



# STATE REPRESENTATIVE

# Liz Hanbidge

## 61ST LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

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Dear Friends:

This year is flying by, and I have been overjoyed to see more and more of you at community events. Our recent shredding and electronic waste recycling events had record turnout! We even had to call in some of our amazing community volunteers to help (if you want to be added to our community events volunteer list, we would love to have you). I am hoping for similarly stellar turnouts at our upcoming events. Our upcoming blood drive is particularly important as our blood supply continues to face a significant shortage. Beyond our regularly scheduled mobile office hours, we are back to hosting many other in-person events, so check them out at [www.pahouse.com/hanbidge/events](http://www.pahouse.com/hanbidge/events).

In the House, we are busy finalizing our budget for the next fiscal year. As always, I'll be discussing that process in greater detail in my weekly emails. I will reiterate what I've said before: the budget is a moral document and reflective of our values and priorities as a community. Over the past year, legislative leadership has unequivocally shown its priorities by refusing to allocate more than \$2.2 billion dollars in COVID-19 relief funding meant to help people and small businesses get back on their feet after the pandemic. We have a projected budget surplus of nearly \$4 billion and the COVID-19 relief dollars must be allocated soon, or we risk losing them. Those federal dollars are meant to be providing relief to people and businesses immediately, not sitting around waiting to be allocated!

While some of my colleagues do not seem to realize that Pennsylvanians need help now, I am fighting for a budget that serves the people. We should be fighting inflation, making childcare more accessible, addressing gas prices, offering property tax relief, and incentivizing industry to come to Pennsylvania by lowering the corporate net income tax. This year we have seen too many "bridge-naming" bills, and niche bills, destined for veto, aimed at inflaming partisan divides. We must do everything in our power to combat gun violence despite the majority's continued refusal to run commonsense gun violence prevention bills. It's imperative we take a step back from partisanship and do the work of the people: it's why we were elected!

We have had some victories. Highlights include, passing bills to streamline medical licensing requirements, to narrow and improve the fireworks laws, to remove homosexuality from the Crimes Code, and to help alleviate the shortage of teachers. Speaker Cutler nominated me to serve as Pennsylvania's representative on a roundtable taskforce with the National Conference of State Legislatures and Pew Charitable Trusts. Eight other legislators and I are working to create model child guardianship laws for national use to help the 5.2 million children who lost a parent or caregiver to COVID-19 and the 250,000 children who lose parents to the opioid epidemic annually. I am the first Democrat in recent memory in the House to be nominated for such a role and am grateful for the opportunity to serve in this capacity. The process of creating good model law typically takes a few years and it is my sincere hope that, as I continue my service as a legislator in years to come, Pew and NCSL will continue to call on me to do this type of work.

As ever, I encourage you to reach out to me. The conversations we have are informative and often the nexus for new legislative ideas. I am here to represent and serve you and I can best do that when I know you and the issues that are important to you! I hope you have an incredible, safe, and fun summer and I look forward to seeing you in our community!

*Liz Hanbidge*



## CONSTITUENT SERVICES CORNER

*(Mid-year report)*

832 Cases (95% closed)

100 SEPTA Key Cards Processed

Six district outreach events

Weekly Legislative Summaries:

21 (From 01/01/2022 to 06/03/2022)

## Upcoming Events

**Blood Drive** – July 1, 2 PM – 7 PM

Hosted by the Montgomery County Community College  
Drive held at Parkhouse Hall

**Electronics Recycling Event** – July 9, 9 AM – 11 AM

Montgomery County Community College, Parking Lot 1D, enter at 595 Cathcart Rd.

**Dog Adoption & Licensing Event** – August 20, 9 AM – 1 PM

Parkside Place Pavilion – 1 Parkside Place North Wales, PA 19454  
Adoptable dogs from Home at Last

**For other events, please visit:**

<https://pahouse.com/hanbidge/events>



## Senior Fraud Prevention Events

We are out in the community with our incredible local law enforcement talking to seniors about fraud prevention. We started hosting these events just before the pandemic began and after a pause are happy to bring them back. If you haven't seen an upcoming date for an event in your community, reach out to our office and we will sign you up.

If you have any questions regarding my office events, please contact my Blue Bell office at (610) 277-3230.

## Sign Up for My Weekly Legislative Email

I send out a weekly email about legislative activities, office services, and upcoming events. If you have not done so already, I encourage you to sign up on my website at [www.RepHanbidge.com/EmailSignUp](http://www.RepHanbidge.com/EmailSignUp).

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Our community continues to feel the ripple effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. My office has heard countless stories from constituents who need help, but do not know where to turn. Below you will find a list of local resources that are ready and available to help. If you are able, please consider donating or volunteering your time to one of the organizations below.

