



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
Daniel McNeill
 133RD LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



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Battling opioid and heroin addiction in our community

The fight against opioid and heroin addiction continues to be a top priority in our state legislature. We have seen too many of our children, family members, neighbors, friends and coworkers affected by this epidemic, with many paying the ultimate price with their lives. The recent rise in heroin use and abuse is directly related to opioids such as Oxycodone, and Percocet, which are being overprescribed by doctors to patients for pain management. Once their prescription ends many are turning to a cheaper and more readily available alternative: heroin.

Our state has taken several measures to address this crisis, including the organization of the PA-HOPE Caucus in the House of Representatives, and a standing order by our Secretary of Health for the public to be able to purchase Narcan, a medicine that can temporarily reverse an overdose and possibly prevent a death.

On August 2nd, I traveled to Pittsburgh to attend a public policy hearing as a member of the PA-HOPE Caucus on the addiction crisis, hearing

much of the same testimony about the problem that we have heard here in the Lehigh Valley.



My first town hall meeting at Whitehall H.S. in February

I have taken a stand against heroin and opioid addiction. On February 24th, I hosted a Town Hall Meeting at Whitehall High School to address the issue. Over 200 people attended to hear a panel of experts speak about this epidemic plaguing our community.



HOPE Caucus hearing in Pittsburgh on August 2

I have since hosted another Town Hall Meeting as well as roundtable discussions throughout the district. We have scheduled our next **Town Hall Meeting on Wednesday, September 14th at 7 p.m. at the Days Inn on Airport Road**, across from the Lehigh Valley International Airport.

Addiction is a disease, not a choice or a weakness, and without proper treatment, this disease can take a loved one away forever. If you have any questions at all, please call the Lehigh County Drug and Alcohol Program at (610) 782-3555.

Expanded wine sales, improved convenience coming to Pennsylvania

The governor recently signed a law that will make the sale of wine and liquor more convenient for Pennsylvania consumers.

The new law allows:

- Customers to purchase up to four bottles of wine at restaurants, grocery stores and hotels.
- Customers to buy wine from a licensed wine producer, such as a winery, over the Internet and have it shipped directly to their home.
- More State Stores to be open Sundays and holidays, and have longer hours.
- Wineries, distilleries and breweries to sell their products at farmer's markets.
- Beer, wine and liquor to be sold at casinos 24 hours a day.
- Some gas stations with restaurant licenses to sell beer to go.

The new law provides for safeguards in the sale of alcohol, including prohibiting powdered alcohol products from being sold or possessed within the commonwealth. All alcohol service employees are also required to complete Responsible Alcohol Management Training.

Many in our state legislature fought to privatize the sale of wine and liquor, but this law modernizes our antiquated system which produces important revenue for the state, while saving 4,000 jobs at State Stores and many more at small businesses.

Pennsylvanians should see wine in grocery stores, select restaurants and hotels by the end of the year.

McNeill donates money to local schools for drug education

To help educate our children on the dangers of drug abuse and addiction, I donated the proceeds from my St. Patrick's Day event to pay for drug education programs in our schools. The four school districts in my legislative district: Whitehall/Coplay, Salisbury, Catasauqua, and Bethlehem, each received \$500 to help pay for drug education programs.



Bethlehem SD

Catasauqua SD



Salisbury SD

Whitehall/Coplay SD

Medical marijuana now legal in Pa.



Pennsylvania recently became the 24th state to legalize marijuana for medical purposes.

The bill will allow doctors to utilize medical marijuana to help ease the pain of patients in cases where it has been proven effective in other states, especially with children who suffer from seizures.

The measure, Senate Bill 3, was signed into law by the governor in April, and it took effect in May.

Once the regulations are in place, doctors will be able to prescribe certain forms of cannabis to people who meet the proper requirements and suffer from one of the approved medical conditions. Under the new law, medical marijuana cannot be smoked, but can be prescribed in pill, oil, topical or liquid form.

Statistics show that states that have legalized medical marijuana have shown a decrease of nearly 25 percent in annual prescription drug overdose deaths. The statistics also show that there have been zero overdose deaths from medical marijuana use.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health is developing the regulations and infrastructure for the program, a process the governor said could take approximately 18-24 months.



I was proud to honor Sister Bonita Smith upon her retirement as Principal of St. Elizabeth Regional School in Fullerton after 18 years.

Apply now to receive your Property Tax/Rent Rebate

The deadline to file a 2015 Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program application is Dec. 31st, and my office is here to help you file for free!

