



## STATE SENATOR JAY COSTA

*Serving the 43rd Senatorial District and the people of Pennsylvania*

### PROFILE

#### ■ BACKGROUND

First Elected to Senate, April 23, 1996, 43rd District  
Shareholder, Grogan Graffam P.C., Pittsburgh  
Register of Wills, Allegheny County (1992-96)  
Deputy Sheriff, Allegheny County (1984-89)  
Juris Doctorate, Duquesne University (1989)  
Bachelor of Arts, Indiana University of Pennsylvania (1979)  
Allegheny County Police Academy (1985)

#### ■ FAMILY

Jay Costa is the son of the late Allegheny County Treasurer Jay Costa Sr. He is married to the former Roxanne Ross. They have two sons and a daughter. His brother, Paul Costa, is a member of the state House of Representatives.

#### ■ STATE PUBLIC SERVICE

- Senator Costa began serving his fourth full term as state Senator from the 43rd District in January 2009. He was first elected to the Senate in a special election on April 23, 1996 and was sworn in on May 13, 1996. He was reelected in 2000, 2004 and 2008.
- Costa was elected by his Senate colleagues in November 2010 to serve as Democratic Floor Leader for the 2011-12 legislative session. The position makes him the highest-ranking member within the Senate Democratic Caucus. During the 2009-10 session, Costa served as the Democratic Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, an influential position to which he was elected by his fellow Democratic senators in November 2008. He also served as Senate Democratic Caucus Chairman from 2005-08 and is past chairman of the Senate Democratic Judiciary Committee.
- Costa is a former adjunct professor to the Community College of Allegheny County and a member of the Pennsylvania and Allegheny County Bar Association. In 2001, he was appointed to the Board of Trustees of the University of Pittsburgh. In 2004, he was appointed to serve on the Board of Trustees for the Community College of Allegheny County and serves as board treasurer. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Catholic Charities Free Health Care Clinic. He also serves as a member of the Board of Trustees for the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, the Board of Directors of the Pittsburgh CLO, the Senator John Heinz Pittsburgh Regional History Center Board, and the 3 Rivers Wet Weather Demonstration Program Board. He is also involved with a variety of civic, community, and athletic groups throughout the district.

#### ■ SENATE DISTRICT

43rd District: Pittsburgh Wards 7, 15, 16, 29, 31 and Part of Wards 4, 14, 17; Penn Hills, Wilkins Townships; Baldwin, Braddock Hills, Chalfant, Churchill, Edgewood, Forest Hills, Homestead, Mt. Oliver, Munhall, Swissvale, Verona, West Homestead, West Mifflin and Whitaker Boroughs.

## ■ LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Prime sponsored jury reform legislation creating statewide jury information system to improve diversity and representation in county and federal jury pools.
- Enacted effort to provide certified interpreters for deaf, hearing impaired and limited English proficient litigants in administrative and judicial proceedings.
- Championed the fight for a new law to reduce the inequitable inheritance tax by 25% which resulted in a savings of millions of dollars each year for Pennsylvania families.
- Authored a new law that would provide for a life-sentence to those who commit rape or involuntary deviate sexual intercourse when serious bodily injury occurs to victims thirteen years or younger.
- Toughened a law that would impose a rigorous 0.02% blood alcohol content standard for school vehicle drivers and providing for suspension of driving privileges for up to one year if convicted, and enhanced penalties for those who are driving under the influence with a minor child in the vehicle.
- Strengthened legislation requiring Internet Service Providers to remove child pornography from their services or face tough criminal sanctions.
- Led legislative effort to overturn anti-employee Superior Court decision in *Shick v Shirey* to prevent retaliatory firings of at-will employees who file worker's compensation claims.
- Prime sponsored new law which enhances reporting requirements for school district financial advisors in order to protect districts from future fraudulent investment activities.
- Improved Pennsylvania's crime data reporting system to ensure that municipalities report crime statistics to the state police, which will leverage additional federal funds for local crime fighting activities.
- Advocated increase to Pennsylvania State Police complement and emphasized that additional troopers be dedicated to Homeland Security and big truck safety enforcement.
- Recognized the economic imperative of supporting legislation which led to the construction of two new stadiums and an expansion of the David Lawrence Convention Center.
- Prime sponsor and lead advocate of state plan, FAIRx, to expand coverage and reduce prescription drug cost for seniors by leveraging additional rebates from drug manufacturers.
- Supported and helped to enact a plan to improve education with a back-to-basics approach in elementary schools, coupled with funding to permit smaller class sizes, to implement new state-of-the-art technologies in the classroom, and to increase tutoring assistance.
- Led efforts to direct a portion of gaming revenues toward reduction of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County development debt, including the convention center, airport, and redevelopment authorities.
- Spearheaded drive to recast Pittsburgh taxing structure and stabilize city finances.
- Supported efforts to expand CHIP health insurance to all children in Pennsylvania.
- Supported 2007 transportation plan that significantly expanded state funding for mass transit.
- Authored a new law to provide enhanced penalties to those who are driving under the influence with a minor child in the vehicle.

## ■ LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

- Upgrade personal safety and security by enactment of new protections for homeowners from home invasion crimes. (*Sponsor*)
- Increase the grading of all theft offenses and fraudulent or deceptive business practices against businesses and government officials who steal. (*Sponsor*)
- Provide a personal tax break for employees whose companies institute guaranteed transportation benefit plans, encouraging greater use of mass transit. (*Sponsor*)
- Pass a fiscally responsible, balanced budget that adequately funds services to Pennsylvania citizens, while recognizing the difficult financial struggles of many state taxpayers during the national economic recession.
- Build additional public safeguards and law enforcement measures into the state gaming law as we identify problems and gain a better understanding of an industry that is still fairly new to our state.
- Expand affordable comprehensive health insurance to working families throughout Pennsylvania and enact measures to contain health care costs. (*Co-sponsor*)
- Expand family exemptions from Realty Transfer Taxes and from estate administration expenses. (*Sponsor*)
- Expand eligibility of Allegheny County Property Tax Relief Act for longtime senior citizen owner occupants. (*Sponsor*)
- Authorize Allegheny County to impose a smoking ban more stringent than the state's.
- Authorize cities and counties to create their own campaign finance reform measures.

## ■ OFFICES

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