

Rep. ^{Rob}MATZIE

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

MAIN OFFICE:
SEND ALL DISTRICT CORRESPONDENCE HERE
1240 Merchant St.
Ambridge, PA 15003
(724) 266-7774 • (412) 565-3569
Fax: (724) 266-7634

ALIQUIPPA SATELLITE OFFICE:
DO NOT SEND MAIL HERE
Franklin Center of Beaver County Inc.
524 Franklin Ave.
Aliquippa, PA 15001
(724) 375-3052 • Fax: (724) 375-3058
Thursday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Website: www.pahouse.com/Matzie

THE 16TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT SERVING BEAVER AND ALLEGHENY COUNTIES
Beaver County: City of Aliquippa; Boroughs of Ambridge, Baden, Conway, East Rochester, Economy, Freedom, Monaca, Rochester and South Heights; and the Townships of Harmony and Hopewell.
Allegheny County: Leetsdale Borough and Leet Township.



Matzie sworn in, named committee chairman

It was my privilege and pleasure to take the oath of office on New Year's Day at the start of the 2019-20 legislative session. Later that month, I was appointed Democratic chairman of the House Consumer Affairs Committee, a committee I've served on for the last 10 years.

The Consumer Affairs Committee is one of the most important committees in the House. It works to protect Pennsylvanians in the areas of utility, cable, telecommunications and transportation services. As a watchdog for taxpayers, I will continue to work to protect you and your wallet.

Holding UPMC accountable

I recently joined more than 50 of my fellow Democratic legislators in filing a brief supporting of Attorney General Josh Shapiro's lawsuit to extend the consent decree between UPMC and Highmark that is set to expire June 30.

If the decree expires, UPMC has said it will require patients with Highmark health insurance to prepay in full, before receiving any non-emergency treatment or procedures at most UPMC hospitals. Patients then must seek any possible reimbursement from Highmark or another out-of-network insurer on their own.

This is, in a word, unconscionable. As a nonprofit that enjoys tax exempt status – among other benefits – it is our firm belief UPMC should live up to the responsibilities that status confers, namely that these regional assets remain available for the benefit of the entire community.

That is why I am supporting the Attorney General's lawsuit to ensure that everyone in our region has access to quality, affordable health care, regardless of their insurer.



Rep. Matzie with Victoria, a 10-year-old German Shepherd who was rescued from a puppy mill where she was treated in such an inhumane way that she was severely disabled. He supports a bill, that if enacted would move the pet market toward more humane sources, prohibiting Pennsylvania pet stores from selling animals from puppy mills. Unfortunately, Victoria passed away not long after the photo was taken, but remains the face and name for this legislation.

Real ID: Available now in PA

Real ID is now available for Pennsylvanians who want one.

Starting Oct. 1, 2020, 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.

You have three options for getting your Real ID:

- ✓ Ordering online, if you have already been pre-verified.
- ✓ Visiting any PennDOT Driver's License Center to have the required documents verified and imaged.
- ✓ Visiting one of the 12 Real ID Centers in Pennsylvania.

You will need the following:

1 proof of identity:

- ✓ Birth Certificate
- ✓ Valid Passport
- ✓ Social Security Card

2 acceptable Proofs of Residency:

- ✓ Current PA Driver's License/ID Card
- ✓ Current PA registration Card
- ✓ Proof of Insurance
- ✓ Bank Statement (no more than 90 days old)
- ✓ W-2 Form or Pay Stub
- ✓ Tax Records
- ✓ Lease Agreement or Mortgage Documents

Proof of all Legal Name Changes

- ✓ Certified Marriage Certificate
- ✓ Court Order

REAL IDs are now available



October 1, 2020 is the deadline to get a REAL ID.

PennDOT.gov/REALID

Pennsylvanians will need a REAL ID to:



Board a domestic flight



Enter a federal building



Enter a military base

Visit www.PennDOT.gov/REALID for more information.

Your vote counts

Imagine not having to worry about bad weather, finding a ride or having to take time off work or find the time in an already busy day to vote.

I've introduced two bills to make it easier to vote, while also safeguarding our elections.

The first bill (H.B. 1059) would permit Pennsylvania voters to cast their ballots by mail. Voters would request a ballot once and then continue receiving ballots for every election until they opt out.

Voting by mail has numerous advantages over traditional voting, from increasing voter participation and saving taxpayer dollars to reducing the chance of fraud even more.

The second bill (H.B. 765) would safeguard Pennsylvania's elections by mandating the use of paper ballots in place of the current electronic systems that are vulnerable to hacking.

Any voting system that involves electronics is open to hackers. Requiring a paper ballot system would help alleviate that risk, and it's working in 21 other states.

Nothing is more fundamental to our democracy than the right to vote and the accessibility and protection of that right.

