

State Representative

MIKE SCHLOSSBERG

FIGHTING FOR YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY



Jobs that Pay

**Health Care/
Mental Health**



**World-Class
Education**

**Safe
Environment**



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Fall 2020

Hometown Heroes

Almost every morning during the COVID pandemic, my wife Brenna and I spend time giving a daily update about the pandemic at [Facebook.com/RepSchlossberg](https://www.facebook.com/RepSchlossberg). At the end of each video, we take a moment to share the story of a hometown hero, somebody who went above and beyond to help others. It is informal and we field

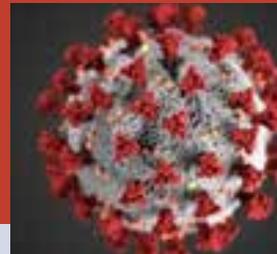
nominations from people who tune in daily, newspapers stories or from emails.

Each day brings with it new challenges during a pandemic. They also bring new stories about the good in our community. It has been a pleasure to share them and I hope you can take a moment to watch a couple of videos to hear about our neighbors.

If you know somebody who deserves recognition as a hometown hero, for going above and beyond to help others, give me a call (610-821-5577) or send me an email (RepSchlossberg@pahouse.net). It will not result in trophies or awards, but it will remind everybody how much good is in our community.



COVID Turns Pennsylvania Upside Down



When 2020 started, not many of us could have expected what happened. As February turned into March, it was clear COVID-19 was going to mark a chapter of global history almost none of us have ever experienced. It didn't take long for mitigation efforts to go into effect, as states and communities across the country took steps to save lives. These efforts, including the ones led by Governor Tom Wolf, saved lives and will continue to save lives until we have a safe, effective and widely available vaccine.

The impact has been severe: COVID-19 has left a trail of destruction from which it will take years to recover. The toll will be felt in just about every corner of our community, from businesses to schools, to civic organizations to individual physical and mental health.

While COVID-19 has exposed many weak points in our society, it hasn't diminished our resolve to recover. We can build a stronger community. We can make Pennsylvania stronger. We can reimagine our economy, our schools and our health care system to serve people fairly and live up to the promise of the American Dream. Abraham Lincoln once said, "we cannot escape history." That is true, but we can reshape our future. I hope you will join me in those efforts.

Unemployment Compensation and Pandemic Unemployment Assistance



Without a doubt, the most frequent calls my office receives are related to help with Unemployment Compensation or Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). With the dramatic spike in unemployment, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry struggled to field incoming phone calls and inquiries. This left people anxious about paying their bills and feeding their families.

My office helped more than 750 individuals get their unemployment questions answered. It was bumpy and sometimes time consuming, but I did my best to return every call and help people navigate the system to get an answer.

We are still available to help answer unemployment-related questions. Please give my office a call (610-821-5577) and be ready to share the login information so we can look at your claim before we ask the department for help.

U.S. Census: Critical for Our Community

The U.S. Constitution requires a complete population count of people living in the United States every 10 years, with the results helping to direct the spending of \$675 billion in federal funds to communities across the country. This helps to ensure public services for schools, hospitals and public safety, plan for housing, business development and improve neighborhoods and even determines how many seats Pennsylvania has in Congress.

For several months, the COVID-19 pandemic has made it difficult to get a complete count. The U.S. Census Bureau has had to rely on mail-in responses and online forms to collect data. If you have not responded to the 2020 Census, you have until the end of September to do so. It's safe and easy to do.

To respond by phone, call 844-330-2020

To respond online, visit my2020census.gov

Your participation in the 2020 Census is critical for our community.

Please, do your part and respond.



First Responder Mental Health Bill Signed into Law

Our first responders often shoulder more burden than most of us realize. There is trauma in responding to horrific accidents, crime scenes and domestic incidents. Studies show that first responders have higher rates of depression, alcohol abuse, sleep disturbances, anxiety disorders and suicidal thoughts.

Last year, I introduced legislation to establish an emergency responder mental wellness and stress management program in Pennsylvania. This summer, it passed the House and Senate and Governor Wolf signed it into law.

