



State Representative | 192nd Legislative District

MORGAN CEPHAS

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Summer/Fall
2023



POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

Ghost Guns and Undetectable Guns

In an effort to protect the safety of all Pennsylvanians and provide the commonwealth's law enforcement officials the tools they need to protect residents, I introduced H.B. 777, which would ban the manufacturing, sale, and possession of 'ghost gun' parts in the commonwealth.

I am also advancing H.B. 776, which would prohibit undetectable firearms. Unlike traditional firearms, 3D-printed firearms cannot be detected by traditional security measures. In addition to being undetectable, they are being printed without serial numbers, making them nearly impossible to trace. This legislation would ban the manufacturing, sale, and possession of undetectable firearms, including 3D-printed firearms.

State Police Ghost Gun Regulations

We are also working directly with Pennsylvania State Police to get ghost guns off our streets. They have developed a series of regulations like those advanced by President Joe Biden, which would require manufacturers to include serial numbers on the separate parts being sold in "ghost gun" kits and require sellers to perform a background check prior to the sale of the parts or kit.

Reminder: there will be an opportunity to provide comments in the near future regarding the regulation. Stay tuned for the next steps.

Gun Legislation Moved to the Senate

Two other firearm safety bills were approved by the House and sent to the Senate.

The House passed H.B. 714, which would expand background checks for firearm purchases. A second bill, H.B. 1018, would provide emergency risk protection orders for gun owners who are at risk of harming themselves or others. ERPO, or "red flag" laws, temporarily disarm people in crisis to disrupt spontaneous acts of violence against themselves or others.

Having gun reform bills pass the House is certainly cause for celebration, however, we know there is much more work to be done to help protect our communities.

Dear Neighbor,

As we head into the final months of this year, I want to share with you some highlights of my work over the past few months.

As legislator and chair of the Philadelphia House Delegation, I take pride in a number of wins for our community, and I am committed to continuing to champion policies and investments to address our most critical needs to help our city progress.

In this edition of the newsletter you will find updates about legislation I have worked to advance, including policies to address the gun violence crisis in our city and also to address Black maternal health and morbidity. You can also catch the recap about my "days in the district" and plenty more.

As I make my way back to Harrisburg this fall, I will be working to ensure that the priorities of the 192nd District and the most vulnerable communities in our city are priorities for the General Assembly. From commonsense policymaking to meaningful investment strategies, I look forward to working with my colleagues in the House to move our communities forward and to move Pennsylvania forward.

Please remember to reach out to my office for any assistance that my staff and I can provide with state and local services. There are many resources we can connect you with, so give us a call or stop by to see how we can help you.

We look forward to serving you soon!

LEGISLATIVE WINS & ACTIONS

Tackling Black Maternal Health - Maternal Morbidity Bill Signed by the Governor

Maternal mortality rates are trending in the wrong direction and it's getting worse each year. The first step in combating the problem is proper data collection. Accurate and regular tracking is essential for comprehensive research on this complex medical issue. We need to fully understand the outcomes of all birthing people as we work to improve maternal care and maternal health outcomes.

This session I re-introduced H.B. 1362, which would require the Pennsylvania Department of Health to report severe maternal morbidities. To mirror this legislation, Women's Health Caucus co-chair Sen. Judy Schwank introduced S.B. 262, which was signed into law by Gov. Josh Shapiro as Act 5 of 2023. This legislation is a key part of the Women's Health Caucus' efforts to end maternal mortality and improve maternal health outcomes in the state, and I am proud to see its advancement.

In addition to passing legislation and making policy changes, we're seeing our hard work and advocacy pay off. We secured \$2.3 million in the state budget to expand maternal health programming to allow for implementation of prevention strategies to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity. It is important for us to invest state dollars into the issues that we advocate for to support our work with policy and legislation.



