

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

R. Lee James

64TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

SUMMER 2025

Dear Friends,

It is an honor to serve as your voice in Harrisburg. My colleagues and I are working diligently on the state budget for the 2025–26 Fiscal Year. Gov. Josh Shapiro proposed a \$51.47 billion budget, representing a \$3.57 billion, or 7.5%, increase over the current fiscal year. Given the current inflationary climate, my focus remains the same: protecting your hard-earned dollars through fiscal responsibility.

My staff and I are eager to assist you. You can reach out to us by phone at my district offices or Harrisburg office, send in a contact form through RepJames.com, reach us by mail or attend one of our events.



ANSWERING THE CALL TO SERVICE

As a U.S. Navy veteran, I had the pleasure of attending a recent Our Community Salutes meeting to witness 23 young men and women embark on a new journey after graduation: answering the call to defend our country.

Our Community Salutes is a nationwide organization to recognize high school seniors who are graduating and have enlisted in a branch of the U.S. military.

To everyone committing to this honorable chapter, thank you! Your decision to step forward and protect the freedoms we hold dear reflects a profound sense of citizenship and honor.

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE REMAINS CRITICAL FOCUS

Recently, my colleagues and I in the House Environmental and Natural Resource Protection Committee toured Pittsburgh's Westinghouse nuclear power lab to learn about the future of nuclear energy in Pennsylvania. Given our track record and abundance of resources beneath our feet, we are a proven energy leader. We must do everything possible to unleash our energy potential. Thank you to everyone who made this tour possible! I am pictured with my colleague and friend, Rep. Tim Twardzik of Schuylkill County.



Arts Advocacy Day in PA

It was an honor to once again participate in Arts Advocacy Day in Harrisburg. As co-chair of the bipartisan, bicameral Arts and Culture Caucus, I enjoy advocating for a sector that provides so much to our communities and Commonwealth.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Pennsylvania's creative sector contributes over \$28 billion to our state's economy and supports more than 170,000 jobs.

But beyond dollars and cents, the arts bring something even more valuable – connection and understanding. Whether it's through painting, dancing, music, theater, design or storytelling, the arts shape our communities, our schools and our future.

Thank you to everyone who participated in this great event!



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 RepJames.com

 /RepLeeJames

Seneca Office

3220 State Route 257, Suite 8, P.O. Box 547
Seneca, PA 16346 | **814-677-6413**

Titusville Office

104 N. Washington St., Suite 2
Titusville, PA 16354 | **814-827-6054**

Capitol Office

Room 41A, East Wing, P.O. Box 202064
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2064 | **717-783-8188**



UPCOMING EVENTS

SENIOR EXPO

Wednesday, Aug. 27, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Rocky Grove Volunteer Fire Department
29 Shuffstall St., Franklin, PA 16323**

Vendors will be there to provide information about programs and services for senior citizens. For more information, please call my Seneca district office at 814-677-6413.

SHREDDING EVENT

Saturday, Oct. 11, Noon to 2 p.m.

Seneca District Office

3220 State Route 257

Seneca, PA 16346

Iron Mountain will provide this service. Acceptable shredding materials are any office paper and color file folders. There is no need to remove staples, paper clips or rubber bands. Please call my Seneca office at 814-677-6413 or Titusville office at 814-827-6054 if you have any questions.

Handheld Devices Ban Now in Effect

A new Pennsylvania law banning the use of handheld devices while driving is now in effect.

Paul Miller's Law limits the use of handheld cellphones or other communication devices while operating a motor vehicle. The law is named for a young man who was killed in a crash involving a distracted tractor-trailer driver in Monroe County in 2010.

Under the law, driving while holding a mobile device is a primary violation, meaning police can pull over drivers solely for the violation. For the first 12 months, the penalty is a written warning. Effective in June 2026, the penalty is a summary offense, which carries a \$50 fine, plus court costs and other fees. If a driver is convicted of homicide by vehicle and driving while distracted, they may be sentenced to up to an additional five years in prison.

Drivers can still use their phones if using hands-free technology, such as a docking station, Bluetooth or speaker technology. You may also use your phone to contact emergency responders.

According to PennDOT, more than 11,000 crashes were the result of distracted driving, leading to 65 deaths and 6,700 injuries in 2023. Pennsylvania joins 28 other states with hands-free laws. More information is available on PennDOT's website.



Celebrating 250 Years

I enjoyed seeing the America250PA Capitol display ahead of America's 250th birthday.

The display showcases iconic symbols of our state's rich history, including the Liberty Bell, Crayola Crayons and Punxsutawney Phil. Designed by Philadelphia-based artist Molly Egan, this 12-foot by 20-foot illuminated display celebrates Pennsylvania's deep roots, vibrant culture and lasting impact on our nation.

This exhibit details the innovation, courage and commitment by those before us that helped make Pennsylvania a great place.

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