



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Scott Conklin

WINTER 2020
WWW.PAHOUSE.COM/CONKLIN



77TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

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Ensuring Your Voice is Heard

As we enter into what promises to be a very busy election year, I have good news to share regarding voting access and more options for voters.

Among the changes included in Act 77 of 2019, Pennsylvanians who choose to vote by mail can now do so without needing an excuse. In addition, voters can request and submit their mail-in and absentee ballot up to 50 days before the election, which is the longest vote-by-mail period in the country. Voters can now also request to receive applications for mail-in or absentee ballots for all primary, general and special elections in a given year.

Beginning with the primary election in April, voters can submit their mail-in absentee ballots until 8 p.m. on Election Day. Additionally, the deadline to register to vote has been extended to 15 days before an election. Previously, it was 30 days before an election.

Looking ahead, I will be urging my colleagues to consider H.B. 821, which would allow independent, unaffiliated voters to

Modernizing the vote for 2020

Effective for the April 2020 Primary Election
More info | www.votepa.com | Register online

More ways to vote

- No-excuse mail-in voting**
New option to vote by mail Without providing an excuse
- Permanent mail-in ballot list**
Receive applications for mail-in or absentee ballots for all elections

More accessible elections

- More time to register**
Deadline to register to vote is now 15 days before an election
- Extended voting period**
Request a mail-in or absentee ballot up to 50 days before an election
- Extended deadline**
Submit mail-in or absentee ballot by 8 p.m. on Election Day



vote in primary elections.

Voting is a constitutional right, and independent voters should not be shut out of the process solely because they are not a member of one of the two largest parties in Pennsylvania. If elections are going to be truly free, it is vital that our independent voters have the opportunity to fully participate in these elections.

Leveling the Playing Field

Early last year, after receiving significant feedback and concerns from several school districts statewide that the current high school sports playoff system is unfair, I introduced legislation that would establish separate playoffs for both public and private schools.



I believe the current system's rules under the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association gives an unfair advantage to private and parochial schools, because they

are not confined by geographic boundaries that public schools are mandated to follow. In addition, unlike public schools, private schools can field more athletes of superior size, strength and speed, creating an unfair advantage and unsafe environment.

My goal – and hope – is to level the playing field by requiring the PIAA to establish separate playoffs. This would make high school team sports both safe and fun again for all students involved.

Currently, my bill is under consideration in the House Education Committee and I am hopeful it will reach the House chamber in the very near future.

Fighting Against Harassment and Discrimination in the Workplace

Throughout my legislative career, I have worked diligently to ensure all Pennsylvanians are treated fairly and with respect. To that end, I have supported several measures to address workplace harassment and discrimination.

Many victims of sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace don't report these incidents, due to threats of retaliation, or they may fear they won't be believed. No one should be subject to such actions while trying to do their job, and those who commit such acts should be held accountable and a thorough investigation should take place.

I have given my support to H.B. 1619, which would expand the duties of the state Ethics Commission to include the investigation of sexual harassment claims against officials and public employees at all levels of government.

Among additional measures included in this effort that I support is H.B. 1040, which would amend the state's Human Relations Act to require employers to conduct annual interactive discrimination and harassment training for all

employees, interns and volunteers. This bill would also mandate additional training for supervisors and managers in the prevention of discrimination, harassment and retaliation. In addition, I am in support of H.B. 1025, which would require that all employees have the same workplace protections against harassment and discrimination, regardless of the size of the employer or the type of work performed. Both bills are currently under consideration in the House Labor and Industry Committee.

In June, I voted in favor of H.B. 849, which would ban the requirement of nondisclosure agreements related to sexual harassment as a condition of getting a job.

Bottom line, I believe all Pennsylvanians should be free from any and all forms of harassment and discrimination at the workplace. Those serving in positions of power and authority are not immune, and those who are victims must have the assurance that their complaints will be taken seriously and if found guilty, their perpetrator will be punished appropriately. I will continue to fight for the rights of workers on this issue.

Since July, our communities have received nearly \$29 million in state and federal funds to support job creation, protect our environment, help victims of crime, and keep our schools safe.

