

GREG VITALI

STATE REPRESENTATIVE — 166TH DISTRICT

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LEGISLATIVE REPORT

DECEMBER 2022

GREG VITALI

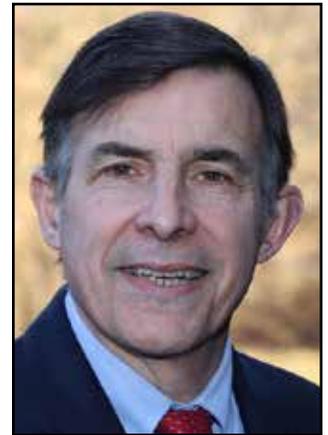
STATE REPRESENTATIVE — 166TH DISTRICT

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Home Heating Assistance Now Available

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is now open and accepting applications until April 28, 2023. LIHEAP offers cash grants to help with home heating bills and emergency situations, such as a broken furnace or an unexpected fuel shortage.

Applicants can be renters or homeowners, and the grant will be sent directly to your utility company or fuel provider and credited on your bill. You do not need to be on public assistance or have any unpaid heating bills. Grants do not need to be repaid.

This season's income limit for LIHEAP grants begins at \$20,385 (yearly) for an individual. This limit increases by \$7,080 for each additional person in the household. Grant awards range from \$300 to \$1,000 based on household size, income, and fuel type.

You can apply for LIHEAP online, www.compass.state.pa.us, or by submitting a paper application to the County Assistance Office. My office can also help complete and submit paper applications, or you can call the LIHEAP Hotline at 1-866-857-7095.

REAL ID Reminder

Beginning May 3, 2023, Pennsylvanians will need a REAL-ID compliant driver's license/ID card or another federal form of identification (such as a passport or military ID) to board domestic commercial flights, enter a military base, or enter certain federal facilities.

To obtain a REAL ID you must bring **all** of the following to a full-service Driver's License Center or REAL ID Center:

■ **One Proof of Identity** | Such as a certified copy of a birth certificate with a raised seal or a valid U.S. passport.

■ **Proof of Social Security Number** | You must present your physical social security card in your current legal name. Laminated cards will not be accepted.

■ **Two Proofs of PA Residency** | Such as an unexpired PA license or ID, a vehicle registration or insurance card, utility bill, pay stub, etc. with your current name and address.

■ **Proof of all legal name changes** | Such as a certified marriage certificate, court order, or amended birth certificate.

The closest REAL ID Center is: 43 S. Gulph Road, King of Prussia, PA 19046. My office can assist in obtaining certified copies of Pennsylvania birth certificates and direct you to the proper agencies to obtain a duplicate social security card or marriage license. For more information about REAL ID visit: www.dmv.pa.gov/REALID.

How I Voted

Each legislative session, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives casts nearly 2,000 votes on bills, amendments, resolutions, and procedural motions. The General Assembly's website (www.legis.state.pa.us) keeps a record of every vote taken, so you can see how I or any other legislator voted.

You can search by bill number, sponsor, or topic and find information on voting schedules, committee meetings, the schedule of session days, and more. Alternatively, you can always call my office to find out how I voted on an issue.

Medicare Counseling Available

The Pennsylvania Medicare Education and Decision Insight (PA MEDI) Program, formerly known as APPRISE, offers free Medicare counseling to older Pennsylvanians. PA MEDI counselors can help you make informed choices about Medicare coverage options, Medigap policies

PA Offers Bigger Rebates for Electric Vehicles

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is now offering greater rebates for the purchase of new or used electric vehicles through the **2022-2023 Alternative Fuel Vehicle (AFV) Rebate program**.

The rebate for the purchase of a new or used electric car or truck has increased from \$750 to \$2,000. Plug-in hybrid cars and trucks now qualify for a \$1,500 rebate, and all other alternative fuel vehicles (such as natural gas vehicles and electric motorcycles) qualify for a \$500 rebate.

