

Unclaimed Property at PA Treasury

The Pennsylvania Treasury is on a mission to deliver \$3 billion from their vault to the rightful owners. These funds end up in the Treasury when somebody trying to pay another person cannot connect with that person and then the funds usually go to one party's bank. After sitting in bank vaults for three years, the money is turned over to the Treasury.

My office is hard at work on trying to notify constituents of their unclaimed property, but you don't have to wait for us to reach out: you can search the Treasury's online database at any time to see if you or friends and family have property waiting to be claimed. You need not pay anyone a fee to search for or claim property from the state. However, if the amount of unclaimed property in your name is over \$1,500, you will need your forms notarized, which my office can assist you with. Learn more at www.patreasury.gov/unclaimed-property. If you need notarization, call us at (610)-251-1070.



Rep. Kristine Howard

P.O. Box 202167
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2167



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Kristine Howard

167TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

WEBSITE: www.RepKHoward.com

FALL 2022

Greentree Office Plaza • 40 Lloyd Ave., Suite 309 • Malvern, PA 19355 • (610) 251-1070

107 East Wing • P.O. Box 202167 • Harrisburg, PA 17120-2167 • (717) 783-4088

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My office can help you with:

- Car registrations, special tags, titles and license applications
- Information on financial assistance for higher education
- Disability plates and placards
- PACE cards for senior citizens
- Complaints and problems with insurance companies
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions
- Problems or questions about the state lottery
- Pennsylvania income tax problems
- Local government officials' problems with state agencies
- Any problem with state government!

STATE REP. KRISTINE HOWARD'S

Senior Fair

Thursday, Oct. 6 | 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
West Whiteland Township Building
101 Commerce Drive
Exton, PA 19341

My annual Senior Fair is being held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursday, October 6 at the West Whiteland Township building (101 Commerce Dr, Exton, PA 19341). I will be hosting 20 vendors, including SEPTA who will be on hand to process Senior Key Card requests and renew Senior Key cards that have expired, along with the SeniorLaw Center, and ROVER Community Transportation. There will also be representatives from Chester County and various commonwealth agencies, including (but by no means limited to) the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, PennDOT and the Department of Banking and Securities.

Additionally, my staff will be on hand to perform online searches for unclaimed property, and Chester County Health will be administering flu and COVID shots.

lpo.km.0822

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Kristine Howard



CONSTITUENT SERVICES

**STATE GOVERNMENT CONCERNS?
CALL MY OFFICE**

My office is here to help you with any state-related issue. If you're having an issue, please call, and my staff will do all they can to serve as guides or champions, as needed, as you navigate your concerns through our government.

While most issues can be resolved by phone, many matters may require an in-person meeting. To minimize wait times while allowing us to research your issue and provide the best service possible without the need to rush our visitors, appointments are encouraged. To schedule an appointment, call my office at (610) 251-1070 or email RepHoward@pahouse.net.

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Dear Neighbor,

Since first being elected in 2018, I have worked tirelessly to ensure that we get everything we need and deserve, both here in the 167th Legislative District and across the commonwealth. I am proud to report that the freshly passed budget includes a massive increase in our state's educational spending. As you can see in the graphic below, our school districts will receive an increase in Basic and Special Education funding, as well as an increase in Ready to Learn Block Grants (for mental health and physical safety)

In addition, the budget commits \$755 million in funds to environmental protection, conservation, water and sewer projects, state parks and clean streams, all while reducing overall taxes, including a new tax credit for families with children. There are a great many things to love about this budget, and I do not have space to detail all of it, but you can read a more comprehensive summary of the budget at www.pahouse.com/Howard.

Additionally, I've brought over \$2.5 million into the district through state grants, including \$2 million to Berwyn Fire Company. Our first responders are critical to the safety and well-being of our communities, and this funding ensures that Berwyn Fire Company has the support they need to build a new firehouse, making way for a stronger emergency response infrastructure to safeguard our communities.

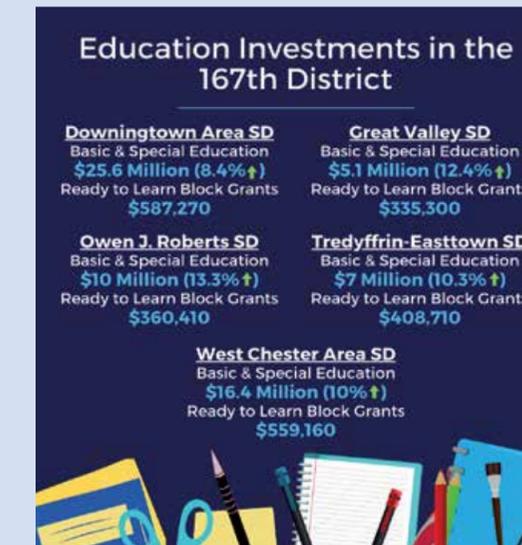
By the time you read this, I will have introduced 30 pieces of legislation this session, many of them suggested by constituents, covering issues from health care to conservation, to labor and skill shortages, to family law and protecting small businesses.

