



State Representative Eddie Day Pashinski

121st Legislative District



Spring 2020

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Dear Neighbor,

It has been an incredible honor representing you, and I am truly humbled by your trust. I am committed to continue doing my very best each and every day here at home and in the Capitol to make sure that your voice, and your priorities, are addressed.

That means working on legislation that would provide real property tax relief to seniors and families struggling to stay in their homes, control and lower the cost of prescription drugs, provide a viable pathway for a burden-free education in our state colleges, help grandparents raising grandchildren, and more. It also means making sure your tax dollars stay in our area by securing funding for important local projects and organizations that improve our economy and quality of life in Northeast PA.

While I'm proud that I've been able to deliver on my promise to propose a practical and balanced property tax relief plan with the introduction of my Universal Property Tax Relief Program (H.B. 2119), I also know that there is much more work to be done on your behalf. In 2020, my colleagues and I will continue to prioritize funding for our public schools, doing everything we can to make health care more affordable, investing in living wage jobs, helping families impacted by the opioid epidemic and so much more.

Please keep reading to learn more about all that's been accomplished in 2019, what I'm working for in 2020, and to see pictures from across the district and in Harrisburg!

Sincerely,

Eddie Day Pashinski

With the new year comes new laws that will go into effect this year.

These include new laws that will impact:

Voting



As a result of Act 77, of 2019 beginning this year:

- PA voters will no longer be able to vote straight-ticket using one button; instead they will have to select a candidate for every race.
- Every county in the state will use voting machines that produce a paper trail.
- All registered voters will have the ability to vote by mail without needing to provide an excuse.

Important 2020 Primary Election Dates:

April 13 – Last day to register to vote in the primary.

April 21 – Last day to apply for a civilian absentee ballot.

April 28 – Primary Election, all mail-in civilian absentee ballots must be received by 8 p.m.

To register, apply for an absentee ballot or for more information, please visit VOTESPA.com

Sunday Hunting

Thanks to Act 107 of 2019, starting this year, hunters in Pennsylvania will be able to hunt three Sundays throughout the year as follows:



- 1.) One day of Sunday hunting shall be instituted by the Game Commission during deer rifle season; and
- 2.) One day of Sunday hunting shall be instituted by the commission during deer archery season; and
- 3.) One day of Sunday hunting shall be instituted by the commission at the agency's discretion.

Tobacco Purchasing Age

Act 93, signed into law in November 2019, will prohibit the sale of any tobacco, nicotine or related item to anyone younger than 21 starting on July 1. The law also expands the definition of a tobacco product to include e-cigarettes and other vaping products, and expressly prohibits the possession of these items on school grounds.



Prop Taxes, Prescriptions, & More: Legislative Update

Introducing my Universal Property Tax Relief Plan

As promised, I recently introduced H.B. 2119, my Universal Property Tax Relief plan! My fully funded plan would provide school property tax relief to working families and seniors who are struggling to stay in their homes by providing an **\$800 rebate to ALL school property taxpayers.**

This plan is plausible, practical and doable. Instead of funding tax relief from the bank accounts of the very people who need help the most, this Property Tax Relief Rebate program would use a modest PIT increase and untapped sales tax revenue on expenses such as professional entertainment, professional sports, cosmetic improvements to buildings and dwellings, as well as services such as massages and spas. The plan would not increase the current sales tax rate or expand it to essential items such as food and clothing.

I believe this is the most balanced and fair plan put forth to date and provides real relief to property tax payers without penalizing