### Nonprofit Food Banks & Essential Needs Resources

#### Community Cupboard:

150 N. Main St. Ambler, PA; (215) 628-3002

#### Manna on Main:

606 Main Street Lansdale, PA; (215) 855-5454

#### Mitzvah Circle:

2562 Boulevard of the Generals #100 Norristown, PA; (267) 649-7610

### Info for How to Apply on COMPASS for Food Stamps/Medical Assistance/CHIP/LIHEAP/Emergency Rental Assistance

#### Visit [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us).

Click "APPLY NOW" to apply.

Click "Renew Now" to renew

### Nonprofit/Government Domestic & Child Abuse Resources

#### Montgomery County Child Advocacy Project:

409 Cherry Street Norristown, PA; (610) 279-1219

#### Laurel House:

180 W. Germantown Pike #2 East Norriton, PA; (610) 277-1860

#### Child Advocacy Center Montgomery:

180 W. Germantown Pike #1 East Norriton, PA; (484) 687-2990

#### Victim Services Center of Montgomery County:

325 Swede St #2 Norristown, PA; (610) 277-0932

**National Sexual Assault Hotline:** 1-800-656-4373

**National Domestic Violence Hotline:** 1-800-799-7233

### Mental Health Resources

#### National Alliance on Mental Illness Montgomery County:

100 W. Main St. Unit 204 Lansdale, PA; (215) 361-7784

#### Resources for Human Development Critical Time Intervention:

1000 Sandy Hill Road Norristown, PA; (610) 279-4240

#### National Suicide Prevention Hotline:

1-800-273-8255; En Espanol 1-888-528-9454

**The Crisis Text Line:** Text "HELLO" to 741741

**Veteran's Crisis Line:** 1-800-273-8255; Press 1 or text 838255

**Safe Helpline for Members of the Military:** 1-877-995-5247

#### Disaster Distress Helpline:

1-800-985-5990 or text "talkwithus" to 66746

#### Trevor Lifeline for LGBTQIA+ Community:

1-866-488-7386 or text "START" to 678678

#### LGBTQIA+ Senior (50+) Hotline:

1-888-234-7243

**Trans Lifeline:** 1-877-565-8860

## Legislation I Have Introduced & Co-sponsored

*Please contact my office to request more information about any of the following bills.*

### ***Addressing Gun Violence***

I am heartsick from the continuous murder and enraged by our persistent failure as a legislature to address gun violence across the commonwealth. In late May, I took the first step in sponsoring a motion to force a floor vote on a bipartisan gun violence prevention bill that has been languishing in committee.

When a committee refuses to report a bill, a resolution adopted by a constitutional majority of the House, called a discharge resolution, may be used to discharge the committee from further consideration of the bill and thereby bypass the committee process. Twenty-five of my colleagues joined me by signing on to my discharge resolution, and the three other discharge resolutions my colleagues brought to force a floor vote on three other commonsense gun bills.

Circumventing the committee process is an unusual step but we are without other options. Majority Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee Rob Kauffman, continues to refuse to bring up any legislation he apparently believes will limit gun rights (but he seems wholly unwilling to address the rights of children to feel safe in school). Each time we have a mass shooting, he, like so many of my colleagues, continues to offer his thoughts and prayers.

In this country, we quite literally have children who plan what they are going to do when someone comes to kill them at school. It's unacceptable and the hypocrisy of offering "thoughts and prayers" and continually refusing to do anything to protect children and families is appalling. We must take action to stop this horror.

I co-sponsored HB 1903, the bill I sought to discharge from committee. HB 1903 empowers loved ones and law enforcement to temporarily disarm persons in crisis, for up to one year, when they present a threat to themselves or to others. Such laws, commonly referred to as Extreme Risk Protection Orders (ERPOs), save lives, and 19 states and D.C. have enacted them. ERPOs have been shown to significantly reduce suicide and prevent planned mass shootings. Over half of all gun deaths are from suicide. Under HB1903, courts could issue immediate temporary orders to limit firearm access. Following the issuance of a temporary order, the court must quickly follow up with a full hearing where the subject of the order may participate and offer evidence and testimony before a final order is issued.

On June 13, instead of addressing the crisis of gun violence by allowing the discharge resolutions to proceed, or voting on the bills, the Judiciary Committee chairman obstructed this process by sending the bills to another committee, blocking a floor vote. While the chairman might choose cowardice and obstruction over action, I won't and, personally, I hope that getting these bills into another committee might mean they have a chance of moving forward. I will continue advocating on this issue because all of us should feel safe in our communities and, most especially, our children should never have to consider whether they'll be murdered at school.

