



State Representative | 157th Legislative District

FALL 2026

MELISSA L. SHUSTERMAN

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Dear Neighbors,

So far this session, the House has passed 467 bills. We have prioritized policies that lower taxes, reform education, invest in community safety, and grow our economy – and there is still time to continue delivering for all Pennsylvanians before the end of the 2025-26 session!

After a busy budget season, I am excited to head back to Harrisburg to continue working on legislation that makes a real impact. As always, my office is available to help address your state-related questions and connect you with state resources. I value your trust in representing our community and will continue to promote policies that improve the lives of all Pennsylvanians!



MY MST BILL BECOMES LAW

This summer my bill to provide additional trauma-informed care training, including military sexual trauma (MST), PTSD and traumatic brain injury, to our county veteran affairs directors was signed into law by Governor Shapiro as Act 38 of 2026! We owe it to our veterans to ensure that the staff supporting them are best equipped to meet their needs. I am grateful for the support of my colleagues and to James Ulinski and the Penn State Military Clearinghouse for their advocacy on MST and this bill. This is a small step in continuing to provide for our Commonwealth's veterans. I look forward to finding more ways to continue serving those who sacrificed so much for us!

2026 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

I am proud of the budget we passed. It invests in education, community safety, affordability measures, and economic development – all without raising taxes or dipping into the state's Rainy Day Fund. This budget continues our commitment to equitable education funding for PA's public schools, provides a cost-of-living adjustment for retired teachers for the first time in nearly two decades, improves services for seniors, and continues to create tax relief for working families. For a third year, the expanded Child & Dependent Care Tax Credit that I worked hard to create remains in the budget. **Below are budget highlights:**

- ✓ Increases education funding for all school districts in the 157th District
- ✓ Helps working families by delivering \$30 million for quality childcare workers
- ✓ Provides significant increases in funding for Rape Crisis Centers
- ✓ Requires data centers to publish their water and energy usage records
- ✓ Enacts chip-enabled SNAP access cards, modernizing benefits and protecting taxpayers from fraud
- ✓ Continues funding for Violence Prevention and Intervention Programs, and increases funding for the State Police, PEMA, and Fire Protection



To read the interactive version of my newsletter that contains hyperlinks to the bill numbers, programs and statistics referenced, please use the QR code or visit my website at:

pahouse.com/Shusterman/InTheNews

UPDATE FROM HARRISBURG

MY AI CHATBOT BILL

AI is moving at the speed of light, and while it possesses revolutionary potential, there is a clear lack of adequate safety protocols and protections in place. Our society is coming to a bipartisan consensus: we need government to step up. I am determined to provide common sense and reasonable safety guardrails that protect Pennsylvania's children and consumers.

AI chatbots are programs that can hold ongoing conversations with a person. They can take the form of your child's favorite soccer player or celebrity; they act like the perfect friend. An alarming number of U.S. teens have admitted to using an AI companion, and not just for homework help. Far too many children and vulnerable adults are creating unhealthy emotional relationships with chatbots and are experiencing terrifying interactions such as isolation, encouragement of suicidal ideation or violence, exposure to child sexual abuse materials and more.



My bill, H.B. 2006, creates consumer protections by implementing safety standards related to suicide and violence prevention, prohibiting the creation of child sexual abuse materials, and guarding against isolation tactics. Pennsylvanians deserve real protections. This bill currently awaits final consideration on the House floor, and I will continue to work for its passage.



PRAMS (PREGNANCY RISK ASSESSMENT MONITORING SYSTEM)

For years, our Commonwealth has relied on the data provided from PRAMS, formerly run by the CDC, to inform public policy regarding maternal and infant health. With the end of the federal program, my bill, HB 2621, to establish our own program here in PA, passed the House with strong bipartisan support on a vote of 190-12. The data collected from PRAMS has helped to shape educational campaigns and policy recommendations regarding safe sleep, tobacco and drug use, and more that saves the lives of mothers and babies. This bill now awaits consideration in the Senate.

STUDYING PA'S CHILDCARE INDUSTRY

We are on the edge of a childcare crisis here in our Commonwealth. Affordable, quality childcare is becoming a luxury for our working families. My legislation recently adopted by the House, H.R. 363, directs the Joint State Government Commission to study PA's childcare industry and offer legislative recommendations. This initiative gathered strong bipartisan support with a vote of 186-16. The state will now conduct a study of PA's childcare industry (public, private, and private equity) and offer legislative recommendations and best practices. Our working parents should not have to choose between their jobs and taking care of their children. I am hopeful the recommendations offered will provide a viable path forward to improving affordability and accessibility of childcare.