\$25 million for new State College water treatment plant

\$1.37 million to expand affordable housing options in Centre County

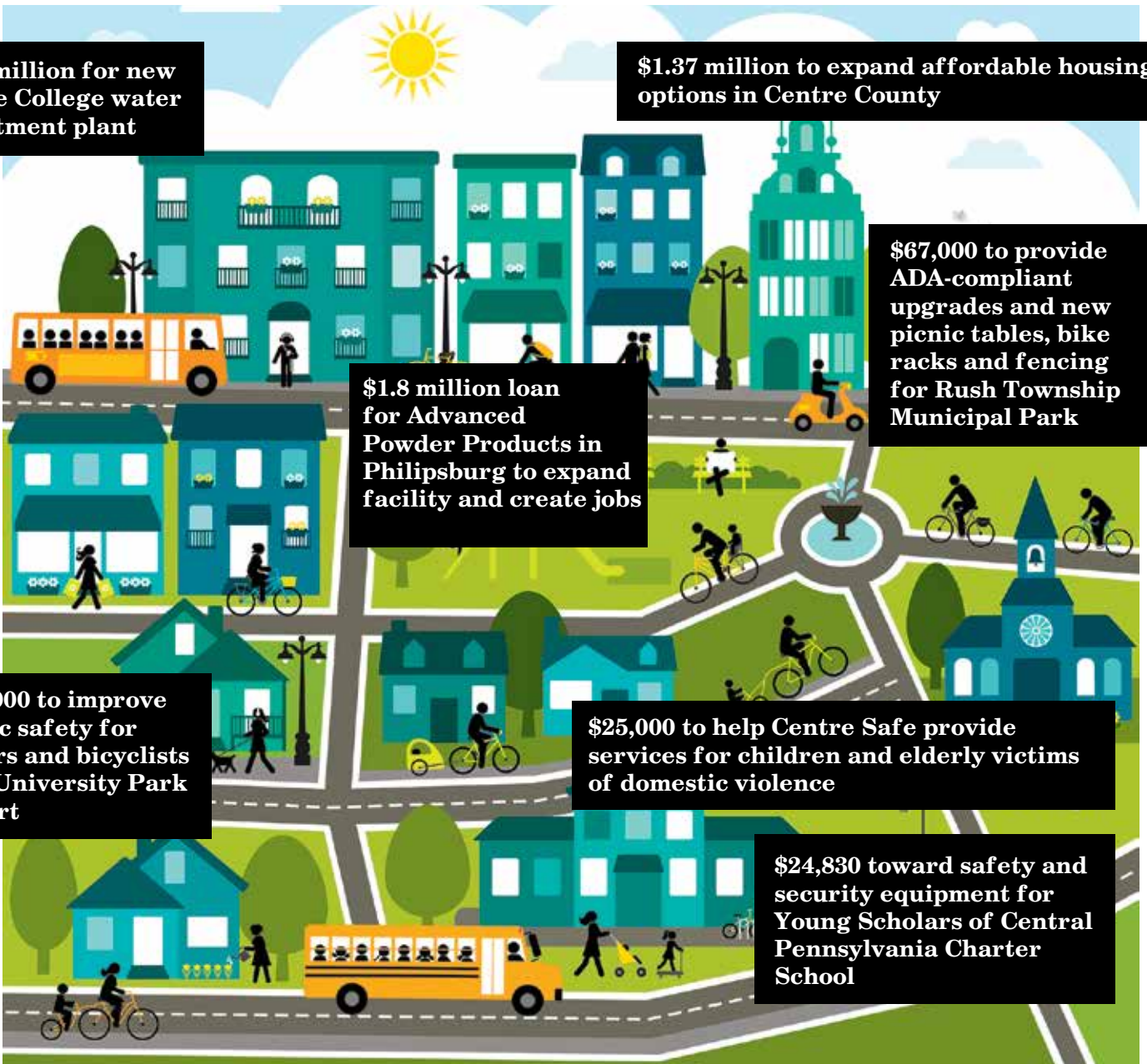
\$67,000 to provide ADA-compliant upgrades and new picnic tables, bike racks and fencing for Rush Township Municipal Park

\$1.8 million loan for Advanced Powder Products in Philipsburg to expand facility and create jobs

\$700,000 to improve traffic safety for drivers and bicyclists near University Park Airport

\$25,000 to help Centre Safe provide services for children and elderly victims of domestic violence

\$24,830 toward safety and security equipment for Young Scholars of Central Pennsylvania Charter School



Michael Shimmel did a great job for us as our summer intern in our Philipsburg office!



Always a fun time at the Grange Fair!



Honored to meet with members of the Moms Demand Action organization!



Great to have state Attorney General Josh Shapiro at the Constitution Day celebration at Tussey Mountain in Boalsburg!