### ***Pelvic Floor Health Insurance & Education***

The pelvic floor, attached to the tail- and pubic-bone, is part of one's core musculature and supports the urinary and reproductive tracts and helps control the bladder and bowels. These pelvic muscles can become weak or unbalanced over time through trauma, pregnancy, or surgery, and not work the way they are expected to, leading to pelvic floor dysfunction (PFD). PFD is most common post proctectomy surgery and postpartum. Individuals with PFD may have trouble controlling their bladder or bowels, experience pain during intercourse, or struggle with constipation.

Without treatment, PFD may lead to long-lasting health issues. For many, it's an embarrassing condition and it has wide-ranging impacts on physical and mental health. Pelvic floor therapy is an extremely useful tool to help those experiencing problems with their pelvic floor. Experts recommend treatment start as soon as symptoms are noticed. Unfortunately, lack of insurance coverage for therapy and lack of knowledge on pelvic floor problems are often cited as barriers to treatment.

I introduced two bills that would provide better access to treatment for pelvic floor issues, HB 2532 & HB 2533. HB 2532 creates partnerships between the PA Department of Health and health centers to educate people about PFD and how to treat it. This bill is currently in the House Health Committee. HB 2533 requires insurance companies to cover pelvic floor therapy. It's currently in the House Insurance Committee.

### ***Right-to-Know Law Exception***

Mayor McDevitt of North Wales reached out to me to advocate for individuals with disabilities who hold public office. A leader in this space, he was concerned that the Right-to-Know (RTK) law needs updating regarding the use of assistive technologies. He sought to ensure that unclear law doesn't prevent individuals with disabilities from seeking public office and municipalities are not unnecessarily paying for unneeded accommodations. Because of his advocacy, I introduced HB 2534, which amends the RTK Law to specifically protect notes or records of communications that would otherwise be privileged, but are created during executive session through assistive technology. HB2534 was approved in committee unanimously on June 21, 2022.

### ***Co-Sponsorship: Water Ratepayer Bill of Rights***

When word got around about the proposed sale of the Towamencin Sewer Authority, my office began getting many calls about what protections are in place for individual ratepayers and with questions about the law that allows for the sale of municipal water and sewer authorities. Act 12 of 2016 created a process for valuation and sale of municipal sewer and water authorities and created requirements for oversight of certain types of transactions.

Unlike the protections afforded under similar laws in other states, like requiring the entity be “distressed” or that the municipality needs funds, there are no such requirements under this act. Nor is there a mechanism in place to be used to solicit voter input about such a sale.

While it’s township supervisors’ role rather than legislators to make decisions about selling a sewer authority, your many calls and questions led to me co-sponsor the “Ratepayer Bill of Rights,” HB144, with Rep. Christina Sappey, which addresses many of the concerns you brought to me, including a mechanism for voter approval of sale of a municipal authority under the act. While this protection for ratepayers will not pass in time to impact residents in Towamencin, it could serve others in similar situations in the future.

**Education Funding Needs Reform**

As we finalize the annual budget, I want to comment on several education funding issues that directly impact property taxes and where and how our education dollars are spent. Pennsylvania is 46th in the country on state spending on public schools, which means Pennsylvania schools are heavily reliant on local taxpayers for funding. This is part of the reason we have the highest per-capita disparity in student funding in the country. Prior to 1992, state law required the state fund at least half the cost of K-12 public education.

Now, Pennsylvania schools get around 58% of public education funding from local property taxes, 34% from the state, and just over 3% from the federal government. This reliance on local property taxes, especially in the context of poor decision-making by the General Assembly, means many, particularly those on fixed incomes, are at risk of being priced out of their homes or communities. I am fighting for simple legislative and budgetary fixes, and better use of relief dollars, to relieve taxpayers while making our schools better funded and more accountable.

A policy that created massive educational disparities beginning in 1992 through today is “Hold Harmless,” which guarantees that schools will not receive less funding than they had in the previous year, irrespective of population changes, school closures, changes in property values, poverty, etc. This means that districts with large population losses still get the same amount of money and there’s less money available to districts with population increases. Areas with large population decreases now have \$590 million tied to students they no longer educate and here in the 61st Legislative District, education funding hasn’t caught up with population increases.

The commonwealth sought to make state education funding fairer through implementation of the Fair Funding Formula (FFF), which determines each district’s fair share of the state’s education funding. However, since its implementation in 2016, only “newly allocated” education dollars go through the FFF so our schools are still not fairly funded. This year only, 13.7% of education

The table below shows the actual amount of state education funding appropriated in 2020-21 to North Penn and Wissahickon school districts, as well as what they would have received if the FFF were fully implemented.

	2021-22 Actual \$	2021-22 if we had Fair Funding	\$ Diff	% Diff	Per student
North Penn SD	\$11,811,117	\$20,893,533	-\$9,082,416	-43.5%	-\$697
Wissahickon SD	\$3,110,417	\$5,508,744	-\$2,398,327	-43.5%	-\$488

dollars went through the FFF. North Penn and Wissahickon school districts, the children they educate, and taxpayers, have been impacted by our failure to implement the FFF.

