



Summer
2022

DANIELLE FRIEL ¹⁵⁵ OTTEN

PA STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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Dear Neighbor,

As your state representative, my role is to ensure that the 155th Legislative District is represented in the lawmaking process in Harrisburg. I am always mindful that the votes and actions my colleagues and I take affect the everyday lives of our constituents. The work I do in Harrisburg would not be possible without our vocal and active community. Your input and involvement ensure that the interests of the 155th District are well represented.

While my focus is on being the best possible legislator for our district, my staff strives to be the best at delivering constituent services. We have responded to thousands of emails, letters, and phone calls; helped hundreds of constituents with unemployment claims; and assisted with tax rebates, state forms, and questions and concerns about state offices, agencies, and public utilities.

Should you need to contact us regarding any state-related issue, please email, call, or stop by our district office. I also encourage you to share your views on state legislative matters that are important to you. We strive to provide a welcoming, informative, and helpful experience to every constituent.

As a reminder, our new state legislative maps were finalized in March. Therefore, the new 155th Legislative District includes Uwchlan, Upper Uwchlan, East Brandywine, West Brandywine, and Wallace townships, plus the Borough of Downingtown and Precinct 4 of Caln Township. East Pikeland, West Vincent, Spring City, and Phoenixville will no longer be in the 155th District. Any resident of the 155th, present or future, is welcome to contact my district office for information or assistance with any state-related matter. My staff and I are here to help make state government work better for you!

MARINER EAST UPDATE

SUNOCO/ENERGY TRANSFER CONVICTED OF CRIMINAL CHARGES

On August 5, Attorney General Josh Shapiro announced that Energy Transfer subsidiaries Sunoco Pipeline L.P. and ETC Northeast Pipeline LLC were convicted of criminal charges related to their conduct during construction of their Mariner East 2 and Revolution pipelines.

As part of the settlement, Energy Transfer will be required to pay for independent evaluations of water quality impacts for affected homeowners and bear the cost of permanently restoring or replacing private water supplies damaged by pipeline construction. Energy Transfer must also pay \$10 million toward projects that improve the quality of water sources along the pipeline routes.

The case against Energy Transfer would not have been possible without the persistence and determination of the residents who documented impacts and demanded action to hold this repeat offender accountable. For more information about the convictions, visit attorneygeneral.gov.

MARSH CREEK CLEANUP

August 10 marked the two-year anniversary of Sunoco's spill of more than 20,000 gallons of drilling mud into streams, wetlands, and the lake at Marsh Creek State Park during construction of their Mariner East 2 pipeline. More than one month past the agreed-upon cleanup deadline of July 1, 2022, Sunoco had failed to complete the required remediation and restoration. The excuses for their delays are things they could and should have accounted for in their planning process—including the existence and location of two pipelines clearly visible on public pipeline maps.

This operator continues to show absolute disregard for the people and communities impacted by their work. A Consent Order and Agreement signed last December between Sunoco, DEP, and DCNR gives DEP the ability to impose penalties of \$10,000 per day for each day past the July 1 deadline and allows for more severe penalties as appropriate, up to and including the forfeiture of a \$4 million surety bond posted by Sunoco. While penalties had not yet been determined at press time for this newsletter, I will keep pushing DEP to hold Sunoco accountable to the fullest extent possible for their ongoing delays.

BUDGET UPDATE

In July, Governor Wolf signed a \$45.2 billion state budget for the 2022-2023 fiscal year. While no budget is perfect, I was proud to vote yes on this year's plan, which makes meaningful investments in education, mental health, long-term care, support for individuals with disabilities and their care workers, and other important priorities for Chester County residents.

I wanted to provide an overview of the budget, highlighting some of the key issues in our legislative district based on feedback we've received from constituents.

INVESTMENTS IN EDUCATION:

This year's budget makes historic investments in public education, with a \$525 million bump to basic education funding, a \$100 million increase for special education, and a \$100 million increase for the state's school safety and security grant program plus a new school mental health initiative.

These historic investments will directly impact our communities, with Chester County schools receiving \$15.9 million in additional funding. My Democratic colleagues and I fought hard for this increase, which will help to fund programs, staff, curriculum, and supports for students and help to alleviate the future burden on property tax payers. I'm excited to bring these funds back to our communities!