IN THE DISTRICT



MEET MY INTERNS

Sofie is a rising senior at the University of Pittsburgh majoring in Politics and Philosophy. She speaks three languages and enjoys yoga, bike riding, and exploring new parks with her dog.

Chris is a rising junior at Dickinson College, where he is majoring in Political Science and minoring in History and Ethics. As an avid history lover, he has created two history-themed boardgames! He also enjoys playing ultimate frisbee.

Thank you Sofie and Chris for spending your summer serving the 157th District! You have been a vital part of our team, and we wish you both the best adventures as you head back to school!

VETERANS BBQ

Thank you to everyone who joined me at my Veterans BBQ! It is an honor to host this event every year for our veterans and their families. We had a great afternoon connecting our veterans with community resources and each other. I can't wait to see everyone in the fall for my Annual Veterans Breakfast on Oct. 1st!



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF VALLEY FORGE

We had some big milestone birthdays this July 4th – America turned 250 and Valley Forge National Historical Park turned 50! I joined my colleagues in celebrating these milestones at Valley Forge, reminiscing on our nation's history and everything Valley Forge has meant to our community over the years. Happy Birthday, Valley Forge, and Happy Birthday, America!



2026 COMMUNITY RECOGNITION AWARD

This spring, I was honored to receive the Community Recognition Award from the Dental Society of Chester and Delaware County. I am grateful for the society's continued presence and work in our community and look forward to continuing to advocate for improving oral health for all Pennsylvanians!

STORMWATER GRANT UPDATE

In 2023, I worked with Senator Comitta to secure a state grant for \$2.2 million to help Tredyffrin Township improve its stormwater infrastructure. Earlier this summer, I was delighted to learn that the project is almost complete! This critical update will help prevent flooding and damage to homes and properties, keeping residents safe.



CONESTOGA STUDENTS WIN STATEWIDE PENNDOT INNOVATIONS CHALLENGE

Congratulations to Conestoga Students Miya, Daniel, and Prranit for being chosen as the 2026 PennDOT Innovation Challenge winners. PennDOT asked students to develop



a concept for the use of AI in work zones to help improve safety and efficiency. Their creative idea and use of unique problem solving secured their first-place victory. Way to go, Pioneers!

CONESTOGA ROBOTICS TEAM

I welcomed the Conestoga Robotics team to the state Capitol to celebrate their performance at the State Championships. This year, they set a new school record with four of their six teams qualifying for worlds! What a feat – Go, Stoga!





State Representative
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Keeping up with Rep. Shusterman

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SIGN UP FOR MY E-NEWSLETTER!

Stay informed by scanning the QR code or emailing me at RepShusterman@pahouse.net.

GENERAL ELECTION REMINDERS

**OCT.
19**

Last day to register to
vote before November
Election. Register at
vote.pa.gov

**OCT.
27**

Last day to
apply for a
mail-in or
absentee ballot.

**NOV.
3**

ELECTION DAY!

Polling places are open from
7 a.m. – 8 p.m. (mail-in and
absentee ballots are due at 8 p.m.)



GRANTS AWARDED TO THE 157TH DISTRICT

✓ **\$1,333,600**

Tredyffrin Township for the
Gateway Multi-modal Project

✓ **\$996,000**

Easttown Township for the
Community Connection Project

✓ **\$850,000**

Paoli Hospital to renovate
the Perinatal Center

✓ **\$800,000**

Schuylkill Township to renovate
the Municipal Building

✓ **\$639,400**

Tredyffrin Township for traffic
signal updates along Routes 30
and 252

✓ **\$354,745**

Willistown Township for the
West Chester Pike Sewer
Extension Project

✓ **\$329,800**

Schuylkill Township for the
Jug Hollow Road Storm-
water Improvement Project

✓ **\$32,167**

V.F. Volunteer Fire Company

✓ **\$31,137**

Berwyn Fire Co. and
Ambulance

✓ **\$30,312**

Paoli Fire Company

FALL EVENTS

Save the Date



September 14

SEPTA Senior Sign-Up Event
Paoli Library
10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Call the library at (610) 296-7996



October 1

Veterans Breakfast
Phoenixville Country Club
9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
RSVP By Sept. 24th by calling
(484) 200-8260



October 3

Shredding with Sen. Comitta
and Collection For Mitzvah Circle
Valley Forge Middle School
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.