I'm always proud to attend the annual Penn State Ag Progress Days, the state's largest outdoor agricultural exhibition, which showcases the latest technology, research exhibits and educational programs in our state's agriculture industry.



How to Obtain Open Records

The Pennsylvania Office of Open Records was created in 2008 to enforce the state's Right-to-Know Law and serves as an important resource for all Pennsylvanians in obtaining public records of state and local governments.

Before you can file a Right To Know (RTK) request, you must first determine which state or local agency is most likely to have the record or records you wish to obtain. The next step is determining who the Open Records Officer is at the agency (by law, each agency is required to have one).

Next, prepare and submit a request using an RTK request form, available at the agency or through the state Office of Open Records. The form can be filed either by email, fax, U.S. mail or in person.

You can contact the Office of Open Records by calling 717-346-9903 or by email at openrecords@pa.gov. You can find out more information by visiting its website at www.openrecords.pa.gov.

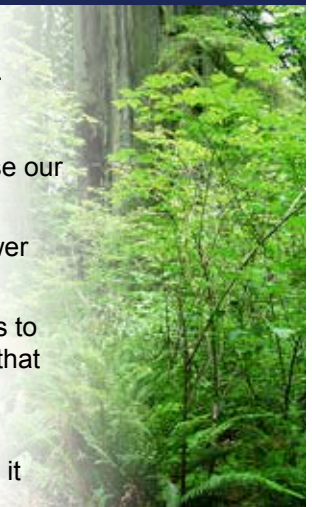
Protecting Our Environment and Quality of Life

It's something we all need to live – clean air to breathe and clean water to drink. Our state constitution guarantees the protection of our public natural resources for our children and for generations to come.

That promise comes with some significant – but vital – responsibilities, including:

- Protecting our public lands and resources (water, land, air) from special interests that seek to abuse our resources.
- Promoting investments in clean energy production and infrastructure, including wind and solar power that will benefit our entire state and create good, family-sustaining jobs.
- Ensuring the state Department of Environmental Protection has the support and resources it needs to create and promote partnerships with clean industries, while also holding companies accountable that violate our laws and pollute our natural resources.

I am in support of a safe and healthy environment for our great commonwealth, as part of the House Democrats' Plan For PA. When we make smart investments to protect our valuable natural resources, it benefits everyone and makes our state a better place to live, work and play.





State Representative

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Home Heating Assistance



If you – or someone you know – is having a tough time paying home heating bills, the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, or LIHEAP, is available to help.

This program offers cash grants to help with home heating bills and crisis grants to help those in need with emergency situations, such as a broken furnace or an unexpected fuel shortage.

Renters and homeowners who qualify can have a cash grant – which does not need to be repaid – sent directly to their utility company or fuel provider. Grants range from \$200 to \$1,000, based on household size, income and fuel type.

My office can help you file a LIHEAP application. LIHEAP information is also available by calling the LIHEAP Client Helpline at 1-866-857-7095 or by applying online at www.compass.state.pa.us.

LIHEAP applications will be accepted through April 10.

Pet safety reminder

Winter is a good time to make sure we're taking care of the furry members of our families.



Please follow these tips to keep them healthy (and warm) this winter:

- **Keep your pets indoors as much as possible.** Many pets can be safe in outside temperatures with proper shelter for a short period of time, but if it's below 32 degrees, under state law, pets cannot be tethered outside for more than 30 minutes.
- **Protect their paws.** Use booties or pet-safe protectants to ensure your pet's paws are not susceptible to frostbite. Always wipe your dog's feet after a walk in the snow to remove ice balls and salt deposits from the road. Salt irritates a dog's paws and can be toxic if ingested.
- **Keep older, arthritic pets inside.** These animals should not be left outside under any circumstances. Escort the older dog outside to relieve itself and use a leash if the yard has ice or snow. Older dogs can easily fall and seriously injure themselves.
- **If you're a dog owner, keep your dog on a leash.** Dogs rely heavily on a strong sense of smell to figure out where they are and can easily get lost during winter storms. Snow covering the ground will make their surroundings less familiar. Keeping your dog on a leash at all times – especially during winter storms – can help stop your dog from getting lost.
- **Never leave your pet inside of a parked car.** While most people know this rule for the summer, a parked vehicle can quickly amplify the effects of extreme weather. During the winter, it can act as an icebox and trap cold air inside.

MY OFFICE CAN HELP YOU WITH:

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

Any state government-related matter!