



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Kristine Howard

167TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

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NOVEMBER 2020

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Dear Neighbor,

Nobody expected 2020 to go quite like it has. This has been a tough and unpredictable year, and it culminated with a difficult election that featured a turnout demonstrating very strongly that the spirit of public participation in government is thriving.

As much as politics has divided us, people are as involved and committed to the political process as they have ever been, and I think that is a very good thing. Considering the challenges that we've all faced as a state and as a nation this year, it would be understandable if people had "tuned out" and given up on our form of government.

Thankfully, they did not.

This election and transfer of presidential power can serve as a great testament to the fundamental strength of our democracy and the commitment that we as Americans make to settling our differences by peaceful and orderly means. In a year that has tested the patience and fortitude of all of us, this extreme level of engagement from voters gives me pride in continuing to serve as a representative in our state legislature. I hope to make everybody in Pennsylvania's 167th Legislative District proud in the coming session as we march toward a new and hopefully vastly better year.

Kristine C. Howard

What can you expect from me this coming session?

As the global pandemic continues, my biggest concerns are keeping Pennsylvanians safe and healthy, along with helping individuals and families struggling with economic and personal hardships during these turbulent times.

While many of us have been fortunate throughout this crisis, many have not, and the threat remains for us all. We must continue working together, wearing our masks, washing our hands, and social distancing.

With regard to legislation, I will be reintroducing the bulk of my bills from this session – bills covering many different subjects, ranging from protecting people with disabilities from crimes, to helping people build their credit, modernizing Protection From Abuse orders, and more.

However, I don't intend to just stop at revisiting previous legislation. These are extraordinary times, and there's an extraordinary amount of work to do to ensure that Chester County continues to be the outstanding place to live that it is. We need to protect and champion our small businesses, to ensure that COVID-19's ability to run rampant is curtailed, to protect the environment and diversify our energy infrastructure, and to make our schools ever-better places for our children to learn.

I believe that we can do all of this in a manner that is fair, efficient, and that doesn't leave anybody feeling left out or unfairly burdened. I believe there is always a way to improve all of our lives without controversy or somebody feeling they've lost, and I always aim to find a way to make life less of a zero-sum game.

Finally, the need for legislators' offices to be providing support to their constituents is greater than ever, and I intend to greatly emphasize and enhance the services my office provides in this coming term. If you have a concern with any state agency, my staff and I are here to support you and your family through this "new normal."

The 167th District includes Malvern Borough and the townships of Charlestown, Easttown, East Whiteland, West Pikeland, West Whiteland and Willistown.

A review of my prior legislation

In the past 22 months, I've introduced the following legislation to correct critical oversights in Pennsylvania law:

HR952: A resolution calling for a study to be conducted on the impacts of remote learning, as well as the best methods for conducting remote learning.

HB1344: A bill that would allow for crimes against the disabled to be counted as hate crimes.

HB1727: A bill that would require real-time alerts for pipeline emergencies.

HB1843: A bill that would require insurance companies to cover EpiPen injectors for children with allergies.

HB2887: A bill that would require lunch breaks for all employees in Pennsylvania, which are currently only required for minors.

HB2888: A bill that would update the language of Protection from Abuse orders to make social media contact a violation of the order, correcting a current gap in the law.

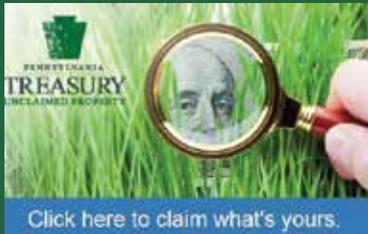
HB2889: A bill that would ban the use of personally identifying information on employee name tags, such as real names, to prevent stalking.

HB2932: A bill that would require that public utilities, such as electric and water companies, offer customers the option to have their bill payments reported to credit agencies, to allow another avenue for people to improve their credit.



Do you have unclaimed property?

