



STATE REP. JENNIFER O'MARA

FALL 2023

165TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



Constituent Services Office: 905 West Sproul Road • Suite 203 • Springfield, PA 19064 • P: (610) 544-9878
Capitol Office: 217 Irvis Office Building • P.O. Box 202165 • Harrisburg, PA 17120 • P: (717) 783-4090

Dear Neighbor,

Welcome to my Fall 2023 Newsletter! Over the past few months, my staff and I have been working hard to bring state services to you. We've hosted events and townhalls, attended community gatherings, and worked to deliver results for you from our state Capitol. In this issue, I am pleased to report that we have positive news to share related to my recent legislative accomplishments, the state budget, and infrastructure projects beginning around the district.

I also wanted to update you on a topic near and dear to my heart. Earlier this year, I wrote a statewide op-ed about my experience with Post-Partum Depression. As many of you know, I welcomed my daughter, Katherine, into the world last year. I was so ecstatic to be a new mom, but I did not anticipate the challenges I would face as I headed back to work last fall. I decided to share my experience because I am not alone—one in ten new mothers suffer from PPD.

As a state Representative, I am in a unique position to use my experience to inform legislation and help others going through challenges, especially ones that I wholeheartedly understand. To read my op-ed, learn about my experience, and the policies I am working to advance for new moms and dads, please use the QR code provided here.

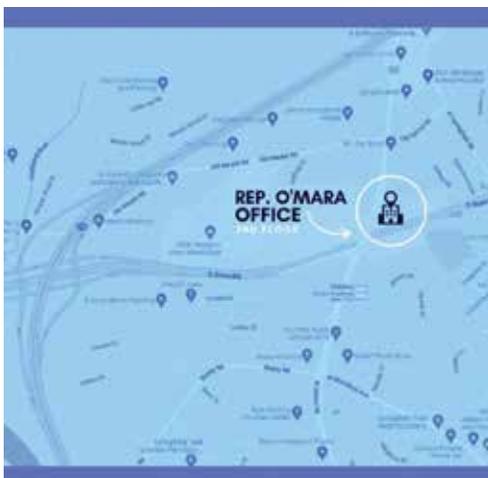


I am committed to using my lived experience to inform my work as a legislator, and that means hearing from YOU—the people I represent. If you need help with any state related issue, or simply want to talk to me about a problem you're having so we can brainstorm ways to fix it together, please do not hesitate to contact my office. It is my truly my pleasure to be of service!

Warm regards,

Jennifer

Stop by My District Office



My district office at 905 W. Sproul Road, Suite 203, is open 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Come visit if you need help with any state-related service! Look for the Edward Jones sign and enter through that side of the building. Our office is ADA accessible, and there is an elevator on site.

Mobile Office Hours

State Representative
JENNIFER O'MARA



Mobile
Office Hours

Media Borough

**2nd Tuesday of the Month
10AM - 2PM**

301 North Jackson Street | Media

Do you need help with a state-related matter, but my Springfield office is too far from you? Stop by my mobile office hours in Media. I'll have staff at Borough Hall 2nd floor on the 2nd Tuesday of every month!

FROM MY DESK IN HARRISBURG

We have had a busy legislative year so far in 2023. I'm excited to share with you some of my bills that have moved as well as other notable achievements. To stay up to date on the latest legislative movements in the Capitol, follow me on social media where I do weekly Fireside chats while I'm in Harrisburg!

Strengthening Accessibility to Driver's Licenses and ID Cards (House Bill 1291)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, PennDOT temporarily allowed everyone to renew their license/ID at home using the most recent photo and signature on file. This was a huge help to Pennsylvanians living with disabilities, who aren't always physically able to get to the DMV, wait in line, and get their photo re-taken. My bill would allow those living with persistent, specific health conditions to renew their license/ID this way permanently while complying with all federal guidelines. Additionally, those with a severely disabled veteran placard or a disabled veteran plate can qualify to have their ID renewed by mail. Everyone deserves access to a state-issued ID, and this legislation will help ensure that. H.B. 1291 unanimously cleared the House Transportation Committee. The next stop is the House chamber for a full vote, which is expected this fall.

Extreme Risk Protection Orders (House Bill 1018)

ERPOs, or "red flag" laws, temporarily disarm people in crisis to disrupt spontaneous acts of violence against themselves or others. I introduced this bill because I lost my dad to gun suicide, and I want to do what I can to ensure that no other family has to go through the tragedy that mine went through. My bill protects due process, requiring a hearing with evidence before a judge. The judge would then determine whether or not to issue the ERPO, which could last for up to one year. The person subject to the order would be able to call a hearing to terminate the ERPO at any time. H.B. 1018 also includes criminal penalties for anyone who files an ERPO maliciously with no reasonable cause. This bill passed the House with bipartisan support and awaits consideration in the Senate.

