

LA'TASHA D. MAYES



Dear Neighbor,

I'm writing to update you on ways I'm working for you in Harrisburg and here in the district to improve the quality of life in our community as we chart our destiny together. I am so proud to represent you and the 61,400 residents who call the East End of Pittsburgh home.

In January, I was sworn into office as a first-year member of the House of Representatives. As the first woman to represent the 24th Legislative District, resident for over two decades, and community organizer and leader in the reproductive justice movement, I put community at the center of everything I do. I am committed to serving every neighborhood in our district to improve our collective quality of life, create social and economic opportunities and make our communities safe and healthy.

Since taking office in January, I've worked to protect reproductive health, rights, and justice; increase funding for the Pittsburgh School District; take on the Black maternal health crisis in Pennsylvania; address gun violence with commonsense gun laws; provide survivors of childhood sexual abuse a window for justice; prohibit discrimination based on hairstyle, hair texture or hair type through the CROWN Act; end funding for deceptive crisis pregnancy centers; expand civil protections for LGBTQ+ Pennsylvanians; and more.

If you have state-related concerns or require help with any state services, please contact my office, and my staff will assist you.



PASSING THE CROWN ACT

It's time to pass the CROWN Act to prohibit hair discrimination in Pennsylvania.

I sponsored the Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair Act – which would prohibit discrimination based on hair type, hair texture, or hair style – with Speaker of the House Joanna McCClinton. While the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission recently established regulations to prohibit such discrimination, it is time to codify these regulations into law in our Commonwealth and also work toward passing the federal CROWN Act.

On July 7th, the House of Representatives passed the CROWN Act by an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote of 182-21 – that's nearly 90% of members who supported the bill! Now, it is time for the Senate to act so that the CROWN Act can be signed into law by our governor.



(412) 663-5502

✉ RepMayes@PAHouse.net

Facebook, X, Instagram @RepMayes

🌐 www.RepLaTashaDMayes.com

📍 2015-2017 Centre Ave., Floor 1
Pittsburgh, PA 15219



URBAN AGRICULTURE

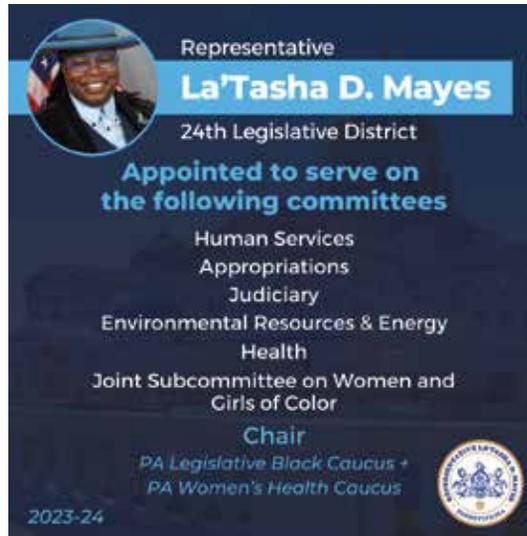
The agriculture industry invests in the economy, but also environmental justice. During Urban Agriculture Week, I toured Oasis Farm in Homewood with Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding. Investing in urban agriculture is just the beginning of our work to advance environmental justice in Pennsylvania. As part of the state's budget, we allocated \$2 million for the Fresh Food Financing Initiative, which addresses food deserts, also known as "high priority food areas," especially in the urban centers such as Greater Pittsburgh.

WORKING FOR YOU IN HARRISBURG

In the House, I am a proud member of the Appropriations, Judiciary, Health, Human Services and Environmental Resources & Energy committees. I also serve as chair of the Joint Subcommittee on Women and Girls of Color for both the Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus and the Women's Health Caucus.

My committee work has allowed me to:

- offer input on budget line items connected to key issues, policies, and services that directly impact our district and all Pennsylvanians.
- advance commonsense gun laws and landmark bills like the Fairness Act, the Patient Safety Act, and related legislation to alleviate medical debt and end intrusive medical practices like pelvic exams performed while a patient is unconscious and unable to consent.
- participate in hearings on orphaned and abandoned fracking wells and advance legislation to bring environmental justice to burdened communities.



PROTECTING LGBTQ+ PENNSYLVANIANS



The U.S. Supreme Court continues to overturn progress we've made to establish and expand civil protections of LGBTQ+ Americans. For example, in *Elenis v. Creative 303*, the High Court ruled that a website designer could refuse to create wedding websites for LGBTQ+ couples, even though the relevant Colorado state law specifically protects against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

The Court considered hypothetical facts – the business owner did not even have an actual LGBTQ+ client seeking services at the time – to deliver a decision that can do very real damage. The ruling erodes the progress we have made since the Stonewall Riots of 1969 – an inflection point in our nation in which patrons of a New York City gay bar fought back against a police raid, which was a moment that would pave the way for the modern-day LGBTQ+ movement.