Sunshine is the best disinfectant



The House of Representatives recently adopted my resolution to bring attention to the importance of government transparency and public access to official documents and agency meetings.

Democracy depends, first and foremost, on the active, informed participation of the people. Access to information guides citizens' decisions and lets them know how their tax dollars are being spent. It helps them determine who they want to represent them, and it empowers them to decide when action or change is necessary. Most importantly, it ensures that people share in the power that comes with knowledge.

Pennsylvania's Sunshine Act and Right to Know Law protect and promote public access to information by ensuring that government meetings remain open to the public and that key documents and reports be made available to citizens. The laws are also indispensable to the press's work of uncovering information that brings transparency to government decision-making and keeps leaders accountable to the people.

Improving access and cost of prescription drugs

Health care costs continue to rise and one of the most costly components is prescription drug prices.

At the end of last year, the Auditor General's Office completed a report on the practice of pharmacy benefit managers. These pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMs, are companies that act as middlemen between your pharmacist, drug companies and your insurance.

Unfortunately, the report confirms what we in the legislature have been hearing for quite some time - PBMs are overcharging patients and taxpayers untold millions of dollars and they are trying to drive local pharmacies out of business in order to fatten their own bottom lines.

We have entrusted these companies with an enormous responsibility and an enormous amount of taxpayer dollars, but it's become clear that they are abusing that trust.

In response to the Auditor General's report, I am introducing bipartisan legislation that would require transparency in PBM pricing practices in Medicaid and addressing inadequate reimbursement rates for pharmacies.

I'm also co-sponsoring H.B. 944, which calls for a full-scale audit of subcontracts with pharmacy benefit managers in Medicaid and H.B. 943, which removes "gag orders" by permitting pharmacists to disclose to a patient prescription drug information that would allow the patient to get the best available price for medications.

Transparency and oversight are important if we are to reign in the exorbitant costs of prescription medication and ensure everyone can afford the medication they need.



Rep. Matzie, co-chairman of the Pharmacy Caucus, speaks at a rally at the Capitol regarding legislation about the cost of prescription drugs.

Grant to create jobs in Leetsdale

Leetsdale Industrial Corp. recently received a \$400,000 state grant to fund the construction of one-half mile of additional freight rail storage track in Allegheny County.

Construction of additional storage track will allow for increased rail car capacity and more efficient storage and transportation of goods and materials. That adds up to greater productivity for our area businesses and industries. At the same time, the project will create jobs that sustain area families. It's an investment that benefits everyone.



Rep. Matzie, Democratic chairman of the Consumer Affairs Committee, presides over a hearing regarding nuclear energy in Pennsylvania. Matzie is also co-chairman of the bicameral/bipartisan Nuclear Caucus.

Monaca Gateway Project receives \$1 million grant

There's more good news for the Monaca Gateway Project! Last month I announced another \$1 million was awarded to make motorist and pedestrian improvements between 13th and 16th streets, including signal upgrades and creating a right-turn lane for eastbound traffic, among other improvements.

Pennsylvania Avenue is a vital commercial and residential corridor in Monaca and I was happy to support the effort to fund these important upgrades in the community. This project will increase safety and accessibility along the highway for motorists and pedestrians alike, and when completed should spur further redevelopment and private investment in the community.

Nearly \$1 million awarded to enhance STEM, computer science learning in Beaver County



There was a time when traditional math and science classes were sufficient for students entering traditional engineering and technology-based fields. Today, technology is so much a part of so many different fields that STEM and computer science learning are essential components of a complete education for kids of all ages.

Two grants were awarded recently to enhance STEM and computer science learning and expand career pathways:

- A \$500,000 grant to the Hopewell Area School District for the Beaver County Innovation and Learning Consortium to increase the skill set of teachers and enhance their ability to provide quality computer science and STEM instruction.

In addition to shared professional learning and curriculum development, the program will include student internships, job shadowing and career exploration.

- A \$443,078 grant to the Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/Fayette Inc. to allow the council and Aliquippa School District to implement district-wide STEM classes into the curriculum for the 2019-20 school year. In addition to traditional subjects, the curriculum will include career pathways specific to regional job opportunities. The grant also will fund two STEM centers – complete with advanced technology including robotics, laptops and 3-D printers – at elementary and junior/senior high schools.

Other district grant awards

It's been my pleasure to work with the state and other officials to secure state funding for the district. Here is a list of other recent grant awards:

Rochester Middle and Elementary schools – \$2,798 each

A Door to Memories – \$849

Beemac Driver Management, LLC – \$10,507

Creekside Springs, LLC – \$3,825

Schroeder Industries, LLC – \$16,978

Versatex Building Products, LLC – \$4,266

Ambridge, Aliquippa, and Rochester School Districts – Funding to provide students with a fresh fruit or vegetable snack at school.

