



STATE REP. JENNIFER O'MARA

WINTER 2024

165TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



***NEW* Constituent Services Office:** 26 East Fourth Street • Media, PA 19063 • P: (610) 544-9878
Capitol Office: 217 Irvis Office Building • P.O. Box 202165 • Harrisburg, PA 17120 • P: (717) 783-4090

Dear Neighbor,

I hope that you and your family are off to a great start to 2024! In this edition of our newsletter, you will find information about the latest news from the state Capitol, including an update on new laws for the new year, and an exciting announcement about our new district office, now located at 26 E. 4th Street in Media!

Despite a new location and a new municipality to call home for my district office, I want to reassure you that my

commitment to ensuring government is a force for good here in our community remains stronger than ever. My staff and I are dedicated to ensuring a smooth transition as we relocate.

Moving district offices while starting a new year has really been a time for reflection and goal setting in my office. I am proud of some of the things we have accomplished this year, like passing a historic expansion of the Child

and Dependent Care Tax Credit and increasing the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program, but I recognize that we still have much to accomplish. I am heading back to Harrisburg with a reinvigorated commitment to pass meaningful legislation to continue to support working families.

Warm regards,

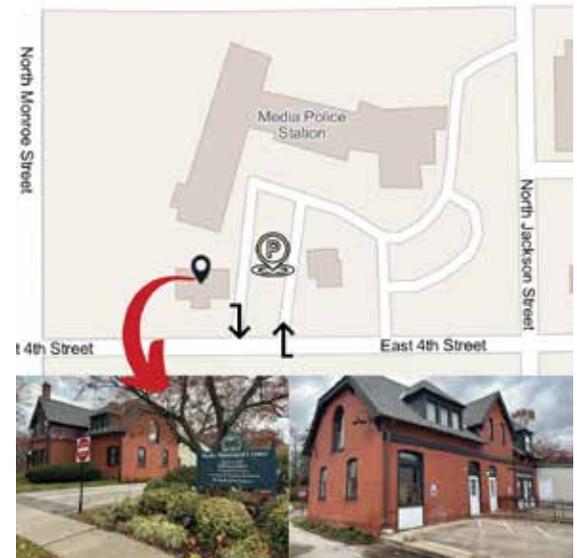
Jennifer

My Office Moved to Media

Big news from my district office: we've moved to Media! After searching for a year, we located the perfect space at 26 E. 4th Street. Our new office is housed on the entire first floor of the historic red brick carriage house at the Media Municipal Center. The new space has so many improved features including:

- ☑ More space for staff and events.
- ☑ First floor access with full accessibility.
- ☑ Dedicated handicap parking plus off-street parking for constituents.
- ☑ Close proximity to county government services and public transit.

My staff and I look forward to serving you in this new and improved space. Our hours will remain 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the new Media office, but the Springfield office will also be open Mondays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. through November 2024.





Inside Delco250

As a member of the Tourism, Economic Development, and Recreation Committee, I had the chance to learn more about the planned celebrations in our area for America250, in both Philadelphia and Delaware County. Did you know that in 2026, we'll be celebrating our 250th year as a nation? In addition to hosting America250 events, we will also be hosting the World Cup and MLB All-Star Game in Philadelphia and the PGA Championship will be happening right here in Delco! Visit and follow America250PA Delco on Facebook to see all the great things planned!



New year, new laws

Gov. Josh Shapiro signed dozens of bills into law last year, but I wanted to share information on a few in particular. The measures below either became law last year or took effect at the start of 2024.



Expanding Pennsylvania's Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit

Those who receive a federal child and dependent care tax credit will now receive the same amount from the state. Credits are based on income level and number of dependents being claimed. Caregivers can claim the Child and Dependent Care Enhancement Tax Credit when they file their personal income tax return with the state.



Porch Pirating Now a Felony

Porch pirates – ye best be prepared to walk the plank of justice. Anyone convicted of stealing mail/packages, otherwise known as “porch pirating,” could now face felony charges. Those who break the law three or more times can be charged with a felony.



Dignity for Incarcerated Women

This new law states that pregnant women can no longer be shackled or placed in solitary confinement, that new mothers are granted three days of bonding time with their baby, and that the correctional facility provides maternal health education to expecting women. Additionally, the law mandates that these facilities provide free feminine hygiene products.



Dog Law Changes

The dog license fee was raised this year, but the law also makes other significant changes aimed at improving breeding, boarding and rescue kennel conditions for dogs, strengthening public safety, and providing consumer protections for those buying or adopting dogs. In particular, I fought for a provision which would prohibit dangerous dogs from being walked by anyone other than a responsible person.