School funding will increase for the school districts in House District 155

- Coatesville SD - 13.6%
- Downingtown SD - 8.4%
- Owen J. Roberts SD - 13.3%
- Phoenixville SD - 9.5%

Rep. Danielle Friel Otten

The infographic features a dark blue background with white and light blue text. At the bottom, there is a circular portrait of Rep. Danielle Friel Otten and an illustration of school supplies like a pencil, notebook, and folder.

INVESTMENTS IN THE CARE WORKFORCE:

The budget includes increases of about \$150 million for nursing homes and provides half-year funding for costs related to increased staffing levels, which will help provide much-needed raises to care workers who helped get us through the COVID-19 pandemic.

This budget also adds an estimated \$294 million in increases to the Medicaid nursing facility rate, with the assurance that the money will go directly to staffing for bedside care.

An additional \$250 million will be provided to long-term living programs through the allocation of federal American Rescue Plan Act funds.

For years, our home and community-based services (HCBS) waiver system, which helps individuals with physical or intellectual disabilities live more independently, has been in dire need of additional funding to address the growing waitlist for

services. This year's budget includes an \$18.8 million increase to serve an additional 832 individuals with physical and intellectual disabilities.

INVESTMENTS IN INFRASTRUCTURE:

The budget allocates \$3.9 billion for state infrastructure projects, including bridge, highway, and road repairs.

In addition, the General Fund is restored as the primary source of state police funding, freeing up an additional \$175 million annually to improve our state's roads and bridges, as it was intended. In past years, Motor License funds intended for infrastructure projects were diverted to pay for state police.

RELIEF FOR HOMEOWNERS AND RENTERS:

The budget includes a one-time 70% increase in the statewide Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program. This will allow for rebates up to \$1,105 for eligible recipients.

This budget also invests \$125 million to establish the Whole-Home Repair program, which will provide financial assistance to qualifying homeowners and small-scale landlords to help upgrade their properties with the aim of improving habitability, energy/water efficiency, winterization, and accessibility for those with disabilities.

ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION:

This budget allocates a historic \$640 million in conservation programs, including \$240 million for water and sewer projects and \$100 million for local conservation districts to use on flood control, nutrient management, and other projects.

The 2022-23 PA Budget

Invests federal funds to preserve and protect Pennsylvania's natural resources like parks, trails, and streams

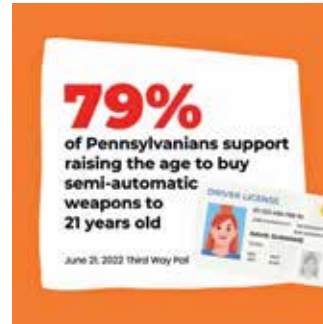
The infographic features a green background with a photograph of a forest path. It includes a logo with a calculator and a dollar sign, and a circular seal at the bottom left.

GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

In 2020, guns became the leading cause of death for U.S. children and teens. Two years later, we have still done nothing to address this crisis. Gun violence has continued to plague our country, yet we have a majority party in Harrisburg that continues to ignore these issues.

Following the tragic events in Uvalde, Texas, and Buffalo, New York, my Democratic colleagues and I attempted several procedural maneuvers to force the House to vote on gun-safety bills that have been sitting in the House Judiciary Committee for more than a year, blocked by a chairman who has pledged that he has “no intention of addressing further gun-control measures.”

To avoid bringing these bills up for an up-or-down vote, Republican leadership canceled session days, reassigned bills to new committees, and gutted-and-replaced original legislation with amendments that would make it easier for anyone over the age of 18 to carry a concealed firearm. These amendments were identical to bills that law enforcement agencies have consistently opposed and that Governor Wolf had already vetoed earlier this legislative session.



We legislators cannot simply sit back and wait for this crisis to go away. A strong majority of our constituents are demanding action, and we need to deliver. I reject the idea that Second Amendment rights and safe, responsible gun laws are mutually exclusive. We can and must do more to protect our children and communities from gun violence.



ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTHCARE

With its June 24 ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson*, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* and nearly 50 years of legal precedent guaranteeing a constitutional right to abortion. The court's decision sends the issue of reproductive rights to the states. It is important to know that access to abortion and reproductive healthcare remains safe and legal in our Commonwealth for now.

While the *Dobbs* decision has no immediate impact on existing Pennsylvania law, Republican leadership has at least 18 bills teed up and ready for a vote that would severely restrict or eliminate access to care—some with no exceptions for rape, incest, or the life, health, or future fertility of the mother.

A majority of Pennsylvanians support access to safe reproductive care, and Governor Wolf has vetoed (and promised to veto) every attempt to restrict these rights. But in an effort to avoid his veto, the majority party in Harrisburg is using another tactic to advance their unpopular beliefs.

In June, Republican leadership fast-tracked SB 106, an omnibus bill containing five different proposed constitutional amendments, one of which would clear a path toward banning abortion in Pennsylvania. During debate in the House, supporters claimed that this constitutional amendment “changes nothing.” They voted down our attempts to table the bill until we reconvene in September, which would give us a chance to hold public hearings, gather constituent feedback, and hold a proper debate. And not one of them would stand for interrogation on the bill.

Why? It's because they cannot defend the seven words they kept leaving out of their remarks: “or any other rights related to abortion.” This phrase gives away the bill's true intent: to ban abortion here in Pennsylvania. This bill was rushed through late at night on a summer Friday before the public had the opportunity to see it in the light of day. If this amendment goes to the ballot, it will be during an “off-year” municipal primary election, when they know turnout will be at its lowest and registered Independents will be less likely to participate.

My colleagues and I are pushing back against extremists with a package of bills to protect access to safe, legal abortion. Together with my colleague Rep. Liz Hanbidge of Montgomery County, I have proposed an amendment to the state constitution that would reaffirm and protect every Pennsylvanian's right to privacy, including the right to choose or refuse an abortion, the right to choose or refuse contraceptives, and the right to choose or refuse fertility care.

Bodily autonomy and control over reproductive healthcare are central to individual freedom, liberty, health, and economic opportunity. Decisions about a pregnancy belong to the pregnant person, not their state legislature. I will keep fighting to ensure that abortion and reproductive healthcare remain safe, legal, and accessible in Pennsylvania.

You can find a complete list of my sponsored legislation under the News tab on my website, RepDanielle.com.

WORKING FOR YOU IN HARRISBURG AND AT HOME



In April, my staff and I partnered with Sen. Katie Muth and her team for a free paper-shredding event. Together, we were able to help over 100 members of our community responsibly recycle more than 9,000 lbs. of paper.



In June, our summer interns and staff members from my district office had the opportunity to visit and work in the Capitol during a session week and get a behind-the-scenes look at the legislative process.



In May, I had so much fun visiting 4th Grade students at Uwchlan Hills Elementary who were learning about state government in class. We discussed one of my proposed bills, Mandatory Free-Play Recess and Lunch Periods, and held a mock legislative session.



Governor Wolf visited Phoenixville this spring to highlight Pennsylvania's strong financial position and called on the legislature to make major investments in the people of Pennsylvania, so families, workers, and businesses have a chance for a brighter future.

HOW I VOTED

As your elected representative in Harrisburg, I am committed to maintaining transparency surrounding the legislative process.

While state legislators' votes are always public record, the reasons behind those votes may not always be clear. This session, I've added a "How I Voted" section to my website with the goal of keeping constituents as informed as possible about the bills that come before the House, my positions on those bills, and why I voted the way I did. We strive to update this page as quickly as possible following the end of each session week to make it easy for you to stay up to date.

Look for the "How I Voted" tab at the top right-hand corner of my website, RepDanielle.com.



PREPARING FOR ELECTION DAY



The General Election is right around the corner on Tuesday, November 8. In August, the state Supreme Court upheld Pennsylvania's mail-in voting law, ensuring that Pennsylvanians will be able to safely and legally cast their ballots by mail or in person this November.