Beyond issues related to inequitable funding, one issue school districts are facing is huge cost increases on items that are out of their control. One line item for school districts that continues to grow is the cost of cyber charter schools. The majority of charter school funding comes from the students’ school district of residence, which makes tuition payments to the charter school. Cyber charters receive practically the same per-student amount as traditional brick-and-mortar schools without having the same fixed costs, such as building maintenance, food, or transportation costs. Cyber charter costs are around 30% less than brick-and-mortar charters yet, because of issues with the charter school law (which hasn’t been updated in 30 years), they receive \$8,306 to \$36,204 per student. Most local school districts run their cyber options for around \$6,000 per student.

Despite the tremendous amount of funding they receive, student outcomes in all 14 of the state’s cyber charters scored below the state average on the 2018-19 English and math assessments and all were indicated as “needing support” under Pennsylvania’s School Improvement and Accountability plan. Only 58% of cyber charter students graduate. Cyber charters spent \$35 million of taxpayer money in advertising alone over the last two years and this year some charter schools sent cyber charter families hundreds of dollars in checks; these taxpayer dollars could have been better spent. We must update the charter law so that taxpayers aren’t overpaying for a system that isn’t properly educating our children. Education is an investment in the future of our children and our economy, but we must invest wisely!

Changes to charter school funding are projected to save taxpayers \$373 million dollars. We also know fully implementing the FFF would significantly improve the state funding our local schools receive and thus impact the burden on local taxpayers. As we finalize our budget, I will continue to advocate for changes to our education system, which promise better outcomes, more accountability, and less cost to taxpayers.



*Liz speaks to elementary school students as part of their fabulous "President for the Day" presentations.*



*Liz speaks to students at Montco Community College as a part of their Legislator in Residence Program.*



*Liz at the Veterans' Expo she hosted with Rep. Matt Bradford.*



*Liz with Commissioner Ken Lawrence who donated shoes to give to Mitzvah Circle.*



*Liz at the Upper Gwynedd Township Unity for Kindness Day Festival.*



*Liz and Rep. Matt Bradford at the April Electronic Waste Recycling Event.*



*Liz with Rep. Matt Bradford, volunteers, and staff at the April Electronic Waste Recycling Event.*



*Liz and Rep. Matt Bradford with the 11 Bravo Motorcycle Club at the March Veterans' Expo.*



*Liz volunteering at the Senior Games Running Event.*



*Liz helping to host the 2022 Senior Games Luncheon.*



*Liz handing out awards at the Whitpain Township Earth Day Poem and Artwork contest.*



*Liz and Sen. Maria Collett at our May Shredding Event.*



*Liz taking active steps to force a floor vote on a bipartisan gun violence prevention bill that's been stuck in committee.*



*Liz attends the Gun Violence Prevention Rally in Montgomery County.*



*Liz with local leaders at the opening of the Food Pantry at Salem Baptist Church, made possible by the Church, Philabundance, and Family Promise of Montgomery County.*



Representative Liz Hanbidge

1098 W. Skippack Pike  
Blue Bell, PA 19422

lpo.jc.0622

**IF YOU HAVE A CURRENT SENIOR SEPTA PASS, IT HAS BEEN AUTOMATICALLY RENEWED UNTIL YOUR EXPIRY DATE IN 2023.**

## CONSTITUENT SERVICES

**I am here to help you with any state government-related issue you might have. Below are some of the most common services that we help with at our office. For help, or to speak with me or my staff, please do not hesitate to contact my office.**

- Driver & vehicle services renewals (Department of Transportation)
- Disability Plate & Placard applications (Department of Transportation)
- Unemployment Compensation (Department of Labor & Industry)
- Applications for birth/death certificates (Division of Vital Records)
- Providing Property Tax/Rent Rebate and other tax forms (Department of Revenue)
- SEPTA Key Card applications (SEPTA)
- Unclaimed funds recovery (Department of Treasury)
- SNAP, LIHEAP, etc. (Department of Human Services)
- Free notary services for nonpolitical documents
- Requests for brochures such as Senior Handbook & Veteran's Benefits

## LEGISLATIVE CORNER

### COMMITTEES

For the 2021-22 session I am currently assigned to the following committees: Agriculture & Rural Affairs, Children & Youth, Judiciary, and Local Government.

### CAUCUSES

In addition to my committee assignments, I also serve on the following delegations & caucuses: Southeast Delegation (vice chair), Climate, Animal Protection, Autism and Intellectual Disabilities, LGBTQ, PA Safe, and Women's Health Caucuses.

