

ECASB

Erie County Association of School Boards

Where professional development, leadership & advocacy meet.

The INSIDER

Proudly Serving the 26th District
And the following ECASB

School Districts:

Amherst CSD, Buffalo Public School District, Cheektowaga CSD, Cheektowaga-Sloan USFD, Depew USFD, Erie 1 BOCES, Grand Island CSD, Ken-Ton UFSD, Lackawanna City School District, Lancaster CSD, Maryvale UFSD, Sweet Home CSD, Tonawanda City School District, West Seneca CSD and Williamsville CSD.

Stay Connected:

Local Office:

Larkin @ Exchange
726 Exchange Street, Suite 601
Buffalo, New York 14210
(716) 852-3501

Also...

800 Main Street, Suite 3C
Niagara Falls, New York 14301
(716) 282-1274

Washington, DC Office:

2459 Rayburn House
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-3306

www.Higgins.House.Gov



@RepBrianHiggins



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Party Affiliation:

Democrat

Providing ECASB Members Information and Insight about our Elected Officials

Congressman Brian Higgins



Left: Congressman Brian Higgins is recognized for his support of Roswell Park. Above: Brian Higgins presents a student from Williamsville East High School with an award for APP Challenge.

Political Positions...

Social Security:

Constituents should have proper customer service when their benefits come due.

Social Security should be strengthened. Opposes any cuts to Social Security benefits, including raising the retirement age. Opposes any effort to privatize Social Security, in whole or in part ... cutting Social Security benefits beyond the already scheduled increase in the retirement age from 65 to 67 . He supports full funding for the Social Security Administration to process checks on time; fight against waste, fraud, and abuse; and combat unacceptable claims backlogs.

Abortion:

While serving in the New York State Assembly from 1999 to 2004, Higgins consistently voted anti-abortion.¹ Since running for Congress in 2004, Higgins identifies himself as pro-choice.

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act:

Also known as Obamacare, Higgins believes that health care providers will have to embrace "Accountable Care Organizations, comparative effectiveness research – Higgins strongly believes in a national healthcare



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COMMITTEES:

Committee on Foreign Affairs

Sub Committee:

- Middle East and South Asia
- Middle East and Northern Africa
- Terrorism, Non Proliferation & Trade
- Europe, Eurasia & Emerging Threats

Homeland Security Committee

- Border and Maritime Security
- Counterterrorism & Intelligence
- Emergency Preparedness, Response and Communications

Caucus Memberships:

Co-Chair Revitalizing Older Cities Task Force

Great Lakes Task Force

House Cancer Caucus

Historic Preservation Caucus

Congressional Arts Caucuses

After School Caucus

Northeast—Midwest Congressional Coalition

Northern Border Caucus

New Democrat Coalition

House Steel Caucus

China Caucus

Brian M. Higgins was born in Buffalo October 6, 1959 and grew up in South Buffalo. His grandparents are from Ireland. Congressman Higgins has served in Congress since 2005 currently representing the 26th District. The district, was originally numbered as the 27th district from 2005 to 2013, which included Buffalo and Niagara Falls. He is a registered Democrat and serves on many congressional committees and caucuses. Brian Higgins is a graduate from both Buffalo State College and Harvard University. He possess a Bachelors Degree in Political Science and a Masters Degree in History from Buffalo State College. In 1996, he earned a Masters in Public Administration from Harvard University.

Brian served on the Buffalo Common Council from 1988 to 1993. He taught courses in state and local government as well as the economic history of Buffalo and Western New York at Buffalo State College in the Economics and History Departments.

From 1999—2004, he represented the 145th District in the New York State Assembly where he ran on the Democrat and Conservative lines.

In the community, Higgins was rated "Buffalo's Best Lawmaker" in 1993 in the Buffalo News Survey of Western New York business and community leaders. Higgins earned the highest rating of any political leader with a 3.81 out of a possible score of 5.

He has procured over \$279 million for Erie County's various governments and agencies from the New York Power Authority as part of the Niagara Power Project 50-year relicensing agreement. Higgins is an advocate for economic development and job creation, and played a pivotal role through his membership on the House's Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in securing approval for the construction of a new federal courthouse in downtown Buffalo. Additionally, Higgins has advocated for increased federal funding for cancer research particularly for Roswell Park Cancer Institute. In 2007, Higgins reportedly played a pivotal behind-the-scenes role in saving St. Joseph's Hospital in Cheektowaga from closure as proposed by the New York State Commission on Health Facilities in the 21st Century.

After only two terms in the House of Representatives, Congressman Higgins secured a spot on the United States House Committee on Ways and Means. This committee is considered to be one of the most important and powerful committees in Congress due to the wide jurisdiction.

Brian Higgins has worked with government leaders in Ireland in association with peace talks in 2006. He has also supported peace efforts around the globe including in South Asia, Africa, Iraq, Afghanistan and Darfur in the Middle East.

Higgins is a supporter of education, including early education through higher education. The Congressman is a proponent regarding congressional support for measures that increase student achievement, but which also reward success rather than punish failure, as the No Child Left Behind Act has done. Higgins further believes that financial barriers to

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education should not prevent individuals from pursuing higher education. He has supported lower interest rates on college loans for students. His cosponsored bills have reduced interest rates for students in the past.

Over the course of his political career, Brian Higgins has received financial support for his campaigns from many business executives in Western New York. In 2012, he raised over \$1,000,000 with a majority of the money donated by individual donors representing businesses right in Western New York.

Congressman Brian Higgins resides in South Buffalo with his wife Mary and his two children Maeve and John.

Political Positions Continue...

program, with a "public option," a plan in which the government provides healthcare which would compete with other businesses' plans.

Stimulus spending:

Proposed a five-year plan to rebuild the nation's roads, bridges, railroads, ports and airports. Higgins' congressional website states the monetary figure as \$1.2 trillion for these endeavors."

Education:

Higgins is a supporter of education, including early education through higher education. Congressman Higgins believes that young people have a quality early education, and that legislators should be supportive of education for individuals in primary, elementary, secondary, and higher educational institutions. He supports increasing student achievement, and rewarding academic success as the 'No Child Left Behind Act' has done. Financial barriers to education should not hold back anyone from pursuing higher education.

Student loan interest rates:

Higgins supports lower interest rates on college loans and has sponsored bills to either extend or impose lower interest rates to make college more affordable to all students.