These attacks on LGBTQ+ rights are why I introduced the Fairness Act together with Reps. Malcolm Kenyatta, Jessica Benham, Dan Frankel, Ismail Smith-Wade-El, and Greg Scott. The act – which passed the House and is now in the state Senate – would prohibit discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression. By enshrining such protections into law, we can ensure Pennsylvania welcomes ALL people.

As your state representative, the first out lesbian to serve in the Pennsylvania General Assembly, and the Pittsburgh Pride March and Parade's 2023 Grand Marshall, I will work tirelessly to pass the Fairness Act and end the legislative and cultural attacks on nearly a half-million LGBTQ+ Pennsylvanians.

With more than 400 anti-LGBTQ+ bills in the country, we must continue the legacy of the Stonewall riots and support the efforts of the Black and Brown trans women who led and continue to lead this fight.

GOV. JOSH SHAPIRO ENDS FUNDING FOR CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTERS

You may ask yourself, Why are crisis pregnancy centers bad? These organizations operate under the guise of providing health care to pregnant women and birthing individuals, when in fact they are often sources of disinformation that delay access to reproductive health care. More so, CPCs often target marginalized communities and, specifically, Black women.

With *Roe v. Wade* overturned and reproductive health, rights, and justice under attack, it is time that we take a proactive approach so that pregnant people can make the health care decisions that are right for them and their families. Our Commonwealth should never fund such organizations with taxpayer dollars.

After many years of organizing for reproductive justice in Pennsylvania, I was pleased to hear Gov. Josh Shapiro announce that the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services contract with Real Alternatives will expire on December 31st, 2023. Now, DHS will seek bids from medical providers to receive state funding to address reproductive health in Pennsylvania. For more information, visit the Department of Human Services website at <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/> or call my office at (412) 665-5502 for more information.

THE FACTS ABOUT CPCs IN PENNSYLVANIA



PENNSYLVANIA FUNDS CRISIS PREGNANCY CENTERS



ABORTION REMAINS SAFE, LEGAL, AND ACCESSIBLE IN PENNSYLVANIA.

Representative La'Tasha D. Mayes



BRINGING YOUR TAX DOLLARS BACK HOME

I'm proud to have helped secure more than \$75.5 million to support projects in the City of Pittsburgh and more than \$5.9 million for projects in the 24th Legislative District to enhance student resources, address addiction, support our veterans, improve transportation safety, and more. Some of the funding includes:

- \$1.8 million for the Bloomfield Bridge to address safety concerns, mobility access and road conditions.
- \$1.3 million for the City of Pittsburgh for new signal controllers and updates to signal equipment.
- \$1.1 million for the Larimer-Homewood Multimodal Greenway Extension for pedestrian and streetscape improvements in Larimer.
- \$500,000 to redevelop the public space at the corner of Broad Street and Highland Avenue in East Liberty.
- \$398,000 for Three Rivers Youth in East Liberty and \$276,000 for Macedonia F.A.C.E. in the Hill District to expand substance use disorder services.
- \$258,000 in infrastructure support for the Latin American Cultural Union in Oakland.
- \$231,000 to construct green stormwater infrastructure on two vacant lots in East Hills.
- \$100,000 to Vintage Center for Active Adults and \$84,000 to Macedonia F.A.C.E. to support their senior centers.
- \$75,000 to the Pittsburgh School District to expand dual credit enrollment for high school students.
- \$50,000 to Grow Pittsburgh in East Liberty to educate the community about urban agriculture and food policy.
- \$45,000 for the Neighborhood Academy in Garfield to improve digital literacy and career readiness for high school students.
- \$40,000 for the Veterans Place of Washington Boulevard in Larimer to support services to homeless veterans.
- \$20,000 to No Hero Left Behind to provide support services to veterans based in the Hill District.
- \$20,000 to Pittsburghers for Public Transit based in Garfield for educating low-income residents about the Pittsburgh Regional Transit Discount Bus Fare program.
- \$20,000 to YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh to expand access to Pre-K Counts early childhood education in Homewood.