Dignity for Incarcerated Women Moves to the Senate

In June, I celebrated the passage of legislation to protect pregnant and postpartum Pennsylvanians who are incarcerated. The bill, H.B. 900, passed the House with bipartisan support in June and has been sent to the Senate for consideration.

H.B. 900 would create important protections for pregnant or postpartum incarcerated women, including prohibiting shackling and solitary confinement, providing trauma-informed care training for corrections officers interacting with pregnant and postpartum women, and providing up to three days of post-delivery bonding time between a mother and newborn child, among other protections.

It is important to ensure that all people incarcerated in Pennsylvania have the support they need, including those who are pregnant and postpartum – for their own health and the health of their babies. I am thankful to the Department of Corrections for their

leadership in this space and I am thankful to my colleagues and all of the advocates who have fought so hard to get us this far!

Fresh Food Initiative Legislation Moves to the Senate

Nearly five years ago the Overbrook Park community suffered the loss of a grocery store that was not only convenient but a staple location that provided much needed access to fresh foods. We have since struggled to regain a comparable location in the area – one of many communities across our city and state considered a food desert. I am happy to report that legislation I am working on in Harrisburg could help address this issue. The Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative (H.B. 580), which passed the House in June, could help to improve access to foods for communities in need. The bill was sent to the Senate for future consideration, and I look forward to its continued advancement this fall.

The Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative is a program that operated from 2004 to 2010 and provided grants and low-interest loans for the construction, rehabilitation or expansion of grocery stores, farmers markets and other healthy food retail establishments in low-income to moderate-income areas in need and other underserved communities.

This legislation would not only make it easier for families to put fruits and vegetables on their tables, but it would also boost local agricultural products throughout Pennsylvania.

White House Maternal Health Visit

I was proud to attend the Legislative Convening on Reproductive Rights at The White House with Vice President Kamala Harris alongside some of my colleagues, including Speaker of the House Joanna McClinton and Women's Health Caucus Co-Chair Rep. Mary Jo Daley. As we work to protect reproductive rights and improve health outcomes for families in Pennsylvania, it is important that we collaborate with our counterparts at the federal level to see the progress we truly want to achieve.





Neighborhood Infrastructure Repair Bill Policy Hearing and Recap of Housing Hearings

In April, I had the pleasure of hosting a roundtable discussion and tour for the House Majority Policy Committee in the Overbrook section, detailing infrastructure investment needs.

While we witnessed some of the needs of my community firsthand, I'm working in Harrisburg to create a program to empower all municipalities throughout the state to develop neighborhood infrastructure repair programs to support working families.

The bill, H.B. 948, would allow municipalities to create repair programs with matching local and state funds to help owners make needed repairs, including providing options to alleviate or spread-out costs over years, for public-use investments. This includes repairs needed for alleys and sidewalks.

We also talked with city leaders about the commonsense benefits of H.B. 948 and how it would allow property owners and homeowners to access a program to make repairs to driveways, retaining walls and alleyways that have degraded and are either a nuisance or at a point where upgrades would preserve or improve public safety.



Housing & Community Development Committee Hearing on Eviction Reform

As Chair of the Philadelphia House Delegation and in response to a series of violent incidents involving landlord-tenant officers taking place in the city, I joined the House Housing and Community Development Committee to host a public hearing on advancing eviction reform in Pennsylvania. We must ensure that whoever is executing evictions in the city and across the state are doing so safely. A series of proposed reforms would ensure proper notification of evictions, making sure that those executing evictions have comprehensive training along with other measures.



BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

WINS FOR PHILADELPHIA

The 2023-24 state budget invests funds in crucial areas that will help Philadelphia progress

- 7.6% Funding Increase for The School District of Philadelphia
- First-Time Funding for Indigent Defense
- Gun Violence Reduction Investment
- 184,562 students qualify for free breakfast
- Additional Investment in Whole Home Repairs
- Expansion of the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program
- Funding Historically Disadvantaged Business Program
- The budget allocates \$100 million for school-based mental health counselors and resources for students



Property Tax/Rent Rebate Expansion

Included in the 2023-24 budget is funding to expand Pennsylvania's Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program for the first time since 2006. I was excited to join Gov. Josh Shapiro and my colleagues here in the city during this historic moment in August when Gov. Shapiro signed the expansion into law.

