

# State Representative ■ 179th Legislative District JASON DAWKINS



#### DISTRICT OFFICE:

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(215) 744-7901

Hours: Mon.-Thurs. 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.,

Fri. 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

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SPRING 2017

**Committees:** Aging & Older Adult Services, Health, Human Services, Insurance, Judiciary, PA SAFE Caucus, PA Black Caucus

## H.B. 741 REVIVES UNCONSTITUTIONAL MANDATORY MINIMUMS

I voiced my strong opposition to House Bill 741, which aims to revive mandatory minimum sentences for a number of drug-related offenses. Bringing back mandatory minimums for non-violent drug offenses is bad policy, and the majority of the public supports putting this era behind us. We need to ensure that judges can use their discretion and expertise to best serve the public in each case that comes before their court, instead of making demands from Harrisburg.

H.B. 741 seeks to revive the mandatory minimum sentences for drug crimes that were ruled unconstitutional in cases before both the Pennsylvania and U.S. supreme courts. It also would increase sentences for certain offenses.

We need to face head on the challenges that our communities face with drugs and addiction. Increasing the prison population and placing greater strain on the Commonwealth's budget will only make it harder to deliver the solutions that people are demanding.

Mandatory minimums do not work. There have been no studies that show they are effective at reducing crime and, given the rising costs of healthcare, a pipeline of individuals staying in our corrections system is a strain on an already stretched state budget. I'll continue to fight against this legislation and to improve the quality of life in our communities.



## PHILLY SPRING CLEANUP



This annual community cleanup brings people together for a common cause that helps communities look and feel better. It was a great opportunity to clean up local roadways, parks, railways and waterways. A big shout out to all of our partners and volunteers. The Great American Cleanup of PA is an annual event held in conjunction with the Great American Cleanup of the Keep America Beautiful organization.

## EASTER EGG HUNTS



The whole family enjoyed days of fun and entertainment during our egg hunt events held at the Houseman Recreation Center and the McIlvain and Zeigler playgrounds. Interacting with the kids was a great opportunity to encourage them to share, to be civil and to help their communities.

# DAWKINS INTRODUCES BILL TO ELIMINATE STATE GOVERNMENT LANGUAGE BARRIERS

I recently introduced a bill to require state departments and agencies, elected row offices, and the General Assembly to craft language access plans to better serve Pennsylvania residents with a limited ability to speak or write in English.

House Bill 1241 would require these language access plans to identify all languages spoken by at least three percent of the population they serve, and provide vital documents and informational materials in those languages. It also would require that oral, in-person interpretive services be provided in languages encountered at least weekly.

All Pennsylvanians should have equal access to their government. Our departments and agencies cannot fulfill their missions if there are 500,000 people in the state they can't communicate with. This is a matter of

protecting our residents' health, rights and well-being.

The bill would require state agencies to submit their language access plans to the secretary of administration, who would provide central coordination and technical assistance. The secretary also would make these plans available online for the public to review. In addition, entities under the authority of the governor, the attorney general, auditor general and treasurer as well as the state House and Senate would be required to publish and implement language access plans under the bill.

As the population of non-English speakers continues to increase, and immigration drives our population and economic growth, we must work to make Pennsylvania a welcoming and inclusive place to live.



## DAWKINS ELECTED VICE CHAIRMAN OF PHILADELPHIA DELEGATION

Earlier this session, my colleagues elected me vice chairman of the Philadelphia Delegation for the Pennsylvania House of Representatives Democratic Caucus for the 2017-18 legislative session.

I look forward to continuing to work on the issues that affect citizens across Philadelphia and the Commonwealth. Members of the delegation work well together and we are committed to fighting for your needs and concerns.

The Philadelphia Democratic Delegation consists of House members from Philadelphia, Delaware and Montgomery counties.



## APPLY NOW TO RECEIVE PROPERTY TAX/RENT REBATE

The deadline to file a 2016 Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program has been extended to Dec. 31, and my office is here to help!

The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians 65 or older, widows and widowers 50 or older, and people with disabilities 18 or older. The maximum standard rebate is \$650, but supplemental rebates can boost rebates up to \$975.

My offices can help with the applications. Please don't assume you are not eligible! Half of Social Security income is discounted, and claimants are not disqualified from rebates solely because of Social Security cost-of-living adjustments.

To find out if you qualify or if you need FREE assistance with filling out your application, please call or visit my offices.

# DAWKINS PRESENTA PROYECTO PARA ELIMINAR BARRERAS LINGÜÍSTICAS EN EL GOBIERNO ESTATAL



Recientemente presenté un proyecto de ley para requerir a los departamentos y agencias estatales, oficinas de funcionarios públicos electos y a la Asamblea General elaborar planes de acceso al lenguaje para servir mejor a los residentes de Pensilvania que tengan dificultad para hablar o escribir inglés.

El Proyecto de la Cámara 1241 requeriría que las agencias identifiquen todos los idiomas hablados por al menos el tres por ciento de la población a la que sirven para proporcionar documentos vitales y materiales informativos en sus respectivos idiomas. También requeriría que las agencias presten servicios de intérpretes –en persona o telefónicamente– en aquellos lugares que son visitados al menos una vez a la semana por ciudadanos con limitaciones en el idioma inglés.

Todos los residentes de Pensilvania deben tener acceso igual a su gobierno. Nuestros departamentos y agencias no pueden cumplir su misión si hay 500,000 personas en el

estado con las que no se pueden comunicar. Se trata de proteger la salud, los derechos y el bienestar de todos nuestros residentes.