Covering Post-Traumatic Stress Injuries under Workers' Compensation for First Responders

An estimated 30% of first responders develop health conditions, including depression and post-traumatic stress injury (PTSI). However, first responders who suffer from work-related PTSI do not qualify for workers' compensation under current Pennsylvania law. Legislation that I introduced to amend the Workers' Compensation Act would change this. Language that I wrote to allow first responders who received a PTSI diagnosis brought on by their work would be eligible to collect workers' compensation has been incorporated into Senate Bill 365. This bill passed unanimously out of Senate Committee and now waits for a full Senate vote before coming to the House for consideration.



SIGN UP FOR MY E-NEWSLETTER



FY 2023-2024 Budget Update

At the beginning of June, the House passed a budget that was sent to the Senate for consideration. After making amendments, the Senate sent back its amended budget to the House, which was passed on concurrence on July 6th. While this meant the budget was “passed,” there was a perfunctory step that the Senate needed to take by coming back to Harrisburg to have the bill signed before the chamber. Due to a disagreement over school vouchers, Senate Leadership refused to come back to session until August 3rd. On August 3, Gov. Josh Shapiro signed the budget after the Senate called session to complete this annual process, effectively ending this impasse.



While this budget that the governor signed isn't perfect, it includes a historic \$717 million increase to our public education system, free breakfast for all K-12 students, \$7.5 million to fund indigent defense for the first time in Pennsylvania history, \$50 million for Whole Home Repairs program, and my bill for \$1 million dollars for the Hunger Free Campus initiative, which will help colleges and universities combat student hunger. However, the legislature's work still is not done. Code bills remain outstanding and enabling legislation which will allow for the spending of certain funds. This includes funding for public defenders, school mental health grants, a transfer to the Rainy Day Fund and tax credits for businesses that contribute to scholarships – just to name a few. Funding for state-related universities (Penn State, Temple and Pitt) also still needs to be addressed. Be sure to follow me on social media for up-to-date developments.

House Votes to Raise the Wage

This spring, the Pennsylvania State House voted to increase the minimum wage for the first time since I was in high school from \$7.25 to \$11/hour with annual increases to \$15 by 2026. It was truly a historic moment and, if it passes through the Senate, would bring us in line with neighboring states, who all have higher minimum wages than us.

Updating the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program

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 will take effect in 2024.

If you have not sent in the 2022 Property Tax/Renters Rebate, the deadline to apply has been extended until December 31st. For assistance with the application process, call my office at 610-544-9878.



The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program is Getting Better

575,000 seniors will qualify for a Property Tax/Rent Rebate with a top rebate of \$1000.

Helping more seniors stay in their homes.

CONSTITUENT SERVICES

DID YOU KNOW?

Veterans' Services

A Veteran Service Officer is available monthly here in my Springfield Office. The VSO will be available for appointments the second Monday of every month from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Interested veterans may call my office at 610-544-9878 to schedule an appointment and learn about the state resources and programs that are available to you.

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

STATE REPRESENTATIVE **JENNIFER O'MARA** 165TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

905 WEST SPROUL ROAD, SUITE 203 • SPRINGFIELD, PA 19064 • (610) 544-9878 • FAX: (484) 200-8270

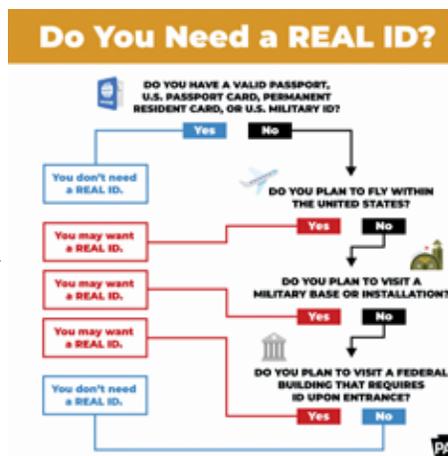
PA MEDI

PA MEDI is a state program for residents who will be going on Medicare. If you need help navigating the Medicare enrollment process or choosing a plan that works for you, my office can connect you with a trained PA MEDI volunteer. This year's open enrollment period is October 15 to December 7. During this period, Medicare participants will have the opportunity to switch their supplementary plans. To schedule phone consultation with a counselor, call my office at 610-544-9878.