I also worked with the State Government Committee to investigate allegations surrounding the 2020 election, consulted with Congressional offices to address crude oil prices and worked with the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education to ensure that students could more seamlessly transfer across the system, thereby saving time and money while pursuing their education.

Beyond that, my staff have assisted thousands of constituents with everything from unemployment issues to tax questions to road repairs.

I am proud of the work of my office, and I will continue working for the 167th!

Kristine C. Howard



Report Potholes

Potholes and other roadway concerns on state roads can be reported by calling 1-800-FIX-ROAD or visiting www.pennidot.gov and clicking on "Submit a Roadway Concern."

RECENTLY SIGNED INTO LAW

It's not just the budget: the legislature and governor's office have been hard at work on many issues, including:

House Bill 1421, which increases Medicaid rates for Skilled Nursing Facilities, so that they can address their staffing shortfalls and provide better care for their patients.

Senate Bill 1179, which updates the Sexual Violence Victim Address Confidentiality Act to allow for victims of human trafficking or kidnapping to participate in the address confidentiality program.

Senate Bill 709, which will require health care providers to offer screenings for cytomegalovirus, one of the most common viral infections infants are born with, and a cause of hearing loss and developmental delay.

House Bill 2412, which will permit the state to have Pennsylvania National Guard members assist state and local governments with cybersecurity training and support.

Among many others. Just on July 7, 31 new bills were signed by the Governor. Additional details are available at www.governor.pa.gov/newsroom.

PENNSYLVANIA SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS MAIL-IN VOTING

On August 2, the PA Supreme Court released its opinion in *McLinko v. Department of State*, a challenge to the constitutionality of Pennsylvania's mail-in voting law. The Court's holding that the law is constitutional will now allow all Pennsylvanians to be secure in their knowledge that whichever method of voting they choose to employ in November, it will be counted and upheld. If you wish to know more, the full texts of the opinions of the Court are available at the PA Supreme Court's website: www.pacourts.us/courts/supreme-court/court-opinions.



NEW MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS NUMBER: 988

Anyone experiencing a mental health, substance use or suicide crisis may now call or text 988 for assistance. This is an extension of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 800-273-8255 (which still works), to include assistance for people experiencing a range of crises. Trained crisis counselors are on the other end of the line to provide free, confidential support 24/7. Please reach out if you're struggling and know that you don't have to fight these battles alone. 988 is now active across the United States. This new, shorter phone number will make it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services.

NEW AND UPCOMING LEGISLATION

HELPING JOB SEEKERS

While the job market has been very healthy recently, it is not without its frustrations for many job seekers, including those who previously worked but took time off, often to start and raise families, and those who have been recently working in fields that are not utilizing their qualifications adequately. Unfortunately, employers see these potential employees as risks, despite their prior experience and qualifications, and it can be very hard for either group to find a job that will use their talents fully. In particular, those who left the labor force for over two years often find it nearly impossible to get back into their old fields.

While a growing number of companies are offering "returnships," which are intend-to-hire paid internships aiming to bring in people who are returning to the workforce after substantial time off, I feel more needs to be done, especially as the returnships largely do not include people

who are underemployed relative to their qualifications, and may exclude returning workers who through simple financial necessity had to take a much lower-paying job while they sought to get back into their old field.

To that end, I will soon be introducing a bill that would create a tax incentive for companies to expand their imaginations beyond recent graduates when looking to fill positions. If a company's hire either greatly improves that employee's salary relative to their old job, or, in the case of those who have been out of the labor force for two years, gives them a decent salary based on their credentials, the company will receive a healthy benefit on their corporate income tax for each year those individuals are employed, up to three years.

I believe that this bill is a necessary first step to ensuring fairness and preventing despair in the workforce, as well as minimizing the gender pay gap.

VOLUNTARY FIREARMS BUYBACK PROGRAM

Firearms sales in America skyrocketed in 2020. Queries to the NICS background check database, along with industry publications, suggest that at least 21 million guns were purchased in 2020, with an additional 18.5 million purchased in 2021, the two strongest years ever for firearm sales. This coincides with an increase in homicides in 2020 and 2021, including a record 562 in Philadelphia alone last year.