In the months ahead, I'll continue working to ensure additional dollars come back to our district, where they can improve services for residents.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS IN PENNSYLVANIA

It's time to save our schools by fairly funding them, which is why leadership in the House Democratic Caucus and the House Democratic Policy Committee traveled throughout Pennsylvania on the "Save Our Schools" tour. I attended the tour of Carrick and South Philadelphia high schools, where we discussed the importance of fairly funding public education and rallied with advocates. As the Commonwealth Court has ruled that Pennsylvania's current funding system for public schools is unconstitutional, we must boldly address access to equitable, quality public education.

Thanks to funding from the state's budget, we'll ensure that 146,649 students in Allegheny County – including 20,039 in Pittsburgh – will qualify for universal free breakfast at school. Through this funding, we will ensure students start the day ready to learn and give them more opportunities to succeed. My mother was a food service worker for 23 years, and she worried about her kids having enough to eat to start their day, when they returned home at night, and on the weekends, so this funding is extra special to me and the young learners of the 24th Legislative District.



PREVENTING VIOLENCE

A graphic with a dark background. At the top left is the PA House Democrats logo. The main title is "Building Safer Communities by Preventing Gun Violence" in orange and white. Below the title is the text "Passed the House with bipartisan support" in white. There are two sections: the first is "HB 714" in an orange box, followed by "Expanded background checks help keep guns away from people who should not have access." with an icon of a laptop and a magnifying glass; the second is "HB 1018" in an orange box, followed by "Extreme Risk Protection Orders (Red Flag Laws) to empower loved ones and law enforcement to temporarily take away gun access from people in crisis—upon approval from a judge." with an icon of a red flag.

In June, I supported legislation to prevent gun violence in Pennsylvania, putting my CeaseFire score at 100. These two bills – which passed the House with bipartisan support – would expand background checks and establish Extreme Risk Protection Orders, which would help decrease the number of gun deaths connected to domestic violence, intimate partner violence, and gender-based violence. Prompt action is critical, and I am urging the Senate to act quickly to pass both bills.

BLACK WOMEN'S HEALTH AND BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH IN PENNSYLVANIA

In February, I hosted my very first event – the Black Women's Health Roundtable – as chair of the Joint Subcommittee on Women and Girls of Color. Together with members of the Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus and Pennsylvania Women's Health Caucus, we discussed policies and legislation to improve the health and well-being of Black women, girls, femmes and gender-expansive folx in the Greater Pittsburgh Region and Pennsylvania.

We welcomed groups including Black Women's Policy Roundtable, Healthy Start Pittsburgh, Planned Parenthood of Western Pennsylvania, Sisters Lifting as We Climb, The Heinz Endowments, The Pittsburgh Foundation, Za'kiyah House, and more. I would like to thank my colleagues who traveled across the state to participate, including Rep. Gina Curry of Delaware County, Rep. Ismail Smith-Wade-El of Lancaster County, and Reps. Roni Green, Tarik Khan, Ben Waxman of Philadelphia County, and Regina Young, of Philadelphia County and parts of Delaware County.

To continue addressing Black maternal mortality and morbidity, I joined with the Women's Health Caucus Co-Chair, Rep. Gina Curry, to organize the first Black Maternal Health Week and Day at the Capitol.

The April event included a press conference with Second Lady Blayre Holmes Davis, Dr. Ala Stanford, and other incredible Black maternal health leaders. We also held legislative meetings with House and Senate members, and a House Democratic Policy Committee Hearing on Black Maternal Health featuring Jada Shirriell, the CEO of Healthy Start Pittsburgh. Additionally, we hosted a productive stakeholder meeting with frontline Black maternal health organizations, Department of Health Secretary Debra Bogen, and Department of Human Services Secretary Val Arkoosh in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Women's Commission.

In a state where Black mothers and birthing individuals are two times more likely than their white counterparts to die from pregnancy-related complications before, during, and up to one year after childbirth, every action must be taken to end this public health crisis.

Severe maternal morbidity measures how often a serious medical condition like a hysterectomy, preeclampsia or kidney failure occurs during pregnancy-related hospitalizations. According to the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council's "Severe Maternal Morbidity in Pennsylvania" report published in August 2023, SMM is disproportionately impacting Black women, those living in ZIP codes with 25% or higher poverty rates, Medicaid patients, and rural women.

Thanks to Rep. Morgan Cephas of Philadelphia County, who has championed this work for years, and Sen. Judy Schwank of Berks County, Act No. 5 of 2023 – which requires the Pennsylvania Department of Health to add severe maternal morbidity to the list of reportable events – is now the law in Pennsylvania.