To be eligible, your income must be below \$54,360 for a single person household. This limit increases by \$18,880 for each additional household member. An additional \$1,000 is available to applicants who meet further low-income requirements.

Rebates are offered on a first-come, first-served basis for as long as funding is available, or until June 30, 2023. The final purchase price of the vehicle must be \$50,000 or less, and you must submit your rebate request no later than six months from the date of purchase.

Further information can be found on the Grants, Loans and Rebates Page of the DEP website (www.dep.pa.gov). Applications are to be submitted through the eGrants page. For questions on the AFV Rebate, please call (717) 705-0374.

Shop for Healthcare Insurance Online

Pennsylvanians can enroll in 2023 health insurance coverage through Pennie until January 15th. Healthcare coverage can only be purchased during Open Enrollment unless a person experiences a Qualifying Life Event, such as a loss of health coverage or changes in their household.

Pennie is Pennsylvania's official health and dental coverage marketplace and offers free meetings with Assistors who can help you understand what options are available to you and your family. For more information or to enroll, visit www.pennie.com or call 1-844-844-8040.

and Medicare Advantage Plans, apply for Medicare Savings Programs to save you money, and more!

To get started, contact the Delaware County Office of Services for the Aging at (610) 490-1300 or the PA MEDI Helpline at 1-800-783-7067. More information can be found at www.aging.pa.gov.

PennDOT Offers Drivers a Second Chance

Drivers facing a suspension due to accumulation of points on their driving records or for a conviction of excessive speeding now have a chance to avoid suspension by successfully completing the new Driver Improvement School (DIS) offered by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT).

The six-hour DIS curriculum focuses on safety and addresses high-risk driving behaviors. Sessions are

currently being held in-person at select Driver License Centers, with virtual sessions forthcoming.

Individuals who attend and successfully complete the DIS may have points removed from their record and avoid a 15-day suspension. For more information, visit the **Driver Improvement School page** at www.dmv.pa.gov, by selecting "Suspensions" under the "Information Centers" tab in the top right hand corner.

Property/Tax Rent Rebate Increase

A new law grants one-time bonus rebates to claimants of the 2021 Property Tax/Rent Rebate (PTRR) Program. This program provides a state rebate for property taxes or rent paid in 2021 to income-eligible residents who are 65 or older; widows and widowers 50 or older; and people with disabilities 18 or older. The bonus rebate will be equal to 70% of their original rebate amount. This total could be as much as \$1,657.50, up from a previous maximum of \$975.

Bonus rebates began being mailed and sent via direct deposit in early September. Those who received their original rebate before mid-August will receive their bonus rebate in a one-time payment, through the same

payment method selected on their application. Eligible claimants who receive their rebate or apply after mid-August will receive one combined rebate payment.

As a reminder, the application deadline for the 2021 PTRR program is December 31, 2022. If you are an eligible claimant of the PTRR program who has already filed an application, **you do not need to take further action to claim your bonus rebate.**

You can obtain information about the program, an application, and free help applying through my district office or on the state Department of Revenue's website at www.revenue.pa.gov.

Naloxone Availability Expanded

To combat the ongoing opioid crisis, Pennsylvania has expanded the availability of Naloxone, a life-saving medication that reverses an overdose by blocking the effects of opioids. Naloxone can be administered by individuals with or without medical training.

You can now acquire Naloxone at your local pharmacy, without a prescription, by showing a copy of the statewide **Naloxone Standing Order** on paper or a mobile device. Please be aware that the out-of-pocket cost of Naloxone may vary.

The medication is also available for free through NEXT Distro, a statewide mail-based naloxone program (www.nextdistro.org/pennsylvania).

For more information on opioid treatment and resources, call 1-800-662-HELP. This hotline is confidential and staffed by trained professionals 24/7.

