

TO: All Senators
FROM: Senator Jay Costa
DATE: January 12, 2011
SUBJECT: Introduction of legislation
Re: Allegheny County Senior Citizen Property Tax Relief

Please join me in sponsoring legislation introduced as S.B. 265 in the 2009-2010 legislative session by Senators COSTA, ORIE, STOUT, FONTANA, LOGAN, KITCHEN, BROWNE, PIPPY, WASHINGTON AND FERLO.

Currently, Allegheny County maintains to reduce property taxes for longtime senior citizen owner occupants pursuant to the First and Second Class County Property Tax Relief Act. To be eligible for this program a person must meet all three of the following requirements:

- **Property Ownership:** Must have owned and occupied a primary residence in Allegheny County continuously for the past 10 years. A property owner who has moved within the past 10 years, and has continued to own and occupy the new property as a primary residence shall be eligible.
- **Age:** The person must be age 60 or older, or if married either spouse must be age 60; be a widow or widower age 50 to 60 years; or permanently disabled and age 18 to 60 years.
- **Income:** Gross household income must be \$30,000 or less.

However, it has come to my attention that in a few very limited circumstances, there are otherwise eligible individuals who do not currently qualify for this program because of a period of interrupted property ownership in the county. For instance, a person who was a longtime owner occupant of property who dissolved their personal owner occupant status to move in with an elderly relative to care for them. Thereafter, they became owner occupants of property in the county and would otherwise be eligible but for the interrupted period of ownership.

My legislation will modify the property ownership requirement only to make an individual eligible for this county program if the person was the owner occupier of a primary residence in the county for a period of at least twenty (20) years, moved for a period of time and then resumed status as an owner occupier of a primary residence in the county for not less than two (2) years.

I hope you will join me in sponsoring this legislation by contacting Anne Griffin-Gray in my Harrisburg office at 7-7683 or e-mailing her at aggray@pasenate.com. Thank you for your attention to this matter.