

# THE DRISCOLL DISPATCH



## State Representative Mike Driscoll

Academy Plaza • 3294 Red Lion Road, Suite 3 • Philadelphia, PA 19114  
(215) 281-3414 • Fax: (215) 281-3418

7104 Torresdale Ave. • Philadelphia, PA 19135  
(215) 333-9760 • Fax: (215) 333-9244

27A East Wing • P.O. Box 202173 • Harrisburg, PA 17120-2173  
(717) 787-4331 • Fax: (717) 772-9962

[www.pahouse.com/Driscoll](http://www.pahouse.com/Driscoll) • [www.facebook.com/RepDriscoll](https://www.facebook.com/RepDriscoll)

## Representing the People of the 173rd Legislative District

Dear Neighbor,

Last January, I was sworn in to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives to represent the people of Northeast Philadelphia. My family and friends were present for this special day and stood witness as I took the oath of office. Since then, I have been focused on advocating for the people of the 173<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District, both in Harrisburg and at home in our district.

As you may know, Harrisburg has been locked in a budget impasse for most of the last year, but I have been hard at work looking for opportunities for compromise and bipartisan agreements. At the time of this writing, the budget impasse is ongoing, but I pledge to do everything within my power to ensure the passage of a responsible spending plan that properly invests in our students, addresses the growing property-tax issue gripping our state, and resolves the structural deficit once and for all.

Although the Capitol has been stuck in an impasse, my work to improve the district continues. I am proud to report that I, with the support of House Transportation Committee Chairmen Bill Keller and John Taylor, have been able to assist in getting multiple district projects completed, including the repaving of Grant Avenue from State Street to Roosevelt Boulevard and Frankford Avenue from Rhawn Street to the city line.

Please feel free to stop by either of my district offices, located at 3294 Red Lion Road and 7104 Torresdale Avenue, Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Whether you have a question about how the budget impasse is affecting a particular program or you have a question about accessing a state service, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

You can also stay up to date with what is happening in Philadelphia and Harrisburg by signing up for periodic email updates on my website at [www.pahouse.com/Driscoll](http://www.pahouse.com/Driscoll), or by following me on Facebook.

In the meantime, I look forward to seeing many of you around the district!

Sincerely,

*Mike Driscoll*  
Mike Driscoll  
State Representative  
173<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District



My wife, Frances, and our children came to Harrisburg to watch as I took the oath of office. I wouldn't be where I am today without their continued support.



In May, I had the opportunity to welcome the St. Hubert High School cheerleading team to Harrisburg for a tour of the Capitol and recognition in the House chamber. The St. Hubert Bambies sent four squads of amazing athletes to Florida to compete in the National High School Cheerleading Championship where their Gold Squad took first in the Large Junior Varsity Division for the second year in a row. I appreciate groups visiting me in Harrisburg, especially when I have the opportunity to recognize them for their achievements. If you are a part of an organization that would be interested in visiting Harrisburg, I strongly urge you to contact either of my district offices for more information.

## Heating assistance program accepting applications

Pennsylvania's Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program — LIHEAP — is open for applications, and expected to close April 1. LIHEAP helps low-income families pay their heating bills.

LIHEAP provides two types of grants — a cash grant sent directly to utility companies to pay a portion of the resident's fuel bill, and a crisis grant for households in immediate danger of being without heat due to a furnace failure or an unexpected fuel shortage.

To qualify for either a cash grant or a crisis grant, the income limit for a one-person household is \$17,655. This income limit increases by \$6,240 for each additional person in the household.

Residents who received a LIHEAP grant last season should have received a postcard or a 2015-16 LIHEAP application with a registration number. Those who did not receive LIHEAP last season may obtain an application by contacting my office.

## Don't fall for IRS phone scams

Increasingly, phone scammers are setting out to target unsuspecting victims who are preparing to file their tax returns. Most often, a person will receive a phone call from someone claiming to work for the IRS and demanding payment on taxes owed.

Please be aware — this phone call is a scam and the IRS will NOT initiate first contact with you about taxes owed through a phone call. Though your caller ID may indicate it is the IRS, phone scammers can alter caller ID numbers to try and deceive you. The IRS does not operate this way and will always send official correspondence through the mail to make its first contact with you.

Northeast Philadelphia residents have been reporting a surge of these calls lately. If you get a call like this, I urge you to hang up and contact my district office. We are compiling these reports and sharing them with the Office of the Attorney General.

## Help available on Property Tax/Rent Rebates

My office has received the current Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program applications from the state Department of Revenue — and the staff is ready to assist!

The rebate program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians 65 or older, widows and widowers 50 or older, and people with disabilities 18 or older.

Claimants must reapply for rebates every year because rebates are based on annual income and property taxes or rent paid annually. Spouses, personal representatives or estates may file rebate claims on behalf of deceased claimants who lived at least one day in 2015 and meet all other eligibility criteria.