PA's New Child Tax Credit

A new PA law makes taxpayers who are eligible for the Federal Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit automatically eligible for the new Pennsylvania Child and Dependent Care Enhancement Tax Credit. The state credit is a refundable credit to help with child and dependent care expenses that allow the caregiver to work, such as summer day camp or child care.

The credit can be claimed when filing state taxes beginning in 2023. Families earning less than \$43,000 could be eligible for \$315 for one child, or \$630 for two or more children. Families earning more than \$43,000 could be eligible for \$180 for one child, or \$360 for two or more children.

The Department of Revenue estimates that 221,000 families will benefit from the program with an average credit of \$171 per year.

For more information, visit www.revenue.pa.gov.

Direct Deposit Now Available for Unclaimed Property

The Pennsylvania Treasury now offers direct deposit for unclaimed property claims. Prior to the release of this feature, all unclaimed property claims were paid by check.

Unclaimed property includes checks from employers and utility companies, dividends and interest from savings accounts and stocks, and credit balances. It is

estimated that the Treasury is holding about \$4 billion in unclaimed property and estimates that 1 in 10 Pennsylvanians has a legal claim.

You can search and claim property online by visiting www.patreasury.gov/unclaimed-property or by calling (800) 222-2046. My office can also help.

PACE & PACENET – Senior Prescription Assistance

Pennsylvania's prescription assistance programs for older adults, **PACE and PACENET**, offer low-cost prescription medication to qualified residents age 65 and older. The program works with Medicare Part D plans and other prescription drug plans such as retiree/union coverage, employer plans, Medicare Advantage, and Veterans' Benefits to lower out-of-pocket costs for medications.

Financial eligibility is determined by your previous calendar year's income. For PACE, your total income must be below \$14,500 for a single person, or below \$17,700 for a married couple. For PACENET, your total income must be between \$14,500 - \$33,500 for a single person, or between \$17,700 - \$41,500 for a married couple.

You may obtain an application from your local Area Agency on Aging, pharmacy, senior citizen center, or my office. You do not need to include documentation with your completed application. The programs will verify your information with other agencies.

If you have questions about PACE or PACENET, call my office, 1-800-225-PACE, or the Delaware County Office of Services for the Aging, (610) 490-1300.

Free Notary Service

Many official documents can be notarized for **free** at my district and satellite offices. Please call ahead to make sure our notary is available and can notarize your type of document.

Some of the documents my office cannot notarize include birth certificates, car titles, wills, deeds, mortgages, powers of attorney, and the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9.

Notary work is done weekdays between 9:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at the district office and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the satellite office. The person whose signature is to be notarized must sign the document in person and provide proof of identity such as a valid driver's license, photo ID card, or passport. Please let us know in advance if witnesses are needed. Unfortunately, we cannot provide witnesses at our satellite office.

If you are unable to climb the stairs to my district office, please let us know when you call. Our notary can meet you on the ground floor. Our Satellite Office does not have stairs and is handicapped accessible.

Receive My Newsletter Electronically

In an effort to reduce postage costs and paper waste, you can opt out of receiving the paper version of my newsletter and receive only the electronic version.

Just email your name, request, and address to my office at RepVitali@pahouse.net.

Follow me on Facebook

You can follow me on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/RepVitali. There you will find updates from Harrisburg, district news, and other important state-related information.

Join My Email Update List

I maintain an email list for those who wish to receive periodic email updates about public meetings, traffic alerts, community events, state and local programs and services, and other items of interest to the community. To be added to that list, please email RepVitali@pahouse.net.

District & Satellite Office Hours

My Havertown district office is open to help with your state-related matters from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Fridays.

Additionally, my satellite office, located in the Ardmore Library, is open on Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The satellite location is ADA compliant if you are not able to climb the stairs to my district office.

My staff can assist with SEPTA Senior ID Card Applications, Property Tax/Rent Rebate Forms, Birth/ Death Certificates, Notary Services, and more at both locations. **While no appointments are necessary, it is best to call before coming to the office.**