

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 953 Session of  
2001

INTRODUCED BY GREENLEAF, BOSCOLA, COSTA, ERICKSON, HOLL, O'PAKE,  
TARTAGLIONE AND WAUGH, JUNE 8, 2001

REFERRED TO FINANCE, JUNE 8, 2001

AN ACT

1 Providing for an exemption from increases in school real  
2 property taxes for eligible taxpayers because of their age  
3 and income level and for the reimbursement of school  
4 districts by the Commonwealth.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. Short title.

8 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Senior  
9 Citizen School Real Property Tax Freeze Act.

10 Section 2. Definitions.

11 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall  
12 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the  
13 context clearly indicates otherwise:

14 "Base amount." The amount of school real property taxes owed  
15 on the homestead in the base year.

16 "Base year." The tax year immediately preceding the tax year  
17 during which the eligible taxpayer becomes 65 years of age. If  
18 the taxpayer did not own the homestead during the tax year

1 immediately preceding the tax year during which the taxpayer  
2 became 65 years of age, the base year shall be the first tax  
3 year during which the eligible taxpayer owned the homestead and  
4 was 65 years of age or older.

5 "Eligible taxpayer." A taxpayer who meets the requirements  
6 of section 5.

7 "Homestead." Any real property that meets the requirements  
8 of section 6.

9 "Household income." All income as defined in the act of  
10 March 11, 1971 (P.L.104, No.3), known as the Senior Citizens  
11 Rebate and Assistance Act, received by the eligible taxpayer and  
12 by the eligible taxpayer's spouse during the calendar year  
13 immediately preceding the tax year for which a tax exemption is  
14 claimed.

15 "Increase in school real property taxes." An increase in the  
16 school real property taxes above the base amount resulting from  
17 a millage increase, a change in the assessment ratio or method  
18 or by a revaluing of all properties.

19 Section 3. School real property tax exemption.

20 Pursuant to section 2(b) of Article VIII of the Constitution  
21 of Pennsylvania, the General Assembly hereby requires school  
22 districts to grant an annual exemption from increases in school  
23 real property taxes for eligible taxpayers because of their age  
24 and income level. This exemption shall apply only to school real  
25 property taxes on an eligible taxpayer's homestead.

26 Section 4. Amount of exemption.

27 The annual school real property tax exemption granted under  
28 this act shall equal the increase in school real property taxes  
29 on the eligible taxpayer's homestead. The amount shall be  
30 calculated by subtracting the amount of school real property

1 taxes on the homestead in the base year from the amount of  
2 school real property taxes on the homestead in the tax year for  
3 which a claim for an exemption is filed. The difference, if any,  
4 shall be the amount of the exemption.

5 Section 5. Eligible taxpayer.

6 The real property tax exemption shall apply to each taxpayer  
7 in the school district meeting the following requirements:

8 (1) The taxpayer is at least 65 years of age.

9 (2) The taxpayer has an annual household income not  
10 exceeding \$40,000.

11 (3) The taxpayer is not delinquent in paying school real  
12 property taxes on the homestead.

13 (4) The taxpayer has filed a claim for the exemption,  
14 including all necessary and required information, on a  
15 standard form. The school district shall make such forms  
16 available upon request.

17 Section 6. Homestead.

18 The exemption from the tax upon real property authorized by  
19 the General Assembly under section 3 shall apply only to school  
20 real property taxes on an eligible taxpayer's homestead. For  
21 purposes of this act, an eligible taxpayer's homestead is real  
22 property which qualifies as a homestead under the act of March  
23 11, 1971 (P.L.104, No.3), known as the Senior Citizens Rebate  
24 and Assistance Act, except real property which is rented or  
25 leased to the eligible taxpayer.

26 Section 7. Commonwealth reimbursement.

27 Pursuant to section 2(b) of Article VIII of the Constitution  
28 of Pennsylvania, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania shall  
29 reimburse school districts for revenue losses occasioned by the  
30 tax exemption provided by this act. The Department of Education

1 shall, upon submission by a school district of documentation as  
2 the department may require, reimburse the school district for  
3 the amount of revenue lost to the school district because of  
4 this exemption. The reimbursement shall occur within 60 days of  
5 submission of the documentation.

6 Section 8. Applicability.

7 This act shall apply to tax years beginning July 1, 2002.

8 Section 9. Effective date.

9 This act shall take effect immediately.