The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians 65 and older, widows and widowers 50 and older, and people with disabilities 18 and older. The maximum standard rebate is \$650, but supplemental rebates can boost rebates up to \$975.

To find out if you qualify, or if you need assistance filling out your application, please visit my district office in Whitehall.



We had a great turnout at my Senior Fair at the Westgate Mall in April. I am looking forward to making next year's event even bigger and better.

Working to expand seniors' prescription coverage

In June, I voted for legislation that would expand prescription drug coverage to over 32,000 older Pennsylvanians by increasing income eligibility guidelines for the PACENET program.

By updating the income limits, we can help thousands of senior citizens maintain their quality of life with affordable prescription drugs.

House Bill 2069 would increase the annual maximum income limits in the PACENET program to \$31,000 for a single person and to \$41,000 for a married couple. Current limits are \$23,500 for an individual and \$31,500 for a married couple.

The PACE and PACENET programs offer lower-cost prescription medications to qualified residents 65 or older, thanks to roughly \$200 million a year in funding from the Pennsylvania Lottery.

The bill is before the state Senate for consideration.

Collecting school supplies



Again this year we will be collecting school supplies for those students in need in our district. Please drop off your donation at my district office in Whitehall. Thank you for your generosity.

Pa. ABLE savings program will help families with disabilities

Under a new law known as the ABLE Act, which stands for Achieving a Better Life Experience, families can ensure that relatives with a disability are taken care of by permitting them to have a savings account without jeopardizing eligibility for important programs.

The new law allows the savings accounts to be used for a wide range of disability-related expenses including health care, housing and transportation. Hopefully, the ABLE Act will foster independence, community-based support and employment opportunities for people with disabilities, while at the same time easing the financial and mental burden on those family members who care for them.

Benefits of the ABLE program include:

- Save up to \$14,000 per year;
- Tax-free growth;
- Ability to use the account to pay for a wide range of disability-related expenses;
- Federal and state income tax-free withdrawals when used for qualified disability expenses; and
- Exemption from Pennsylvania inheritance tax.

One of the most vital aspects of the ABLE program is that savings are excluded from eligibility determinations for many government-related benefits. This means Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medical Assistance and other disability and health benefits cannot be taken away because of ABLE savings.

For more information, please visit www.PA529.com/ ABLE or contact my office. The goal is to have the ABLE Program running by the end of 2016.



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INSIDE:

- **Fighting the heroin epidemic**
- **More convenient wine and liquor sales**
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MY OFFICE CAN HELP YOU WITH:

- Car registrations, special tags, handicap placards, titles and driver's license applications
 - Information on financial assistance for higher education
 - Assistance in obtaining and completing state forms of all kinds
 - Voter registration and absentee ballot applications
 - Unemployment compensation, disability and workers' compensation
 - Birth and death certificates
 - Issues with the Department of Human Services (food stamps, medical and income assistance)
 - Pennsylvania income tax questions or problems
 - Requests for literature of all kinds – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information
 - Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding accomplishments and family milestones
 - Inquiries about utilities and the Public Utility Commission
 - Issues with insurance companies
 - Renewal of state-issued licenses or certifications
 - Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program problems or questions
 - Questions about the state lottery
 - PACE prescription-drug cards for senior citizens
 - Consumer complaints
 - Liquor Control Board concerns or questions
 - Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups
 - Information about federal, state and local government agencies
- Any state-government related matter!**

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IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS FOR YOUR REFERENCE

Lehigh County Government Center.....	610-782-3000	Lehigh County Veterans Affairs Office.....	610-782-3295
Northampton County Government Center.....	610-559-3000	Northampton County Department of Veterans Affairs.....	610-559-3199
PA Department of Revenue (Bethlehem Office).....	610-861-2000	CareerLink.....	610-437-5627
Internal Revenue Service (Bethlehem Office).....	610-865-8208	American Red Cross.....	610-865-4400
AARP – Allentown.....	610-434-2701	Social Security office (Allentown).....	1-877-405-6746
Crime Victims Council of Lehigh Valley.....	610-437-6611	Social Security office (Bethlehem).....	1-866-783-7458
Turning Point Lehigh Valley Helpline.....	610-437-3369	LIHEAP (Lehigh County).....	610-821-6509
CACLV – Community Action Committee Lehigh Valley.....	610-691-5620	LIHEAP (Northampton County).....	610-250-1700
Lehigh County Department of Aging.....	610-782-3034	U.S. Rep. Charles Dent.....	610-770-3490
Northampton County Department of Aging.....	610-559-3245	State Sen. Lisa Boscola.....	610-868-8667
		State Sen. Patrick Browne.....	610-821-8468