

State Representative • 115th Legislative District

# Maureen E. MADDEN



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[www.pahouse.com/Madden](http://www.pahouse.com/Madden)

DEAR FRIEND,



On Jan. 3, I was honored to be sworn in for my first term as your representative. I'm excited about the possibilities to work in a bipartisan fashion to represent the district and advance your interests, especially in terms of jobs, property tax reform, equitable education funding and a state budget that puts working families first.

Also in January, I was assigned to work on five House committees: Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Children and Youth, Education, Game and Fisheries and Human Services. These assignments will help me to advance issues critical to you and the region.

I was proud to support Gov. Tom Wolf in working toward a 2017-18 state budget that supports our schools, and protects public health and safety. It includes \$100 million more for basic education, \$25 million for special education and \$30 million for Head Start and pre-K programs which have proven successful in helping kids jump-start their education.

Please don't ever hesitate to contact one of my offices if you need help with any state-related matter.

Sincerely,

## Madden fighting for equitable education funding

All students deserve an equal opportunity no matter where they live.

It was a pleasure to join several of my colleagues and education advocates from across Pennsylvania at a Capitol rally demanding legislative accountability in education funding. As your state representative, I believe it is time to revise the way we apply the basic education funding formula to the entirety of the state's basic education budget so that all students, regardless of where they reside in our commonwealth, receive the equal opportunity they deserve.

True equitable funding is the constitutional right of every student across the commonwealth. Giving students the educational tools they need from an early age is just one part of helping them prepare for a successful future.

As the 2017-18 session continues, I will keep fighting for equitable funding for all Pennsylvania public schools.



*Rep. Maureen Madden joined students, parents, community activists and faith leaders for an "Educational Apartheid" Day of Action to demand fair and fully funded education for Pennsylvania's public school students.*



*House Education Committee Democratic Chairman James Roebuck joins Rep. Madden and Rep. Carol Hill-Evans of York.*

# Madden bill would lower property taxes

The state must undertake a property tax relief plan that is doable and not fraught with controversy or unpredictable revenue streams that jeopardize the future of school funding.

The legislature must act on a plan that will actually benefit working men and women, instead of providing massive tax breaks to out-of-state corporations. The focus should be on homeowners and renters.

For those reasons, I plan to introduce legislation that would reduce school property taxes by an average of 50% across the state by fully funding the homestead/farmstead exclusion in each school district. In addition, the bill would expand the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program to provide substantially more relief to many more qualifying homeowners and renters.

The PTRR Program would see an income eligibility increase to \$55,000 and higher rebate amounts up to \$900.

As you well know, the topic of reducing property taxes has been discussed for decades; the need for such, however, has reached a fever pitch across Pennsylvania and especially in the northeast as senior citizens have to make the tough decision of buying their prescription medicine or paying their growing property tax bill.

My bill would provide immediate and attainable relief to all corners of the state through the utilization of a simple and equitable plan.



*Thank you Mount Pocono Public Library for allowing these students to use the public room for the PA Game Commission Hunter Trapper Education Class. There was a nice turnout and we look forward to a guided hunting event in the fall.*



*You're invited!*



**State Rep. Maureen E. Madden's**  
**Women's Day Expo**  
**Saturday, July 22**  
**9 a.m. - 12 p.m.**  
Stroudsburg High School Gymnasium  
1100 West Main Street • Stroudsburg, PA 18360

Providing resources and information to women concerning State programs.  
Call (570) 894-7905 or (570) 420-2850 for more information.



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## \$2 million in state grants benefit district

Earlier this year, seven projects in the 115th Legislative District received \$2.17 million in funding by the Commonwealth Financing Authority.

Infrastructure and economic development improvements are important keys to success in any municipality. It's especially gratifying to see so many other projects funded that will help area organizations enhance their facilities and offerings to local residents.

East Stroudsburg Borough received a \$340,948 Small Water and Sewer grant to replace 1,530 feet of eight-inch waterline along Elizabeth Street from West Vine Street to Lenox Avenue. The existing cast iron waterline is old with lead joints and is undersized by modern standards. Replacing it will ensure that the water delivered by the borough is of high quality standard and it will improve fire flow characteristics for the area.

Six grants were awarded from funds earned through the proceeds of gaming at Mount Airy Casino Resort,

under the state's Local Share Assessment program which provides grants to communities near gaming locations.

Stroudsburg Borough received \$130,670 for paving and drainage improvements along Sarah Street from Fifth to Ninth streets.

Five other grants were provided to the Monroe County Industrial Development Authority on behalf of other organizations.

A \$640,500 grant will help Pocono Services for Family and Children to replace the roof on the recently purchased Mountain Center facility in Coolbaugh Township. WIC, Area Agency on Aging and Habitat for Humanity joined PSFC in this facility and divided the building into four sections: Early Childhood Education and Care, Family Engagement, Senior Adult Activities and Youth Empowerment.

A \$286,068 grant will allow the Pocono Medical Center to purchase a mobile medical vehicle and mammogram equipment to perform annual breast screenings on women

in remote areas with limited access to health care services.