REAL ID Update

To increase the efficiency of the REAL ID application process, Gov. Shapiro recently expanded the list of documents that meet the requirement for proof of one's Social Security Number. In addition to a Social Security Card, PennDOT now accepts a W-2 form, SSA-1099 form, non-SSA-1099 form, or a pay stub with the applicant's name and full Social Security Number on it. These changes are a result of bipartisan collaboration between the Administration and the General Assembly, and they are intended to make the REAL ID application process more effective and convenient for Pennsylvanians.

REAL ID is a law that dictates which forms of identification can be used for certain federal purposes; a REAL ID driver's license or ID is optional for Pennsylvania residents with an alternative form of federally acceptable identification, such as a passport. A REAL ID or passport will be required to board domestic flights and enter some federal facilities beginning on May 7, 2025.



Improvements to Blue Route

It is my pleasure to announce that the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation has allocated nearly \$64 million to improve the conditions of I-476. The project is designed to resurface and repair 16.7 miles spanning from I-76 in West Conshohocken Borough to I-95 in Ridley Township. To increase ride quality and safety, funds will be used to pave travel lanes and shoulders, repair noise barriers, and update roadside elements. Most construction will take place at night or at non-peak hours to minimize the impact on traffic and travel times. Construction will begin soon and is expected to be completed in 2025!

PennDOT Connects

Have you heard about PennDOT Connects? PennDOT Connects is a program offered by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to address improvement needs within the project development process. Through collaboration with various levels of government, projects are suggested to PennDOT and implemented during a scheduled repaving project. As a member of the Transportation Committee and a resident of the 165th District, I encourage our communities to take advantage of this program.

DID YOU KNOW?

My office can help you process SEPTA Senior Key Card requests.

Seniors 65+ older are eligible to travel for FREE on all PA SEPTA service lines with a SEPTA Key Card.

Contact my office:

- (610) 544-9878
- RepOMara@pahouse.net
- 905 West Sproul Rd. Suite 203 Springfield, PA 19064

AROUND DELCO AND THE WORLD



Thanks to the amazing communities of Springfield, Swarthmore, and Marple for putting on incredible Fourth of July celebrations!



I stood in solidarity with the UPS Teamsters this summer for better working conditions and wages amid contract negotiations.



My family and I attended Memorial Day ceremonies in Springfield and Media to help honor and remember those in our armed forces who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms.



Gov. Josh Shapiro visited Delco to discuss the importance of commonsense gun safety legislation, like my Extreme Risk Protection Order bill.



The Media Branch of the NAACP invited me to speak at their Juneteenth event about Hayti Cemetary and the work we've done to help revitalize and preserve the historic cemetary.



I joined 75 legislators from 41 states in Washington DC to talk about childcare policy in our legislatures and hear from Dr. Jill Biden on this subject.



I was honored to speak at the reopening of the Philip Jaisohn Memorial in Rose Tree Park in Upper Providence and speak about the impact Philip Jaisohn had on our region and democracy around the world.



In honor of International Firefighters Day, Police Week, and EMS Week in May, I dropped off Certificates of Appreciation and a meal to all of the first responder companies and departments in the district.



I represented Pennsylvania in the bipartisan 2023 U.S. Young Leaders Delegation in Taiwan. The purpose of our delegation was to immerse ourselves in Taiwanese society to learn about the importance of Taiwan globally and to foster stronger relationships between individual states and Taiwan.



I joined the incredible team of staff and volunteers at the Media Food Bank for one of their weekly meal distributions, where they fed nearly 100 families. You can learn more about the Media Food Bank including how to donate and how to pick up food by visiting <https://www.mediafoodbank.org/>.



STATE REP.
JENNIFER
O'MARA
165TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

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Springfield, PA 19064

lpo.kg.0823



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.

Springfield Town Hall

September 21, 7 p.m.
Springfield Township Building

Please join me for an open forum to discuss the state-related issues that matter most to you.

Mental Health Fair

October 5, 4:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
Delaware County Community College, STEM Atrium

Talk to various organizations and agencies about mental and behavioral health resources available. Use the QR code to see a map of the campus.



Senior Fair

October 13, 9 a.m. - Noon
Springfield YMCA

Stop by to get your SEPTA pass, get your flu shot, learn about various resources for seniors, and more!

Shred Event + Food Drive with Senator Kearney

October 21, 9 a.m. - Noon
Springfield Mall

Stop by to have your personal documents shredded! Please no trash or junk mail. Identity theft prevention practices will be in place. Limited to four boxes per car. We will also be collecting donations for Media Food Bank.

Veterans Breakfast

November 10, 8 a.m. - 10 a.m.
Springfield Country Club*

Free breakfast for local veterans and their plus one.
**Please note the new location from previous years.*