### Please take note of two changes to the program that I supported:

- Social Security cost-of-living adjustments no longer disqualify those applying for a rebate; and
- Claims filed on behalf of claimants who lived at least one day during the claim year and meet all other eligibility criteria will be paid.

Please ignore offers to assist with filing the application for a fee. My office offers free help, and the Revenue Department does not charge a fee to process your application.

## Is the state holding unclaimed property for you?

One in 10 Pa. residents has unclaimed property that belongs to them.

Is the state treasurer holding unclaimed property that belongs to you? You can search for and claim any property the treasurer is holding for you – it's easy and it's FREE!

Simply visit the treasurer's website at [www.patreasury.gov](http://www.patreasury.gov) and click on the "Unclaimed Property" drop-down menu along the top of the page.

Or, you can contact or stop by my office and my staff will be happy to help you search the Pennsylvania Treasurer's Office website for unclaimed property for free.

## Bills I've introduced in the 2015-16 session

While the budget impasse has dominated headlines, the work of the General Assembly has continued through this difficult time. In my first term, I have been focused on bills to support our first responders and their families, while also looking for ways to help discourage food waste.

- **HOUSE BILL 933** – would exclude a surviving spouse or minor children of a first responder, who receive benefits under the Emergency and Law Enforcement Personnel Death Benefit Act, from paying inheritance tax.
- **HOUSE BILL 1641** – would give Pennsylvania farmers and retailers a tax credit on the food they donate to a regional food bank or emergency food provider.
- **HOUSE BILL 1810** – would establish the Waterfront Redevelopment Act and create a state grant program to provide funding for projects that support the revitalization of undeveloped waterfronts across the commonwealth.
- **HOUSE RESOLUTION 220** – Would direct the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study and issue a report on the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of implementing an independent board charged with administering voluntary IRAs for private-sector employees.



# Around the 173rd District



I would like to thank all who attended and assisted with my first Senior Fair, which was held in October at the Torredale Boys Club. Attendees had access to resources including health screenings, information on state programs that benefit seniors, door prizes and much more. I look forward to holding this event again.



Local resident Luis Castro stopped back in my office after receiving assistance from my staff to thank me for the help. Getting the opportunity to assist constituents navigate state services while getting to know them better is one of my favorite parts of the job.



In July, I had the opportunity to visit Delaire Landing Community Center residents and present them with a new American flag to replace the worn one that flew in front of their center.



In May, I was glad to see such a great turnout at my Free Shredding and E-Waste Recycling event. Many area residents turned out to safely and securely dispose of unwanted personal documents and old electronic equipment. This is a great way to help prevent becoming the victim of opportunistic identity thieves, and I plan to hold similar events in the near future.





STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**MIKE DRISCOLL**  
 173RD LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT  
 P.O. Box 202173  
 Harrisburg, PA 17120-2173

**INSIDE:**

- Heating aid program now open
- Is Pa. holding unclaimed property for you?
- Important information about the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program

lpo.jc.0216

## Two District Offices to better serve the 173<sup>rd</sup> District

In September, I was proud to open my second constituent service office, which is located at 7104 Torresdale Avenue. I opened the second office to ensure that everyone in the 173<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District has easy access to the services my office can provide.

To celebrate the grand opening of the office, I invited constituents to attend an event to tour the facility and meet my staff. A good time seemed to be had by all who attended, and my staff was even able to assist a few attendees with their questions about state services.

If you are in need of assistance with any city, state or federal program or service, I encourage you to contact or stop by one of my district offices, which are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. My Torresdale Avenue office can be contacted at (215) 333-9760. My other constituent service office, which is located at 3294 Red Lion Road, can be reached at (215) 281-3414.



## PennDOT program can provide help in emergencies

Please be aware of a program offered by PennDOT that helps people immediately after a traffic accident when they may not be able to communicate their needs to police and first responders.

It's called the Yellow Dot Program. It gets your emergency contact and medical information promptly into the hands of emergency personnel at the scene of a crash.

Under the Yellow Dot Program, you fill out a form with your emergency contact information, medical history and medical contact information and put this information, along with a photo of yourself, in your vehicle's glove compartment. A yellow dot sticker goes on your back window. This sticker will alert first responders to check your glove compartment for your information in an emergency.

You can contact my office for more information or to obtain Yellow Dot materials. You can also find information by visiting [www.YellowDot.pa.gov](http://www.YellowDot.pa.gov).

## My office can help you with:

- Car registrations, special tags, titles and license applications
- Information on financial assistance for higher education
- Unemployment compensation problems
- Attorney General consumer complaint forms
- Concerns about state road conditions
- Matters concerning PennDOT
- Birth certificates or death records
- Disability plates and placards
- PACE prescription-drug cards for senior citizens
- Complaints about insurance companies
- Help in finding unclaimed property through the state Treasurer's Office
- Assistance in completing the Property Tax/Rent Rebate application

*Any problem with state government!*