Las agencias tendrán que presentar sus planes al secretario de administración, quien proporcionará la coordinación central y asistencia técnica. El secretario deberá publicar los planes en internet para que el público los revise y haga recomendaciones. Igualmente, las entidades bajo la autoridad del gobernador, el procurador general, el auditor general y el tesorero, así como la Cámara de Representantes y el Senado estatales estarían obligados a implementar planes de acceso al lenguaje.

A medida que la cantidad de hispanohablantes continúa aumentando y la inmigración sigue impulsando nuestra población y crecimiento económico, debemos trabajar para hacer de Pensilvania un lugar acogedor, inclusivo y atractivo para vivir.

## SOLICITE AHORA EL REEMBOLSO DEL IMPUESTO A LA PROPIEDAD Y/O ALQUILER DE VIVIENDAS

La fecha límite para presentar la solicitud del Programa de Reembolso de Impuestos a la Propiedad y/o Alquiler de Viviendas es el próximo 30 de junio. La fecha límite a menudo se extiende y mi oficina está aquí para ayudar.

Los beneficios del programa son para personas elegibles de 65 años o más, viudas y viudos de 50 años o más y personas con discapacidades de 18 años en adelante. El reembolso estándar máximo es de \$650, pero otros descuentos suplementarios pueden aumentarlo hasta \$975.

Mis oficinas pueden ayudarle a completar la solicitud. ¡No asuma que no es elegible! La mitad de los ingresos del Seguro Social se descuentan y los solicitantes no son descalificados únicamente por los ajustes del costo de vida del Seguro Social.

Para saber si cualifica o si necesita asistencia GRATUITA para llenar su solicitud, llame o visite mis oficinas.



## DAWKINS ELECTO COMO VICEPRESIDENTE DE LA DELEGACIÓN DE FILADELFIA

Al comienzo de esta sesión, mis colegas me eligieron vicepresidente de la Delegación Demócrata de Filadelfia en la Cámara de Representantes de Pensilvania para el período legislativo 2017-18.

Espero continuar trabajando en los asuntos que afectan a los ciudadanos de Filadelfia y de todo el estado. Los miembros de la delegación estamos comprometidos y trabajaremos para satisfacer las necesidades y preocupaciones de todos nuestros constituyentes.

La delegación demócrata de Filadelfia está compuesta por miembros de los condados de Filadelfia, Delaware y Montgomery.



STATE REP. JASON DAWKINS  
P.O. Box 202179  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2179

## INSIDE:

- Mandatory Minimum Sentences Update
- Language Access Bill Introduced



lpo.kl.0617

## SAVE THE DATE!

# Pardon and Expungement Clinic

Tuesday, July 25th, 2017 • 3 p.m. – 5 p.m.

St. Mark's Church  
4442 Frankford Ave.  
Philadelphia, PA 19124

### Qualifications for an expungement:

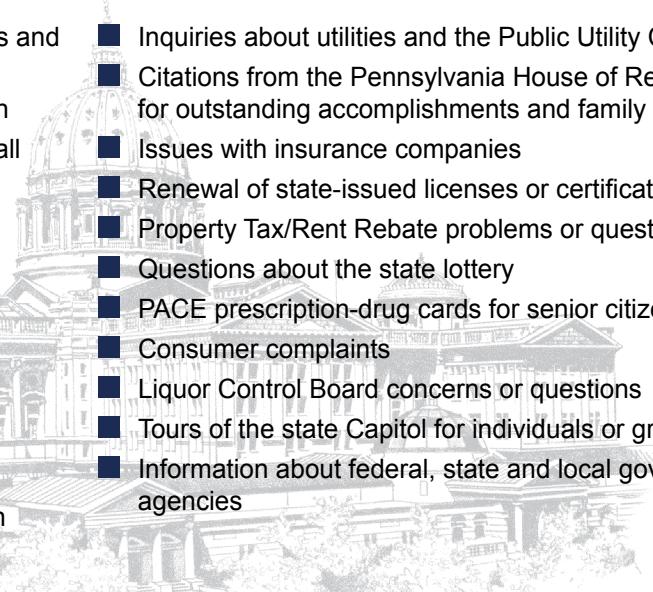
- only non-conviction charges or summary convictions with no arrests in the past five years;
- some second- and third-degree misdemeanor convictions may be sealed if 10 years have passed;
- must have no current criminal charges; and
- must not be serving probation time.

For more information, please call my office, 215-744-7901.



## MY OFFICE CAN HELP YOU WITH:

- Car registrations, special tags, handicap placards, titles and driver's license applications
- Information on financial assistance for higher education
- Assistance in obtaining and completing state forms of all kinds
- Voter registration and absentee ballot applications
- Unemployment compensation, disability and workers' compensation
- Birth and death certificates
- Issues with the Department of Human Services (food stamps, medical and income assistance)
- Pennsylvania income tax questions or problems
- Requests for literature of all kinds – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information



Any state government-related matters!

- Inquiries about utilities and the Public Utility Commission
- Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding accomplishments and family milestones
- Issues with insurance companies
- Renewal of state-issued licenses or certifications
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions
- Questions about the state lottery
- PACE prescription-drug cards for senior citizens
- Consumer complaints
- Liquor Control Board concerns or questions
- Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups
- Information about federal, state and local government agencies

Stay connected to what's happening in Harrisburg and in the community by signing up for my email updates.

Go to [www.pahouse.com/Dawkins](http://www.pahouse.com/Dawkins) to sign up. You can also follow me on social media!



/RepDawkins



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