Rep. O'Mara's Legislative Update

I'm happy to share that several of my bills have progressed this legislative session. Here is a snapshot of some bills I introduced and their status in the legislature:

HB 1632 - Including PTSD in Workers' Compensation for First Responders

Summary: One-third of first responders face health issues like depression and PTSD. My bill aims to grant workers' compensation eligibility for those with work-related PTSD, ensuring proper care and recovery time after traumatic events. This can be life-saving for first responders.

Latest action: *Received a subcommittee vote with the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee.*

HB 842 - The Clawback Act

Summary: The Clawback Act safeguards taxpayer dollars by mandating that new state grant and loan programs address funding misuse. If entities violate guidelines, they must promptly repay any misused funds to the Commonwealth.

Latest action: *Passed the House on Nov. 13, 2023, awaiting consideration in the Senate Finance Committee.*

HB 1291 - Increasing Access to Driver's Licenses & ID Cards for Individuals Living with Disabilities

Summary: Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the online ID/license renewal change particularly helped people living with a disability by improving access. My bill seeks to make the online renewal option permanent for those with severe medical conditions and disabled veterans, ensuring equitable access to state-issued IDs and licenses.

Latest action: *Passed the House on Sept. 27, 2023, awaiting consideration in the Senate Transportation Committee.*

HB 1615 - Appliance Energy Efficiency Standards

Summary: This bill would adopt energy efficiency and water conservation standards for new commercial and residential appliances sold in the Commonwealth. This type of standard can play a critical role to help Pennsylvania tackle climate change, reduce air pollution, conserve our water resources, and save consumers and businesses money on their utility bills.

Latest action: *Received a hearing in the Consumer Protection, Technology, and Utilities committee.*

HR 208 - Friendship Between Pennsylvania and Taiwan

Summary: The resolution acknowledges the enduring friendship between Pennsylvania and Taiwan, endorsing a bilateral trade agreement between the US and Taiwan. Recognizing Taiwan's vibrant democracy and its role in the US security network, the resolution highlights Taiwan's advanced economy, emphasizing its significance in electronics production and consumer market demand beneficial to Pennsylvania.

Latest action: *Passed the House unanimously.*

Reforming Public Water and Wastewater Sale Systems

Summary: This bill package aims to reform Act 12 of 2016, addressing issues stemming from uncontrolled water/wastewater rate increases. It seeks to maintain the acquisition option for struggling systems while limiting acquisitions of healthy ones. The goal is to relieve immediate burdens on ratepayers, provide the Public Utility Commission ample time for thorough review, and enhance notification requirements for both buyers and sellers from the sale's outset.

Latest action: *Received a hearing with the House Consumer Protection, Technology and Utilities Committee.*

Changes to FAFSA

There are major changes and improvements to the 2024-25 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form, which is currently available. Highlights of the new form:

- Shorter and more user-friendly
- Allow for up to 20 colleges to be listed
- Available in more languages

PA State Grant applications are due May 1st and the FAFSA is due June 30th. Make sure to check with your college for their deadlines as well. PHEAA.org has a variety of FAQs and resources for parents and students.

2024 Primary Election – April 23

This year's primary election will be held on Tuesday, April 23. The polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. The last day to register to vote in time for the election is April 8. If you want to vote by mail, the last day to request a mail in or absentee ballot is April 16. Remember, you have to re-request to vote by mail every year. Use the QR code to request it now.



You can visit vote.pa.gov for more information or call my office at (610) 544-9878.

Did you know? PENNSYLVANIA NOW HAS AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION

This means that when you get/renew your driver's license or ID card, you will by default be selected to register to vote, unless you choose to opt out.



Previously, voter registration worked on an opt in basis – now it works on an opt out basis.

Tax and Rebate Season

As part of the budget, the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program was expanded and signed into law. This is the first update to the program in 16 years and is now in effect. The updated income guidelines are in the chart to the right.

Tax day is Monday, April 15. You must submit your federal and state income tax returns by this date. If you need state or federal tax forms, my office can assist you! By the middle of February, we will have copies of the most common state and federal forms. Additionally, if you live or work in Media Borough, you should file a local tax return with Keystone Collections. My office can provide the instructions to you for this as well.

As always, remember that my office can help with the application process. Give us a call at (610) 544-9878.



Property Tax / Rent Rebate 2024 Program Expansion

MORE people eligible, **MORE** money back!