Rochester Area Joint Sewer Authority – \$35.4 million loan and \$1.59 million grant to upgrade its Center Street, West Madison and Freedom pump stations and add a new detention tank for residents in Rochester, East Rochester and Freedom boroughs and in Rochester and New Sewickley townships.

Central Valley and Hopewell Area School Districts – \$35,000 each to provide computer science classes.

Quaker Valley School District – \$160,154 for training and compensating school resource and police officers.

Hopewell Area School District – \$132,681 for conflict resolution and restorative justice programs, peer helper program, security planning and access to trauma support services.

Women's Center of Beaver County – \$196,192 to fund the WCBC Community Violence Prevention Reduction Program.

Beaver County schools – \$44,044 to fund 15 teachers' participation in Teacher in the Workplace program.

Hopewell Area School District – \$20,000 from the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board's Reducing Underage Drinking and Dangerous Drinking program.



Rep. Matzie, a member of The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commision, participated in a historical marker dedication in Leet Township at the site of the former D.T. Watson home for Crippled Children. Matzie's Aunt Cecelia was a resident of this home and died from polio, which made this dedication that much more meaningful.



Matzie announces nearly \$187,000 in fire, EMS grants

Fourteen fire and EMS companies in the 16th Legislative District will receive \$186,951 in state Fire Company and Emergency Medical Service Grant Program funding.

Our firefighters and EMS professionals work tirelessly on the front lines to keep us safe, often while contending with tight budgets that stretch resources. These grants will help ensure they have the training, equipment and other essential resources they need to carry on their life-saving work.

Allegheny County

Leetsdale Fire Department – \$12,172

Beaver County

Aliquippa Bureau of Fire – \$13,326

Ambridge Borough Fire Department – \$12,007

Ambridge Volunteer Fire Department – \$12,832

Baden Volunteer Fire Department – \$14,646

Conway Volunteer Fire Department – \$13,656

Economy Volunteer Ambulance Service – \$7,155

Economy Volunteer Firemen’s Association – \$14,151

Freedom Volunteer Fire Department – \$11,512

Harmony Township Volunteer Firemen Inc. – \$13,162

Hopewell Township Volunteer Fire Department – \$12,007

Monaca No. 4 Volunteer Fire Department – \$12,172

Monaca No. 1 Volunteer Fire Department – \$11,842

Rochester Fire Department – \$26,311



Farmers’ Market vouchers available in June

The Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program attempts to provide seniors who are nutritionally at risk with a means to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables from approved Pennsylvania farmers. Eligible seniors may pick up four \$5 voucher checks for a total year benefit of \$20 to redeem at qualified farmers’ markets. Checks may be spent this year on produce that is grown in Pennsylvania or purchased directly from a Pennsylvania farmer.

To be eligible, individuals must be an Allegheny or Beaver County resident 60 or older. The income limit for a one-person household is \$23,107 and is \$31,284 for a two-person household. Married couples may each receive one set of checks. Eligible consumers may also designate a proxy to receive their checks.

The distribution of voucher checks begins on June 11 at various locations. Checks are distributed on a first-come basis. Seniors are asked to bring identification showing proof of age and residency to the distribution site. For more details on the program, please contact my office.



When Hurricane Ivan ravaged the area 15 years ago, it flooded the Green Garden Plaza in Hopewell Township. Even though the plaza has been rebuilt, it will take a larger investment from the state to protect against and prevent future flooding. Gov. Tom Wolf came to the area earlier this spring to talk about his support in addressing some of our region’s most pressing infrastructure needs, including flood prevention and blight remediation. I was happy to welcome him to the region to discuss our needs.



STATE REP. ROBERT F. "ROB" MATZIE

P.O. Box 202016
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2016

lpo.km.0519



Identity Theft Paper Shredding Event

SHREDDING EVENT

HOSTED BY REPRESENTATIVE ROB MATZIE

Document Shredding Event

Saturday, May 18

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Walter Panek Park

*1055 Breitenstein Road
Ambridge, PA 15003*

For additional information, including questions, please contact my office at (724) 266-7774. Donations of non-perishable food also will be collected.

**No Electronic
Recycling.
Paper Only.**

Common types of unwanted items that should be shredded may include credit card statements or applications, bank statements, canceled checks, old income tax information, insurance and medical records, and materials with identifying personal information such as Social Security, credit card, or bank account numbers.

Phonebooks, newspaper, and bound books cannot be accepted. Please remove all paper clips and bindings from your materials.

To ensure that residents can securely dispose of documents containing private information – and do so in an environmentally safe manner – I'm hosting a free shredding event. This event is a great way to get rid of documents used by identity thieves, and all documents will be securely shredded and recycled! Please limit your paper to five bags or boxes.

All shredding will be performed by a local National Association for Information Destruction and Mobile Shredding Association-member company.

**Protect
yourself from
identity theft!**