Net Benefit of Tax Relief and PIT Increase by Income Level					
PIT = Personal Income Tax on Salary and Wage Earnings					
Income	3.07% PIT (Current)	3.49% PIT (Proposed)	PIT Difference	Universal Prop Tax Rebate	Net Benefit
\$ 30,000.00	\$ 921.00	\$ 1,047.00	\$ (126.00)	\$ 800.00	\$ 674.00
\$ 40,000.00	\$ 1,228.00	\$ 1,396.00	\$ (168.00)	\$ 800.00	\$ 632.00
\$ 50,000.00	\$ 1,535.00	\$ 1,745.00	\$ (210.00)	\$ 800.00	\$ 590.00
\$ 60,000.00	\$ 1,842.00	\$ 2,094.00	\$ (252.00)	\$ 800.00	\$ 548.00
\$ 80,000.00	\$ 2,456.00	\$ 2,792.00	\$ (336.00)	\$ 800.00	\$ 464.00
\$ 100,000.00	\$ 3,070.00	\$ 3,490.00	\$ (420.00)	\$ 800.00	\$ 380.00
\$ 120,000.00	\$ 3,684.00	\$ 4,188.00	\$ (504.00)	\$ 800.00	\$ 296.00
\$ 140,000.00	\$ 4,298.00	\$ 4,886.00	\$ (588.00)	\$ 800.00	\$ 212.00
\$ 160,000.00	\$ 4,912.00	\$ 5,584.00	\$ (672.00)	\$ 800.00	\$ 128.00
\$ 180,000.00	\$ 5,526.00	\$ 6,282.00	\$ (756.00)	\$ 800.00	\$ 44.00

Remember: All retired senior property taxpayers will see the full benefit of the \$800 rebate, since they do not pay a PIT.

the very people we are trying to help. Should this program be successfully implemented, it could guide us in the right direction to provide additional property tax relief in the future! Please review the chart above.

Fighting to lower the cost of Prescription Drugs and Health Care

The increasing cost of prescription drugs is driving up health care costs, which in turn drives up the cost of living for all Pennsylvanians. In order to address this critical life or death issue, I have worked to introduce and co-sponsor several pieces of legislation to bring down costs so everyone can afford the medicine they need.

Most recently, Rep. Steve McCarter and I introduced H.B. 2225, legislation that would make sure Pennsylvania is developing a long-term solution to this problem by preparing the state to effectively implement a prescription drug importation program once federal regulations are issued – this would save the state and consumers millions of dollars. This legislation is in addition to my already introduced H.B. 1042, which would establish a Prescription Drug Pricing Task Force, as well as H.R. 187, which would direct the Joint State Government Commission (JSGC) to

conduct a study on prescription drug pricing.

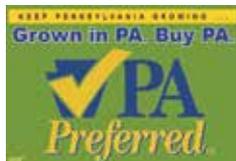
I am also proud to stand with Reps. Dan Frankel and Austin Davis, along with other members of the House and patient advocates, in support of their Prescription Drug Affordability Act (H.B. 2212). This legislation would be an important step toward providing transparency in drug pricing and ensuring affordable access to life-saving medication by recognizing that we need to treat these life-saving drugs like a public good and put people before profit.

I thank Rep. McCarter for his partnership on our proposal to lower prescription drug costs and all my colleagues who recognize the seriousness of this issue and are working diligently to find meaningful solutions to this devastating and deadly health care crisis.

PA Farm Bill Enacted with My Plan to help PA Farmers who are Veterans

In July, Governor Wolf signed the historic \$23 million PA Farm Bill package, including my plan to help Pennsylvania veterans who become farmers. The package meets the governor's and Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding's six priorities:

1. Develop New Resources for Agriculture Business Development and Succession Planning
2. Increase Opportunities for Pennsylvania's Agricultural Workforce
3. Remove Regulatory Burdens and Strengthen the State's Agricultural Business Climate
4. Create More Processing Capabilities
5. Increase Market Opportunities and Grow the Organic Sector
6. Protect Agriculture Infrastructure



I'm very excited that my plan to increase marketing opportunities for Pennsylvania's veterans was included in this package. Specifically, it will help bolster enrollment and promote the Homegrown by Heroes program for Pennsylvania veterans who are giving back to their communities through agriculture after serving their country. PA Preferred is working with the Homegrown by Heroes program by combining the logos to let consumers know they are supporting Pennsylvania farmers who are veterans.



I strongly encourage all Pennsylvanians to support our state's farmers by looking for the PA Preferred label whenever they shop – especially those with a Homegrown by Heroes logo. As I always say: Grown in PA. Buy PA. PA Preferred. PA PROUD.

Senior Center Tour



Last spring, I invited local seniors and their families to discuss local and state issues with me, as well as providing assistance with state services, at senior centers across the area. It was a pleasure to personally visit the Charles T. Adams, Lee Park, and Mountain Top Senior Centers. Thank you to everyone who made it to one of our stops. I look forward to visiting again soon!