According to the PA Treasury, our district has \$65,110,619.49 in unclaimed property, each worth \$100 or more. This is property (usually cash or checks) that has been turned over to Treasury for any number of reasons, such as a misspelled name or an out-of-date address. The Treasury is waiting for the rightful owner to come claim it.



1 in 10 Pennsylvania residents has unclaimed property waiting for them.

My office will soon be starting on a project to link people to their unclaimed property. Don't be surprised if you receive a phone call from my office advising you that we've found property for you to claim and that we can assist you with filling out the paperwork to receive it.

To see whether you have unclaimed property, you can go to this website: <https://bit.ly/38OtHPG>

Infrastructure grants for our communities

West Whiteland and Willistown townships were awarded \$514,200 to help upgrade small water, sewer, storm sewer and flood control infrastructure.

PA Small Water and Sewer grants through the Commonwealth Financing Authority were awarded as follows:

- ★ \$300,000 to rehabilitate West Whiteland Township's sanitary sewer collection system.
- ★ \$214,200 to extend Willistown Township's public sanitary sewer service.

This funding will help these communities to develop and strengthen their sewer systems.

State grant for Quann Park

The Horace J. Quann Memorial Park in Malvern Borough has received a \$92,500 grant from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

The grant money will be used to support the construction of a pedestrian walkway and stormwater management measures, installation of fencing and ADA access, and enhancements of the park's landscaping and other related site improvements.

I'm glad that this money will open up the space for walkers and provide ADA access so that more people can enjoy this wonderful park.





\$510K in COVID-19 grants for Chester County fire, EMS agencies

In October, I announced Chester County fire and EMS agencies will receive a total of \$510,110 in grants to offset some of the impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on their operations.

Through Act 26, the state made \$50 million in grants available to fire and emergency medical service organizations that were affected by the pandemic. The funding must be used for operational and equipment expenses.

Firefighters and EMS workers put their own lives at risk every day to save others, and so supporting our fire companies and EMS agencies is a priority for me. I'm glad that our local fire and emergency medical service organizations are receiving this funding to allow them to safely perform their jobs.

The grants awarded in our district are as follows:

* Alert Fire Company No. 1	\$23,699
* East Whiteland Township Volunteer Fire Association	\$25,342
* Malvern Fire Company	\$25,342
* West Whiteland Fire Company	\$23,896
* East Whiteland Township Volunteer Fire Association	\$15,048



Resource for grandparents raising grandchildren

If you are a grandparent raising a grandchild or know someone who is, I want to make sure you know about a resource recently launched by the Department of Human Services to help kinship care families connect to services and supports that can help children and their caregivers. At www.kinconnector.org you can find resources in your community, learn about trainings and services available for kinship families and find support groups and networks of other kinship care families and family care professionals. KinConnector also runs a helpline that can be reached by calling **1-866-KIN-2111** (1-866-546-2111).

Download the app to help fight COVID-19

More than 165,000 Pennsylvanians downloaded the COVID Alert PA exposure notification mobile app in its first week of release to the Apple and Google Play stores.

COVID Alert PA is a free, voluntary mobile app that includes an interactive COVID-19 symptom checker, alerts of potential exposures to the virus, updates on the latest public health data and public health guidance for what to do if you have a potential exposure to the virus. The app is designed to ensure the public's health and your privacy.

The more people who download the app, the more effective it will be in helping to stop the spread of COVID-19.



Help with Medicare's open enrollment

Do you need help applying for Medicare?

Medicare's open enrollment period continues through December 7. Medicare-eligible Pennsylvanians can take advantage of APPRISE, a free program run by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging that helps older Pennsylvanians choose Medicare supplements based on their income and medical needs. For more information, call APPRISE at **1-800-783-7067** or visit its website: <https://bit.ly/2GFHFYk>.



Pennie's enrollment period now open

Pennie is the new state-based health insurance marketplace for 2021 coverage. Pennsylvanians seeking individual health insurance coverage for 2021 will use Pennie.com instead of Healthcare.gov.

