

The United States Mission to the OSCE

Office of the Public Affairs Advisor
Obersteingasse 11/1 ■ A-1190 Vienna, Austria
Tel (+43-1) 313-39-3421 ■ FAX (+43-1) 368-6385
<http://osce.usmission.gov>

Congressman Joe Pitts -

Joe Pitts is a fourth-term Congressman who represents the 16th Congressional District of Pennsylvania, a district that stretches from the far western suburbs of Philadelphia in Chester County, north to Reading and Berks County, and west into the rolling countryside of Lancaster County famous for its Amish and Mennonite culture.

The son of an Army chaplain turned missionary, Joe spent several years of his youth living in the Philippines. He attended Asbury College in Kentucky and received his Master's Degree from West Chester University in Pennsylvania. He served in the United States Air Force from 1963 to 1969, rising to the rank of Captain and flying 116 combat missions as a navigator and electronic warfare officer in Vietnam.

After leaving the Air Force, Joe returned to teaching math and science and coaching basketball at Great Valley High School, near Malvern College in Chester County, Pennsylvania.

In 1972, Joe began his service in the Pennsylvania state legislature. During his 24 years in Harrisburg, he served as chairman of the Labor and Industry Committee. He was then chosen by his colleagues to chair the powerful House Appropriations Committee for eight years.

In 1997, Joe was sworn into Congress, replacing Congressman Bob Walker as representative of Pennsylvania's 16th Congressional District.

During his first term, Joe served on the Budget, Transportation, and Small Business committees, working hard to balance the federal budget and acquire much-needed and long-overdue funding for highway safety improvements in Lancaster and Chester counties.

In his second term, he moved from the Transportation Committee to the Armed Services Committee, where he became a champion of electronic warfare technology. In his third term, Joe moved to the Energy and Commerce and International Relations Committees, where he currently serves.

On the Energy and Commerce Committee, he sits on the Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection; Environment and Hazardous Materials; and Health subcommittees. On the International Relations Committee he sits on the Middle East and Central Asia subcommittee, and serves as the Vice-Chair of the International Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Human Rights subcommittee.

Since he came to Congress in 1997, Joe has been a staunch fiscal conservative and promoter of traditional family values. He is chairman of the Central Asia Caucus, the Electronic Warfare Working Group, the Fatherhood Promotion Task Force, the Religious Prisoners Congressional Task Force, the Values Action Team, and the Wilberforce Group. He belongs to the Alzheimer's Caucus, the Air Force Caucus, the Fire Caucus, the Helsinki Commission, the Human Rights Caucus, the Pro-Life Caucus, the Republican Study Committee, the Steel Caucus, and the Congressional Caucus on the Western Sahara.

(Con't on page 2)

The United States Mission to the OSCE

Office of the Public Affairs Advisor

Obersteingasse 11/1 ■ A-1190 Vienna, Austria

Tel (+43-1) 313-39-3421 ■ FAX (+43-1) 368-6385

<http://osce.usmission.gov>

page 2

Even prior to his assignment to the International Relations Committee, Joe has worked hard to champion human rights and humanitarian efforts around the world. He has coordinated

humanitarian aid to Western Sahara, Pakistan, and many other countries. He regularly advocates for people who have been imprisoned for their religious beliefs.

Joe is active with many organizations at home in Pennsylvania as well, including the Brandywine Valley Association, Bridges of Peace International, Crosslinks, Eastern College, the Keystone State Games, the Po-Mar-Line Fire Company, the Retired Officers Association, Rotary Club International, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Among the many awards and honors he has received are the Award for Manufacturing Legislation Excellence from the National Association of Manufacturers, the Guardian of Small Business Award from the National Federation of Independent Business, the Spirit of Enterprise Award from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Taxpayer Hero Award from Citizens Against Government Waste, and the Hero of the Taxpayer Award from Americans for Tax Reform.