The Lake Swiftwater Club Inc. will use a \$242,000 grant to rehabilitate the Lake Swiftwater Dam in Paradise Township per a consent order and agreement of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

KidsPeace Corp. will use a \$130,000 grant to renovate a vacant space to expand its operations in Coolbaugh Township. Improvements will include demolition, general construction, plumbing, HVAC and electrical upgrades.

Finally, the Pocono Mountain Municipal Airport Authority will use its \$400,000 grant to construct a 6,000 square foot building to store its snow removal equipment.

The CFA is an independent state agency that administers several funding programs designed to help grow Pennsylvania's economy, create jobs, and improve cultural and recreational assets in communities statewide.

## Raising minimum wage focus of Policy hearing

In May, the House Democratic Policy Committee held a public hearing at the Pocono Mountain Public Library to discuss raising Pennsylvania's minimum wage.

I was thrilled to have the opportunity to discuss fair, family-sustaining wages in Pennsylvania. Working full time should not equal living in poverty and raising the minimum wage is a must. The people in my district work hard and working hard shouldn't leave workers in poverty.

The committee heard testimony from Sean Ramaley, deputy secretary for safety and labor – management relations, Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry; a panel of

business owners including Tarah Probst, owner of The Charcuterie and mayor of Stroudsburg Borough, and Lisa Diemer, owner of Pocono Soap and Kitchen Chemistry; and Mark Price, labor economist, Keystone Research Center.

"Minimum wage workers deserve a boost so they can provide for their families. All states surrounding Pennsylvania have raised their wage and it's time we give low-wage workers a boost. I thank Representative Madden for hosting the hearing and continuing to be a voice for working families," said Policy Committee Chairman Mike Sturla.

Hearing materials and video clips from the hearing are available at [www.pahouse.com/policycommittee](http://www.pahouse.com/policycommittee).



*People working a full-time job should not have to live in poverty. Rep. Madden hosted a House Democratic Policy hearing in Coolbaugh Township to discuss increasing the state's minimum wage.*

## Help available for Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program

Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program applications are available at my district offices for eligible residents to claim rebates on property taxes or rent paid in 2016, and my staff is ready to help!

The rebate program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians 65 or older, widows and widowers 50 or older, and people with disabilities 18 or older. The income limit is \$35,000 a year for homeowners and \$15,000 annually for renters. Half of Social Security income is excluded and the maximum standard rebate is \$650.

Claimants must reapply for rebates every year because rebates are based on annual income and property taxes or rent paid annually. Spouses, personal representatives or estates may file rebate claims on behalf of deceased claimants who lived at least one day in 2016 and met all other eligibility criteria.

The deadline to apply is Dec. 31.

Please ignore offers to assist with filing the application for a fee. My office provides help for FREE and the Revenue Department does not charge a fee to process your application.

Applications also are available online at [www.revenue.pa.gov](http://www.revenue.pa.gov) or by calling 1-888-222-9190.



Gov. Tom Wolf joined Rep. Maureen Madden and other legislators in wearing pink to signify their support for maintaining funding for Planned Parenthood.

## Help available for unclaimed property

The Pennsylvania Treasurer's Office currently holds \$2.3 billion in unclaimed property, and would like to turn it over to its rightful owners. Does the commonwealth owe you and you are not aware?

One in 10 residents has unclaimed property waiting for them.

Please remember, there is never a fee to claim what is yours.

You can obtain applications and forms to claim your property by logging onto the Pennsylvania Treasurer's Office website at [www.patreasury.org](http://www.patreasury.org), or call the treasury toll free at 1-800-222-2046.

If you have questions about this service or any other state-related issues, please stop by one of my offices for assistance. We also can help you download or complete the appropriate forms.



**You may have unclaimed property if:**

- You were named as a beneficiary on a life insurance policy;
- You opened a savings account and forgot about it or your account went inactive because you did not make deposits or withdrawals for a period of time;
- You moved, forgot to change your address at the post office, and had money coming to you;
- You left your job to start a new one, and never received your final paycheck;
- You forgot to redeem a gift certificate and it expired.

## Get social with Maureen on Facebook and Twitter

In an effort to be more accessible to you, I'm working to build a social media following on Facebook and Twitter, where my office provides insights on district activities and happenings in Harrisburg.

We also offer photos from local events and updates on legislation and state matters.

You can even view short video segments where I discuss important issues.