The new law supports peer-to-peer support programs, training for peer support efforts, a toll-free helpline, statewide and regional stress management support, trauma and suicide awareness training, and support for nonprofit organizations already doing this work.

For the past several months, we have spent a lot of time giving credit to first responders for the heroic work they have done for our communities during a pandemic. We owe them more than our words of gratitude. This program aims to provide the resources and programs they need to get help.

This is not the end of the conversation about improving mental health care in Pennsylvania. Other people in our communities are in desperate need of these services, and I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues to save the lives of Pennsylvanians.

Promise of Liberty & Justice for All

With tensions brought on by the economic strains of a pandemic, people across the country expressed their deep-seeded frustration when Minneapolis police officers arrested George Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man. Mr. Floyd died in police custody. The four officers involved in his arrest were fired and charges for murder and manslaughter were filed against one of the officers for excessive use of force after one officer kept his knee on the neck of Mr. Floyd for approximately 8 minutes. This touched off a firestorm for those concerned about racial justice and prompted many Americans to join in supporting Black Lives Matter.

I believe Black Lives Matter calls us to a greater America, one in which the quality of education offered in a community

Yes,
Black
Lives
Matter



school isn't dictated by its zip code, where housing and jobs are available to sustain families and the legacy of white supremacy is actively dismantled. Yes, I stand with Black Lives Matter because I deeply believe "with Liberty and Justice for all" is more than the ending to the Pledge of Allegiance: it is a promise to everybody living in this country.



Freedom from Discrimination for LGBTQ

In June of 2015, the United States Supreme Court ruled the U.S. Constitution protects the right of same-sex couples. Almost five years later, the same court ruled the Civil Rights Act protects LGBTQ employees from discrimination based on sex. These two decisions seem almost miraculous, given the heated battles waged to ensure civil rights for LGBTQ individuals.

While we can celebrate these historic moments, we have a long way to go. The Supreme Court's ruling on freedom from discrimination in the workplace is critical, but there are no protections for housing and public accommodation for LGBTQ individuals. The state human relations act protects individuals from discrimination due to race, color, religion, ancestry, and national origin, but not sex or gender. I have been a strong supporter of changing that in Pennsylvania so that no one fears their housing or presence in a public space is endangered by who they love.



Allen School Students Visit the Capitol

In January, Rep. Schweyer and I welcomed William Allen students to the Capitol for a visit.



Career Day at Harrison Morton

One of my favorite days of the year, visiting with students at Harrison Morton Middle School for Career Day.

Constituent Services

PennDOT Placard

Even if you do not have a car or driver's license, you can still have a disability placard to use when somebody is giving you a ride to the grocery store or the doctor! When sending in the application for your first placard or to renew a placard, my office can help expedite the process. If you lose your placard or need help renewing it, my office can also help. Just give us a call at 610-821-5577 and we will determine the best way to get your placard request processed.



Property Tax Rent Rebate Deadline Extended

The deadline for Pennsylvania's 2019 Property Tax/Rent Rebate has been extended to December 31, 2020 and my office is ready to help you file.

The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program is open to:

- Eligible seniors 65 or older;
- Widows and widowers 50 or older; and
- People with permanent disabilities 18 or older.

To qualify, applicants must earn less than \$35,000 per year (for homeowners) or \$15,000 per year (for renters) – and only HALF of Social Security or railroad retirement income counts toward eligibility. Residents of assisted living facilities may be eligible if they reside in a facility which pays property taxes and meet the income limits for renters.

We've learned that we can help most people with the rebate forms over the phone. Call my Allentown office at 610-821-5577 to get started, set up an appointment or request the forms to file on your own.

REAL ID: Deadline Extended

The REAL ID enforcement has been delayed until October 1, 2021. If you plan on boarding a domestic flight, entering a federal building or visiting a military base, you will continue to be able to use your valid Pennsylvania driver's license or photo identification card until the new October 1, 2021 deadline. Remember: REAL ID is not needed for driving, voting or general identification purposes.



