



**CAPITOL UPDATE**

# STATE REPRESENTATIVE MAUREEN E. MADDEN

Representing the 115th Legislative District

Summer 2024

## Preserving the Poconos



**For our seniors...**



**...for our students...**



**...and for our environment.**

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Aging & Older Adult Services Committee • Securing Funds For Community Projects  
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# Madden Chairs Aging & Older Adult Services Committee



During session this past March, I was invited to chair the House Aging & Older Adult Services Committee. Speaker Joanna McClinton personally asked me to serve, and I was honored to accept.

Pennsylvania is home to one of the largest older populations in the country, and we have a variety of successful programs to assist those residents. Being chair of the House Aging & Older Adult Services Committee puts me at the forefront of any discussions that involve maintaining and improving those state services.

I recently chaired my first informational hearing with the committee. The hearing centered on the somewhat lesser-known AAA. AAA evokes a certain energy, related to batteries or the motorist assistance club. However, the AAA we discussed is actually the Area Agency on Aging.

AAAs exist in 52 counties and in some cases, are shared between them so all 67 counties are covered. The 115th District is served by the excellent Monroe County Area Agency on Aging. Monroe County

AAA provides a variety of services that are extremely worthwhile to consider, including PA MEDI (Medicare Education & Decision Insight), social events, and even mobility classes.

I have had several productive discussions with the administration, including Secretary of Aging Jason Kavulich, on a variety of upcoming initiatives. I look forward to working with my colleagues in the legislature as well as the administration on older adult issues moving forward.





## Ensuring School Board Members Have Tools They Need

I am honored to serve as the prime sponsor of H.B. 1743, which would amend the state's Public School Code of 1949. The legislation would mandate that the required courses taken by elected public school board members be instructed by high-quality professionals.

As of right now, the Department of Education is solely responsible for carrying out all necessary training for school board members. Should H.B. 1743 pass the Senate, the Pennsylvania Department of Education would begin to work in conjunction with statewide organizations that represent school board directors, as well as school business officials. This would ensure that the training our elected public school board members receive meets the standards needed to carry out their duties to the absolute best of their abilities.



This new and improved training would require a minimum of five hours of instruction in the following areas: instruction and academic programs, best practices related to

trauma-informed approaches, personnel, fiscal management, operations, governance, and ethics and open meetings. Thorough training in these areas ensures that regardless of their

previous backgrounds or areas of expertise, all school board members would start their terms with the same baseline level of knowledge.

Getting this bill through the Senate is crucial toward the advancement of our public education system here in the commonwealth. I urge you to contact your state senator and tell them that you support the passage of H.B. 1743! Find your senator at [www.legis.state.pa.us](http://www.legis.state.pa.us).

# Securing Funds for Community Projects



I am pleased that the Pennsylvania Commonwealth Financing Authority recently awarded \$1.54 million in Local Share Account grants for a variety of projects in the 115th District.

Emergency services are the lifeblood of our communities. Some of the funding provided will help first responders with new opportunities to serve the public and stay safe doing it.

I am pleased to have worked with colleagues to acquire a \$248,437 grant for Smithfield Township, on behalf of the Marshalls Creek Fire Co., for safety improvements to two fire stations located in Smithfield and Price townships. This project will install exhaust systems in both fire company garages, upgrade gear cleaning equipment, and upgrade fire detection and security equipment.

According to Township Manager Julia Heilakka, "This award for the full project is a game-changer for Marshalls Creek Fire Co. Smithfield Township is honored to have worked with them to secure this funding, keeping our first responders safe and in good health."

I am beyond excited for the Pocono Mountain Regional Medical Emergency Services new headquarters. The CFA awarded PMR EMS \$250,000 for this project. Their current space is inadequate to hold community events and classes such as CPR, First Aid, and Stop the Bleed.

Chief Operating Officer Austin Schrader said, "Without LSA, we wouldn't be in the position to serve the community with the quality care we currently do."

## Preparations are currently in place for a fall groundbreaking!

Additionally, Monroe County Industrial Development Authority was awarded \$250,000 on behalf of Monroe Career & Technical Institute for improvements to the existing building in Pocono Township. Improvements include a 15,000-square-foot addition, a new security entry point, and a conference room.

Of the project, MCTI Director Dennis Virga said: "MCTI's enrollment is the highest it has ever been. Though this is wonderful, we are at capacity and need to grow to continue to provide the best career and technical education possible. This addition will enhance security, provide a venue for student and community events, and provide space for additional programs."



The Monroe County Industrial Development Authority was awarded a total of \$663,676 including the previous projects and the following:

- \$100,000, on behalf of the Paradise Falls Lutheran Association, for phase two of a stream restoration and fish habitat improvement project located in Paradise Township.
- \$63,676, on behalf of Pocono Pride Softball, for improvements to the Field of Dreams Athletic Park in Mount Pocono.

Other awards include:

- Barrett Township, \$331,838 to pave the parking lots and entrance roads surrounding the Barrett Township Administrative and Recreation Complex.
- Pocono Mountains Industrial Park Authority, \$100,000 for the PMCC Sewer Line Connection project located in Coolbaugh Township to connect the Pocono Mountains Corporate Center East business/industrial park to the spray irrigation sewage treatment facility.
- Pocono Township, \$200,000 to replace a pedestrian bridge in TLC Park.

# Another Women's Expo in the Books

This year's Women's Expo marked a significant milestone as the seventh overall and the second co-hosted with Rep. Tarah Probst. The synergy between our offices created a seamless and enjoyable experience for all attendees. Despite the sweltering heat, part of the longest heat wave the region has faced in over a decade, the event saw a tremendous turnout. Hundreds of community members flocked to the expo, seeking relief from the heat and engaging with a record number of vendors.

Meeting so many people and connecting them with essential services was incredibly rewarding. We were thrilled to have RSVP of Monroe County, Pocono Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, PHEAA, Safe Monroe, and many other esteemed organizations join us. Their presence underscores the expo's role as a hub for vital resources and community support.

The expo serves as a powerful reminder of the resilience and unity within our Monroe County community. I am already looking forward to next year's event, where I anticipate even greater enthusiasm and participation!



# Around the District & Harrisburg








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*State Representative Maureen Madden*







***I'm here to help!***

*My team and I can help with:*

- Property Tax/Rent Rebate
- Information about jobs, housing relief and utility assistance
- Prescription assistance for seniors
- Driver's License & Vehicle Registration



I'm ready to make state government work harder for you!

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**Property Tax / Rent Rebate  
2024 Program Expansion**

**MORE** people eligible, **MORE** money back!

Homeowner Income	Rebate	Renter Income	Rebate
Up to \$8K	<b>\$1,000</b>	Up to \$8K	<b>\$1,000</b>
Up to \$15K	<b>\$770</b>	Up to \$15K	<b>\$770</b>
Up to \$18K	<b>\$460</b>	Up to \$18K	<b>\$460</b>
Up to \$35K	<b>\$380</b>	Up to \$45K	<b>\$380</b>
Up to \$45K	<b>\$380</b>		



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