join me on the second Thursday morning of every month from 9-10:30 a.m. These meetings will occur either at my district office or another location in the 47th. I'll provide additional information on Java with Joe, as well as two other exciting events, in my weekly emails as details become available. You can sign up to receive my emails at

RepJoeD.com.