The expansion includes an increase of the maximum rebate to \$1,000. It also raises the income-eligibility cap to \$45,000, allowing more people to be eligible for the program. Nearly 175,000 more Pennsylvanians will qualify, and many of the 400,000 seniors who already qualify will see their rebates nearly double.

Small Business Tour with Lt. Gov. Davis



I had the opportunity to host a small business tour with Lt. Gov. Austin Davis along the Haverford Avenue Business Corridor to visit small businesses and have a conversation about state-level efforts to support businesses and improve public safety. I am glad to share that the budget invests \$20 million in new funding for historically disadvantaged business assistance.



Welcoming students back to school for the 2023-24 school year!



Helping neighbors protect against identity theft during my Spring Shredding event.



I stood with State Sen. Vincent Hughes and City Councilmember Curtis Jones Jr. to present over a million dollars to Friends of Granahan playground to help support renovations of the space.



I was happy to join the Elevation Project and other community partners to host an expungement clinic and block party featuring special musical guests, State Property.



I joined Friends of Carroll Park and ParkWest Towne Center for their annual National Night Out events.



I hosted a series of community meetings to discuss ongoing concerns with a convenience store impacting the surrounding neighborhoods.



I stood alongside local leaders at the groundbreaking for the Cobbs Creek Golf Course project. This is an exciting asset being restored in our community.



We celebrated the opening of Tustin Pool, a safe haven for youth and families to stay cool during the summer.



The Philadelphia Delegation proudly walked alongside UPS workers in their fight for better pay and employee benefits.



At this year's Youth Employment Workshop we helped connect youth to summer employment and training opportunities. Thank you to our partners, Urban Affairs Coalition, Wes Gold Fellows and Episcopal Community Services.



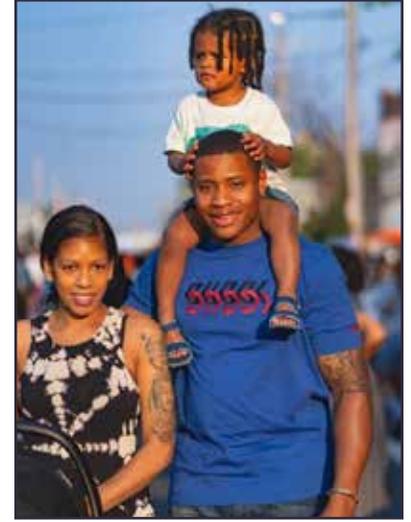
The Philadelphia Delegation made our way to the I-95 construction site to show our support for the workers and get a close look at the roadway being rebuilt just weeks after the catastrophic collapse.

3RD ANNUAL OVERBROOK NIGHT MARKET

Over 10,000 people joined us along Lancaster Avenue between 61st and 63rd Streets for the 3rd installment of the Overbrook Night Market. It featured 39 food and drink vendors, a curated family zone with activities for children and families, and two DJ entertainment zones, among other attractions. It not only offered an opportunity to enjoy food and entertainment, but it also provided residents with an authentic sense of community.

Event Highlights

- 10,000+ Attendees
- 37+ Food Trucks/Vendors
- 75% Black, minority and/or woman owned
- Average of \$20,000+ spent
- 20+ community volunteers





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lpo.kw.0923

UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER

State of the 192nd Town Hall

Wednesday, October 25th | 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Senior Health & Wellness Seminar Series

Multiple dates and locations | Contact our office for registration details!

Halloween at Carroll Park - Trunk or Treat

Tuesday, October 31st | 58th & Girard | Begins at 4:30 p.m.

Fall Resource Drive N' Drop Turkey Giveaway

Contact my office to sign-up and for more information. Limited slots available.

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