Open Enrollment began November 1 and ends January 15, 2021. A health insurance policy purchased between November 1 and December 15 will take effect January 1, 2021, while a policy purchased between December 16 and January 15 will take effect February 1, 2021.

For more information, go to <https://pennie.com/>. My office can help if you need more information or assistance applying.



My office can help you with...

- * Car registrations, special tags, titles and license applications
- * Information on financial assistance for higher education
- * Unemployment compensation problems
- * Birth and death certificate applications
- * Problems with Pennsylvania income taxes
- * Problems with Department of Human Services (food stamps, welfare)
- * Requests for literature — bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information, student aid information, etc.
- * Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding local accomplishments and family milestones
- * Complaints or questions about utilities and the PUC
- * Consumer complaints
- * Problems or questions about PennDOT
- * Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups
- * Disability license plates and placards
- * Assistance in getting and filling out state forms, like PACE (pharmaceutical assistance for qualified senior citizens), voter registration, property tax/rent rebate (for qualified seniors), PHEAA (PA Higher Education Assistance), etc.
- * Problems or questions about the state lottery
- * Local government officials' problems with state agencies

Any problem with state government!!

2020 -21 Income Guidelines

for homeowners and renters



household size	Maximum Income
1	\$19,140
2	\$25,860
3	\$32,580
4	\$39,300
5	\$46,020
6	\$52,740
7	\$59,460
8	\$66,180

Each additional person + \$6,720

Home heating assistance available

Do you struggle to pay your home heating bills?

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program helps eligible Pennsylvanians cover their home heating bills. Go to <https://bit.ly/3mQ50G8> to learn more.

My office can help if you need more information or assistance filling out the application.

Need help paying your rent, mortgage, health care, food, or home energy bills?

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many state programs have been expanded or extended to help Pennsylvanians in need:

- * The **Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program** application deadline has been extended until the end of the year. Go to: <https://bit.ly/38CSUMM>
- * **Pennsylvania Department of Human Services** offers a wide variety of services online. Go to: <https://bit.ly/3kpQ4gC>
- * Apply for health care, food and nutrition, or other services with **Compass**. Go to: <https://bit.ly/35r1vjL>

Be mindful of your mental health

If you or someone you know is struggling with loneliness or thoughts of hopelessness, please know that people want to help. These free resources are available 24/7.

- * The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: **1-800-273-8255**
- * The Spanish-language National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: **1-888-628-9454**
- * For the Mental Health Crisis Text Line: Text PA to **741741**
- * Support and Referral Helpline: **1-855-284-2494**
For TTY: **724-631-5600**
- * TrevorLifeline for LGBTQ individuals: **866-488-7386**
- * Trans Helpline: **877-565-8860**



Mental Health Help During COVID-19

Crisis Text Line



Text 'PA' to 741741

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline



1-800-273-8255

Preventing suicide in PA



[preventsuicide pa.org/](https://preventsuicide.pa.org/)

Disaster Distress Helpline



800-985-5990

Get Help Now for substance use disorder



1-800-662-4357

Veterans in crisis



[veterans crisisline.net](https://veterans.crisisline.net)

PA's support helpline



855-284-2494

Coping with COVID-19 stress



bit.ly/covid-coping

COVID-19 resources



mhanational.org/covid19



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PennDOT resumes issuing REAL ID

PennDOT has resumed issuing REAL ID at its full-service Driver License Centers.

Beginning October 1, 2021, Pennsylvanians will need a REAL ID-compliant driver's license, photo ID card, or another form of federally-acceptable identification (such as a valid passport or military ID) to board a domestic commercial flight or enter a federal building or military installation that requires ID.

For more information on REAL ID: <https://bit.ly/2FJVR1C>



District Office Open by Appointment

My office is open by appointment only. To schedule your appointment, call my office at 610-251-1070 or email RepHoward@pahouse.net. Please come to your appointment wearing a mask.

Visit RepKHoward.com and sign up for my email newsletter to stay up to date!