If you plan to vote by mail-in ballot, avoid these common reasons mail ballots may be rejected:


- Inner privacy envelope is not included. This is known as a "naked" ballot. **Be sure to enclose your ballot in the inner envelope and seal both the inner and outer envelopes.**
- Outer envelope not signed or missing other mandatory information. **Double check that all fields are complete!**
- Either envelope (inner or outer) opened and re-sealed with tape. **If you mess up your ballot, call Chester County Voter Services for guidance at 610-344-6410.**
- Late arrivals. **The county election office must receive all ballots by 8 PM on Nov. 8.**

Visit vote.pa.gov to register to vote, check your registration status, find your polling place, or request a mail-in or absentee ballot.

2022 General Election Important Dates

 <p>Register to vote or update your registration Deadline: October 24</p>	 <p>Request mail-in or absentee ballot Sign up by: November 1</p>
 <p>Deadline for mail-in or absentee ballots Due: November 8 <small>(must be received by 8 p.m.)</small></p>	 <p>Election Day Polls open 7 a.m. - 8 p.m. Date: November 8</p>

vote.pa.gov



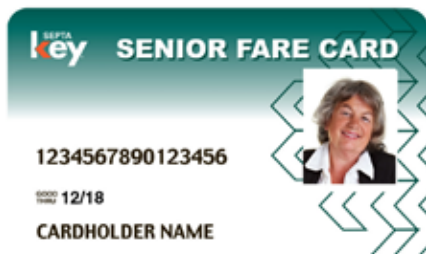
Scan to find a secure drop box near you.

SENIOR SEPTA PASSES

Seniors who present a SEPTA Key Senior ID Card ride for free on all SEPTA service lines within Pennsylvania. Seniors traveling to NJ or DE are eligible for a half-fare discount with their SEPTA Key Senior ID Card.

Signing up for a card is simple! If you are at least 65 years of age, stop by my district office with a form of ID with a date of birth on it, such as a PA driver's license, non-driver photo ID, U.S. passport, or birth certificate. We will take your photo and electronically submit your application to SEPTA, and you'll receive your card in the mail.

We are now able to process SEPTA Senior Key renewals in my district office! If your card has expired or will expire in the next month, please call or stop by, and we'll be glad to help you with your renewal.



The federal REAL ID Act has been extended in Pennsylvania until **May 3, 2023**

The best thing you can do to prepare for REAL ID is to get your documents together:

- ✓ Proof of identity
- ✓ Social Security card
- ✓ Two current, physical proofs of PA residency
- ✓ Proof of all legal name changes



visit **PENNDOT.GOV/REALID**

Beginning May 3, 2023, Pennsylvanians will need REAL ID-compliant identification to board a domestic flight or enter a federal building. Please contact my office for assistance with the REAL ID application process.



DANIELLE FRIEL ¹⁵⁵ **OTTEN**
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STAY INFORMED!

Visit RepDanielle.com/emailsSignup to join my email list for regular updates from Harrisburg and the district.

lpo.ad.0822

MY OFFICE CAN HELP YOU WITH:

- PennDOT documents
- Disability plates and placards
- Questions about REAL ID
- Birth certificate applications
- Unemployment Compensation issues
- Department of Human Services benefits (SNAP, Medical Assistance, Rent & Utility Assistance)
- Consumer complaints
- Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding local accomplishments and family milestones
- Concerns about state road conditions
- PACE cards for senior citizens
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate applications

And more!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Join us for Mobile Office Hours at the Downingtown Library!

Staff from my district office will be at the Downingtown Library, 122 Wallace Avenue, on the fourth Wednesday of each month, from 11 AM – 1 PM.

This is a great opportunity to get help with state services like Unclaimed Property or Unemployment Compensation, sign up for your SEPTA Key Senior ID Card (must be age 65+/bring your ID), or let us know about the issues that most concern you.

Stop in to say hello and find out how we can help! We look forward to meeting you!

Free Paper-Only Shred Event Sunday October 16, 1 PM - 3 PM

Join us on Sunday, October 16 for a FREE Paper-Only Shred Event in the parking lot of the Lionville Middle School, 550 W. Uwchlan Ave., Exton.

Bring your confidential documents to be destroyed! Each car will be limited to 4 file-size boxes. Small paper clips and staples are OK, but please no binder clips, binders, or cardboard (plan to take your boxes home with you).

This event is first come, first served. When the truck is full, the event will end. All shredded paper will be recycled!