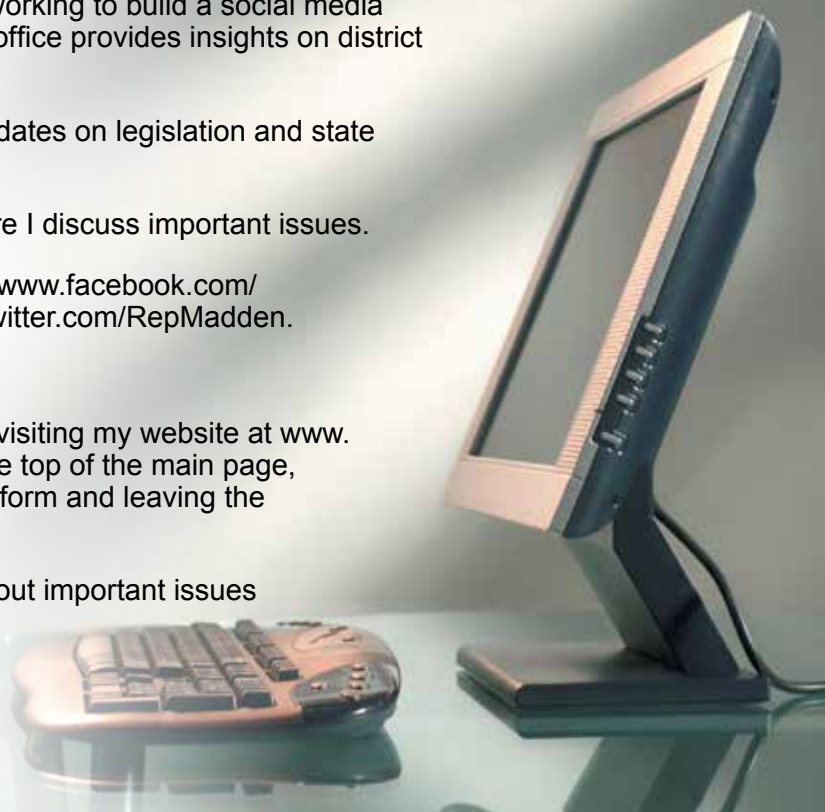
Join the crowd and follow me on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/RepMaureenMadden](http://www.facebook.com/RepMaureenMadden) and on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/RepMadden](http://www.twitter.com/RepMadden).

## Stay connected by email

You can sign up to receive my email alerts by visiting my website at [www.pahouse.com/Madden](http://www.pahouse.com/Madden), clicking "Contact" at the top of the main page, then "Sign Up for Emails" before filling out the form and leaving the box checked.

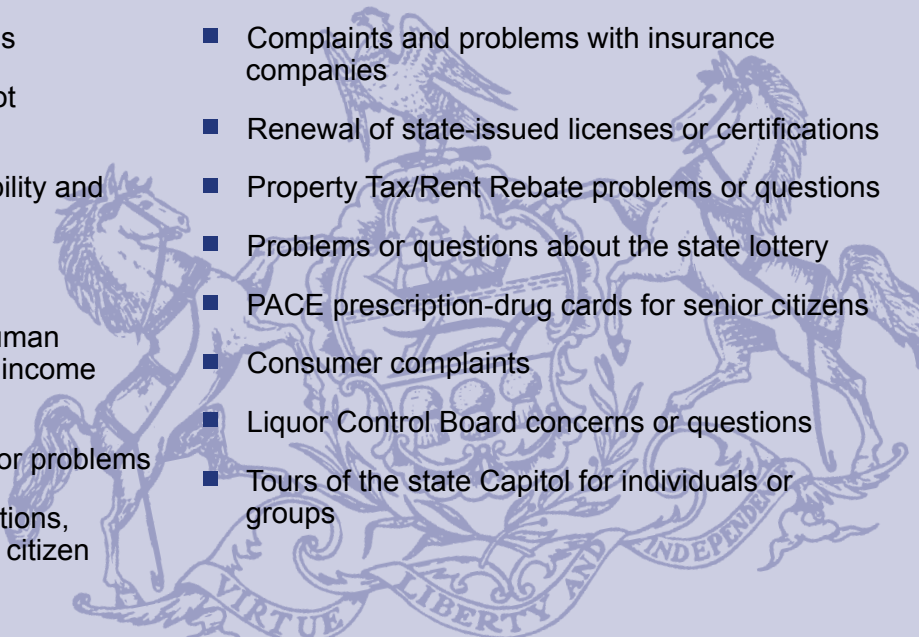
Signing up will allow you to receive notices about important issues that matter to you, including:

- News and events in the district;
- Updates on legislation;
- Other government-related information.



## My office can help you with ...

- PennDOT issues – vehicle registrations, special tags, handicap placards, titles and driver's license applications
- Information on financial assistance for higher education
- Obtaining and completing state forms
- Voter registration and absentee ballot applications
- Unemployment compensation, disability and workers' compensation
- Birth and death certificates
- Problems with the Department of Human Services (food stamps, medical and income assistance)
- Pennsylvania income tax questions or problems
- Requests for literature – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information
- Complaints or questions about utilities and the Public Utility Commission
- Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding accomplishments and family milestones
- Complaints and problems with insurance companies
- Renewal of state-issued licenses or certifications
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions
- Problems or questions about the state lottery
- PACE prescription-drug cards for senior citizens
- Consumer complaints
- Liquor Control Board concerns or questions
- Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups





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*Rep. Madden stands with visitors during their Delta Day in the chamber of the state House of Representatives.*

## Watch 'Monroe Matters' each Tuesday

My monthly cable program "Monroe Matters" airs at 9 a.m. Tuesdays on Blue Ridge Communications News 13. If you can't catch it there, it's also on my Facebook page and website.

We cover a variety of local and state issues each month that I hope you find to be informative and useful. Please contact my office if there's a topic that you think I should address in a future show.