A substantial number of the 2020 and 2021 sales appear to have been purchases by first-time buyers, and at least some of these first-time buyers may no longer want their purchases. We need a safe and secure mechanism for gun owners to rid themselves of unwanted firearms without the fear that those firearms will be recirculated and used in crime.

Local voluntary gun buyback programs collect thousands of unwanted or illegally possessed firearms each year. House Bill 2688 would establish a voluntary statewide firearm buyback program within the Office of the Attorney General and in conjunction with our state and local police departments. This program would offer fair secondhand market value for unwanted firearms, and because donors may turn over their weapons anonymously, this program would help get illegally obtained weapons off our streets and ensure that stolen firearms are returned to their rightful owners, if known. I firmly believe that investing in this program will save lives across Pennsylvania.

BROADENING PFA ORDERS

Introduced as a tool to protect survivors of domestic violence, over 30,000 Protection from Abuse Orders (PFAs) have been filed or pending each year since 2011. While our current PFA law is relatively comprehensive, it still fails to protect a broader group of Pennsylvanians who may not be experiencing violence at the hands of an intimate partner, family or household member, or those who may be experiencing a type of violence not available for protection under the law.

My legislation, House Bill 2705, would address this issue by broadening the eligibility criteria for individuals who would like to file for a PFA against an abuser. By amending the current definition to no longer specify that only individuals with familial, intimate, or domestic relationships are eligible for a PFA and adding two new PFA-eligible crimes, my bill would allow more survivors to protect themselves against often-overlooked forms of abuse, such as harassment and financial abuse.

Birth Certificates and Death Certificates

My office can help you obtain copies of birth and death certificates. Certificates cost \$20 each and must be paid via check or money order made payable to "VITAL RECORDS."

VISIT WWW.PAHOUSE.COM/HOWARD AND SIGN UP FOR MY EMAIL NEWSLETTER TO STAY UP TO DATE!

Property Tax/Rent Rebate Increased This Year!

The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians aged 65 and older; widows and widowers aged 50 and older; and people with disabilities aged 18 and older. The income limit is \$35,000 a year for homeowners and \$15,000 annually for renters, with half of Social Security income excluded. For example, if you're a homeowner that earned \$20,000 in wages, and received \$20,000 in Social Security, you will still qualify, because the Social Security is

counted as \$10,000. Spouses, personal representatives or estates may also file rebate claims on behalf of claimants who lived at least one day in 2020 and meet all other eligibility criteria. Visit www.revenue.pa.gov for more information.

Additionally, the 2022/2023 state budget includes an additional one-time \$140 million boost to the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THIS ONE-TIME SUPPLEMENT

- Seniors and disabled residents who received rebates under the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program for the 2021 claim year will receive the additional one-time rebate.
- The rebate is equal to 70% of your regular rebate. (For example, a resident who received a regular rebate of \$500 can expect to receive a supplemental rebate of \$350.)
- If you are a claimant who has already received your original rebate on property taxes or rent paid in 2021, you will receive your additional bonus rebate in a one-time payment. There's no need to act! The state Department of Revenue will send the additional funds automatically. It anticipates that bonus rebates will start being mailed and sent via direct deposit in early September.
- If you are an eligible claimant whose 2021 rebate application is still being processed; or an eligible claimant who has not yet submitted your 2021 rebate application form, you will receive a combined rebate (original + bonus) in a one-time payment.
- The extra payment will be sent in the mail or via direct deposit, depending on how you designated to receive your regular rebate on the original application.

Conservation Corner

As you may recall, I introduced two bills that would help bees and other pollinating species by tasking PennDOT with planting wildflowers along roads, creating habitats that they can thrive in while also reducing expenditures on roadside maintenance, as well as a bill that would fund this with a special pollinator license plate.

I am pleased to report that the Senate companions to these bills, introduced by my friend, state Sen. Carolyn Comitta, recently came up for a vote in the Senate Transportation Committee – which effectively folded the bills into one bill known as Senate Bill 1249 – and then unanimously approved it! Hopefully very soon, this bill will get a vote in the Senate as a whole, and then come to the House, where it can be concurred, and then ultimately become law.



2022 General Election Important Dates



Register to vote
or update your registration

Deadline: **October 24**



Request mail-in or absentee ballot

Sign up by: **November 1**



Deadline for mail-in or absentee ballots

Due: **November 8**
(must be received by 8 p.m.)



Election Day

Polls open 7 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Date: **November 8**

vote.pa.gov