Please remember, my staff and I are ready to help local seniors file their Property Tax/Rent Rebates, LIHEAP heating assistance, and PACE prescription-assistance program applications. Simply call (570) 825-5934 for an appointment.

Discussing Affordable Health Care at Wilkes University

Last March, I hosted a PA House Democratic Policy Committee hearing on the healthcare system in Pennsylvania at my alma mater, Wilkes University, where we discussed what needs to be done to address this life-or death-issue. I asked for the hearing because too many Pennsylvanians can't afford and therefore don't have access to health care, making obtaining quality services impossible for too many. This is a human travesty, because the U.S. pays double for its health care compared to any other industrialized nation. The three words used by health-related companies to describe their products is affordable, accessible, and quality. However, if it's not affordable, then it's not accessible. If it's not accessible, then you have no quality because you have no health care services. You should NEVER put profits before people's lives.

I thank my fellow House Democrats and healthcare experts for joining me to examine policies to improve access, lower costs and improve the quality of health care in Pennsylvania.



Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Update: KinConnector Line Now Available to Help Find Resources

Assisting grandparents and other family members who step up to take care of children whose parents have been impacted by the opioid epidemic has long been one of my top priorities. That's why I was proud to sponsor Act 88 of 2018, which grants temporary guardianship in 90-day increments to grandparents

or other adult family members when the parents of a child are unable to care for him or her due to alcohol or opioid abuse issues. While this was a great first step, my colleagues and I recognize that there is much more to be done.

I am pleased to share progress on another initiative to help grandparents raising grandchildren: The Launch of the KinConnector helpline (1-866-KIN-2111). Working together with Chairwoman Kathy Watson, we were able to pass H.B. 2133 to launch the KinConnector helpline.

Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) Secretary Teresa Miller and Aging (PDA) Secretary Robert Torres announced this past fall the launch of the helpline for families in kinship care situations, including grandparents raising their grandchildren because of the opioid crisis. The KinConnector helpline can help kinship care families access local, state, and federal resources.

The KinConnector helpline is staffed by Kinship Navigators – compassionate, knowledgeable social service professionals prepared to help families locate, understand, and access resources that may be able to help them. Kinship Navigators will connect grandparents and other relatives who are raising children with resources such as health, financial, and legal services, support groups, training, and parenting advice. They will help families locate physical or behavioral health services, enroll the child in school, find support groups, and provide other services designed to help caregivers.

They will also be available to help families apply for federal, state, and local benefits such as Social Security, public assistance, or CHIP.

This helpline is just the beginning, with a website of resources planned to launch soon, as well as additional opportunities for our legislature to provide more assistance to these families in need. As the chair of the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Caucus, I promise to continue fighting and finding solutions and additional resources for these heroes stepping up for our commonwealth's children. Please call my office at (570) 825-5934 if the services that are available to you now do not address your needs and my office will do its best to help you with your situation.



State Grants Awarded to NEPA Will Improve Our Quality of Life

Protecting your valuable tax dollars is extremely important to me, which is why I work diligently to help local organizations, groups, and governments receive the grant fund necessary to improve the quality of life throughout our district and region. Since 2019, I'm proud to have announced millions of dollars in grants for our area, including:

- \$115,000 to North Branch Land Trust to construct a 6-mile section of D&L Trail.
- \$50,000 to Hanover Township for the restoration of a 600-foot reach of Spring Run through natural stream design.
- \$50,000 in Teacher in the Workplace grants for Crestwood, Hanover Area school districts.
- \$850,000 grant awarded for local state forest expansion.
- \$200,000 grant awarded to Commission on Economic Opportunity in Luzerne County toward ending hunger in our region by 2025.
- \$3.5 million in RACP funding announced for projects to enhance Luzerne County's economy, and infrastructure.
- \$300,000 multimodal grant to Ashley Borough to assist with the Ashley Main Streetscape Project.
- \$600,000 multimodal grant to Wilkes-Barre to replace and install sidewalks and handicap-accessible ramps, among other improvements in the King's College neighborhood.
- \$200,000 multimodal grant to Luzerne County for a project to meet increasing bus ridership demand through the installation of 18 bus shelters and additional sidewalk.
- \$21,000 LSA grant to Huber Breaker Preservation Society (HBPS) to purchase, ship and restore a historic steam locomotive – Lokie – to Miners Memorial Heritage Park.
- \$50,000 LSA grant for Ashley Vision 2020 streetscape improvements, including the addition of new curbing, new sidewalks, street lighting, additional trees, and more.
- \$1 million LSA grant to NorthPoint Development LLC to provide a more suitable access for navigating and maneuvering throughout their 2,300,000-square-foot industrial park.
- \$98,856 LSA grant to Luzerne County to demolish the functionally obsolete Culvert Street Railroad Bridge and fund plans for its replacement.
- \$126,365 LSA grant to the Luzerne County Convention Center Authority for the installation of a wi-fi system at the Mohegan Sun Arena.
- \$800,000 LSA grant to McCarthy Tire Services Co. toward renovation of an old local warehouse to be used as a state-of-the-art corporate headquarters for the company.
- \$420,000 LSA grant to Wilkes-Barre to replace their 2003 aerial ladder truck with a new fire truck that will have the latest upgrades to maximize safety for firefighters and protect city residents.
- \$20,000 LSA grant to Catholic Youth Center of Wyoming Valley to assist with renovating the center's aquatic facility in Wilkes-Barre.
- \$75,000 LSA grant to Volunteers in Medicine for renovation of the second floor of their clinic in Wilkes-Barre.
- \$100,000 LSA grant to Greater Wilkes-Barre Development Corp. (GWBDC) to help their efforts to restore and stabilize the Irem Temple in Wilkes-Barre.
- \$30,000 LSA grant to RC Theatres of Wilkes-Barre to help with demolition and construction work on the theatre over a two-year period.
- \$150,000 LSA grant to F.M. Kirby Center for the Performing Arts to help replace the center's 30-year-old HVAC system with a more reliable heating and cooling system.
- \$109,500 LSA grant to Osterhout Free Library for upgrades to the library, including renovations to the exterior and interior of the building.
- \$20,450 LSA grant to Fairview Township to improve several roads within the Bow Creek Development.
- \$20,343 LSA grant to Fairview Township Police Department to purchase equipment to help officers protect and serve residents, including a mobile license plate recognition scanner.

Don't forget: My district office is here to help if you or your organization are interested applying for state funding.

Photos from around the district and Harrisburg



It was a blast to participate in the Feed Scurry competition in January at the 104th annual Pennsylvania Farm Show as we “Imagined the Opportunities.” With over 1 MILLION square feet of indoor excitement featuring nearly 6,000 animals, over 10,000 exhibits, and a variety of tasty, homegrown food – every Pennsylvanian should be proud of this enormous and enlightening demonstration of Pennsylvania agriculture.

In March, I was thrilled to welcome to the state Capitol students, staff, and parents from the Scranton School for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing. Thank you to my young constituent, Logan, for inviting me to join you during your visit!



Anup Patel, his family, and members from our local BAPS chapter visited my Capitol office to meet and invite me to participate in the Diwali celebrations at the state Capitol in October! It was an honor to participate in celebrating this incredible Festival of Lights.



Last February I joined Governor Wolf and other legislative leaders in agriculture to announce the historic PA Farm Bill proposal, which was signed into law in July.



In August, I toured a couple of Luzerne County’s fine agricultural growers & producers, Maylath’s Farm & Orchard & Milkhouse Creamery LLC! Thank you to my hosts whose families have poured themselves into their farms and creamery to provide us with quality produce, dairy and more.



Following a September fireworks legislation hearing, fellow House Ag & Rural Affairs Committee Chairman Rep. Martin Causer and I spoke with Jay Delaney, City of Wilkes-Barre Fire Chief and President of the Pennsylvania Career Fire Chiefs Association and Jerry Ozog, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Fire & Emergency Services Institute.



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Look inside for information:

- About my plan for Real Property Tax Relief
- New laws in effect for 2020
- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren update
- ... and much more!

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