Homeowner Income	Rebate	Renter Income	Rebate
Up to \$8K	\$1,000	Up to \$8K	\$1,000
Up to \$15K	\$770	Up to \$15K	\$770
Up to \$18K	\$460	Up to \$18K	\$460
Up to \$35K	\$380	Up to \$45K	\$380
Up to \$45K	\$380		

Constituent Services

My office can help with a variety of state issues. Give us a call at (610) 544-9878 to see how we can help!

Rep. O'Mara will have a Veteran Service Officer on hand once a month!

SECOND MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH
10 A.M. – 2 P.M.

We can help with:

- VA claims
- Reduced property taxes
- Educational benefits and more!

CALL TO MAKE YOUR APPOINTMENT 610.544.9878




Do you have a SEPTA Senior Fare Card?

Seniors ages 65 and older can ride SEPTA routes in PA for free with a Senior Fare Card! Sign-up or reapply for your card at my district office today!

JENNIFER O'MARA
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Media
26 E 4th Street
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Out and About



The donations were flowing at the Delaware County Veterans Memorial Association this past holiday season thanks to the generosity of so many!



In October, I joined Moms Demand Action to call on the Senate to move forward the gun safety bills we sent, including my ERPO bill.



Senator Kearney and I joined the Springfield Ambulance company for their 75th anniversary. We are so grateful for all of the work the members do to keep our community safe and healthy!



Benchmark School welcomed me to their classroom this fall and gave me the chance to read one of my favorite books to their students.



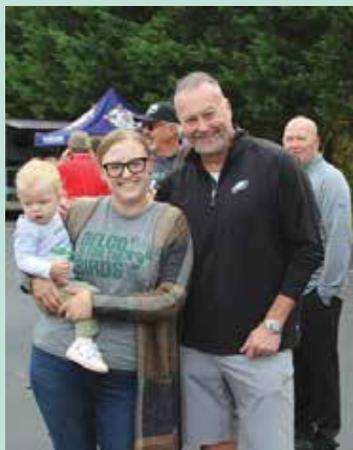
Last fall, I hosted legislators, local officials, and stakeholders in Media for a policy tour and round table on pedestrian safety and the importance of Main Streets.



Katherine and I had a blast meeting the Big Guy at Breakfast with Santa! Thanks to everyone at the Morton-Rutledge Fire Company for making this event so magical!



In December, I attended the largest convening of state legislators so far to discuss various gun-violence prevention tactics, such as ERPO or Red Flag laws.



This fall, I joined IBEW 654's Toys for Tots drive collection. Thanks to the generosity of our constituents, our office participated in not only the Toys for Tots collection but multiple food drives and diaper drives in 2023!



Larry and I visited the Swarthmore Senior Association to help seniors apply for a free SEPTA Senior Key Card.



A little bit of rain couldn't put a damper on Media's Veterans Day festivities. Special thanks to Senator Bob Casey for joining the celebration.



I was honored to accept the Ivy Young Willis & Martha Willis Dale Award from Cabrini University. This award annually recognizes a woman who has made a noteworthy contribution to the civic life of her community.



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Ipo.TS.0224



UPCOMING EVENTS

Here are some events that my office is organizing. Information is subject to change, especially for events happening farther out. Follow me on social media as my staff and I finalize all of the details so you can stay up to date. Also, feel free to call my office before any of these events to confirm the date, time, and location.

Virtual Townhall

February 20, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Facebook Live

Join me on Facebook for a virtual townhall to give you an update on what we accomplished in 2023 and what's on the agenda for 2024.

I'll take questions and answer them live!

SEPTA Senior Card Event

March 15, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Surrey Senior Services

Over 65? Come stop by and apply for a SEPTA Senior Key Card to ride SEPTA for free!

We can also renew yours if it has expired.

Unreadable License Plate Event

March 23, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

26 East 4th Street, Media, PA, 19063

Is your license plate faded? My office can process a replacement license plate application for you! Call my office at (610) 544-9878 to make an appointment.

Property Tax Rent Rebate Clinic

March 29, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Surrey Senior Services

The Property Tax Rent Rebate program has expanded this year! Call (610) 544-9878 to make an appointment and our staff can help you apply!

Apprenticeship Fair

April 13, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

DCIU – Morton

Join Senator Kearney and I for an apprenticeship fair to learn about post high school opportunities!

Shred Event

April 27, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Springfield Mall

Bring your confidential documents to be shredded on site! Identity theft prevention practices will be in place. E-waste will be collected as well.

Save The Date!

Senior Breakfast

May 3, 8 a.m.

Location TBD

Senior Expo

October 12 – Location TBD

Veterans Breakfast

November 11, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Springfield Country Club