At the moment, the REAL ID product issuance is on hold in Pennsylvania, but it's not too early to plan for obtaining your REAL ID. You will need an original birth certificate, Social Security Card, all documents which prove legal name changes (marriage certificate, divorce decrees) and two proofs of residence. The only way to obtain REAL ID is to appear at a PA Driver License Center with those documents. As soon as PennDOT announces it is processing REAL ID again, I will post it on my Facebook Page and website or you can call my office (610-821-5577) to ask if REAL ID processing has started.

For more information about REAL ID, visit dmv.pa.gov/REALID. My office has resources and can answer your specific questions.

Parkland Library Ground Breaking

In July, the Parkland Library celebrated the ground breaking for its expansion – masks and all!



Cuddle Zone Story Time Visit

It was a pleasure to visit with kids at The Cuddle Zone in Allentown and share in some story time.



Exercise Your Right to Vote

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic turned our lives upside down, the General Assembly and governor approved bipartisan legislation to make it easier for you to exercise your right to vote in Pennsylvania by allowing no-excuse mail-in voting. As a result, more than 1.8 million Pennsylvanians cast their votes by mail in the June 2 primary. While there are kinks to work out, county voter registration offices performed very well and worked diligently to make sure votes were accurately counted and reported to the public within a week of the primary.

Vote By Mail

With COVID-19 still likely to be a challenge in November, I am encouraging people to vote by mail in the General Election. There are concerns to be addressed about mail timeliness, but that can be solved by taking the following steps:

- Request your ballot online at [VotesPA.com](https://www.votespa.com) or call my office NOW (610-821-5577) to request a vote-by-mail application. Per Lehigh County Voter Registration, ballots are scheduled to be printed and mailed around October 1.
- Follow the instructions for completing the ballot, placing the completed ballot in the correct envelope, signing it and returning it.
- If you are mailing the ballot back to the voter registration office, give yourself 2-3 weeks to make sure it gets there.
- If you can't get the ballot back to the voter registration office with a few weeks to spare, consider taking it to the voter registration office at 17 S. 7th St. in Allentown yourself.

NOTE: ballots must be returned by mail or the person casting the vote. You can't ask somebody else to deliver it for you.



**ARE YOU
READY TO VOTE
IN 2020?**

VotesPA.com 

#ReadyToVotePA #VotesPA #TrustedInfo2020

Check your Voter Registration Status or Register Online

You can check your voter registration status or register to vote online in Pennsylvania. Visit [VotesPA.com](https://www.votespa.com) to check your registration status or call my office for help (610-821-5577). If you prefer to register using a paper application, my office can mail an application to you. Registrations or changes must be in the hands of the voter registration office by October 19, 2020. But don't delay! Get it done early.

Has your Polling Place Moved?

The pandemic created a variety of challenges for voting in the 2020 primary election. Many of the people who work the polls on Election Day are at high risk for COVID-19 and needed to be excused from working that day. Additionally, many of the polling locations are facilities with high risk populations. Lehigh County did a commendable job in securing polling locations to ensure people voting in person could cast their vote safely.

It is possible the location where you voted last will not be a polling place for the 2020 election. If you are not sure where to vote, visit [www.VotesPA.com](https://www.votespa.com) or call my office (610-821-5577) so we can help you determine where you will vote.



Governor Wolf Unveils Mental Health Plan at Muhlenberg College

It was a pleasure to host Governor Wolf at Muhlenberg College in January to unveil the PA Suicide Prevention Plan, titled "Reach Out PA: Your Mental Health Matters." We were joined by local officials and Congresswoman Susan Wild.



Rep. Mike Schlossberg

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Constituent Service Available By Appointment



Wearing a mask on the House floor is a sign of respect for the health, safety and well-being of my colleagues.

Throughout the pandemic, my staff and I have been busy helping people with state government questions. In most cases, I personally returned calls. While it was not always easy, my staff and I delivered the same services we would deliver in-person, working 80 hours a week during the worst of the pandemic to assist people.

My office is available to serve you, but we do need to take steps to ensure health and safety. We are available by appointment for in-person services to minimize face-to-face interaction. Call the office (610-821-5577) or email me (RepSchlossberg@pahouse.net) to see if we can help before setting up an appointment.

We do miss the many friends who stop by for help, but we recognize it is more important for our community to keep people safe. If we do need to set up an appointment, masks are required... no exception.