Governor Shapiro allocated \$2.3 million in the FY 2023-24 state budget to specifically address Black maternal health, with community-centered solutions as a core strategy. As we work in Harrisburg this fall, I will be leading the charge to advance, introduce and pass legislation on Black maternal health and engaging frontline Black pregnant women, mothers and birthing individuals, Black maternal health organizations, birth workers, medical providers, hospital systems and other stakeholders to take bold action on Black maternal health.



SUPREME COURT RULINGS ADD BARRIERS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

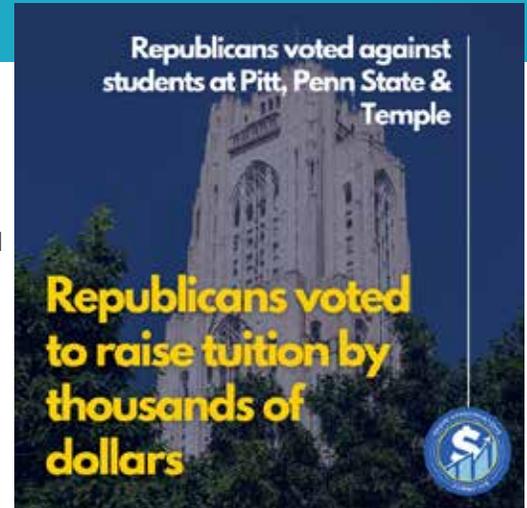
In June, the U.S. Supreme Court issued two decisions that affect students of color and those with student loan repayments.

In *Students for Fair Admissions v. University of North Carolina* and *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard College*, the Court overturned affirmative action in college admissions, reversing decades of progress by the civil rights movement. By allowing racial inequity to exist in higher education, the decision closes a critical window of opportunity for students who are of color and systemically excluded from higher education.

In this landscape, it is more important than ever that we support additional investments in K-12 education and higher education institutions' commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

In *Biden v. Nebraska*, the U.S. Supreme Court continued to perpetuate inequities in higher education by overturning the Biden-Harris administration's Student Loan Debt Relief Plan, creating greater structural economic barriers to higher education.

While the U.S. Supreme Court continues to advance the agenda of right-wing extremists and allows U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas to accept six-figure gifts, I will continuously advocate to make higher education accessible and affordable for all.



A BUDGET TO MOVE US FORWARD

The budget appropriates approximately \$45 billion for state programs and services without any increases in state taxes, making it a win for ALL Pennsylvanians.

In August, Gov. Josh Shapiro signed the budget, allowing millions of Pennsylvanians to receive financial relief. The budget includes more than \$177 million in Basic Education Funding, Level Up Supplements, and Special Education Funding for the Pittsburgh School District; \$50 million for the Whole-Home Repairs Program; \$20 million for the Historically Disadvantaged Business Assistance Program; \$2.3 million to specifically address the Black maternal health crisis; and \$2 million for the Fresh Food Financing Initiative.

With these investments, we can address:

- Fair funding for public schools.
- Sustainable home repairs, especially for our seniors.
- Lack of investments in minority, women, and veteran-owned businesses.
- Black maternal mortality and morbidity.
- Food deserts or high-priority food areas, and more.

Now, we will work to pass the Fiscal Code bills that guide the allocation of funding for new programs. We will also be working to ensure funding for our state-related universities, such as the University of Pittsburgh.

UNIONS IN PENNSYLVANIA

Unions make families, the labor movement, the economy, Pittsburgh, and Pennsylvania stronger. That's why I continue to stand with staff at the University of Pittsburgh, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Starbucks Workers United, the Writers' Guild of America, the Screen Actors Guild – America Federation of Television and Radio Artists, and others as they advocate for their right to unionize. I will continue to stand in solidarity with the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers as they fight for our educators, students and public schools; with Pennsylvania nurses for final passage of the Patient Safety Act; and with SEIU and the Teamsters to win and maintain fair labor contracts. Together, we are union strong.





State Representative
LA'TASHA D. MAYES
 111A East Wing
 P.O. Box 202024
 Harrisburg, PA 17120-2024

lpo.tb.1023

HELPING SENIORS

DEADLINE EXTENDED
DUE DECEMBER 31

PROPERTY TAX/RENT REBATE PROGRAM DEADLINE

<p>What you need to provide:</p> <p>EVERYONE All earned income tax forms (1099 SSI, W2s, etc.)</p> <p>HOMEOWNERS Copies of all paid tax bills</p> <p>RENTERS Signed form from the landlord</p>	<p>\$35,000 household income for homeowners</p> <p>&</p> <p>\$15,000 household income for renters</p> <p><small>For those on Social Security: half of SSI/SSD income is excluded for eligibility</small></p>
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State Representative La'Tasha D. Mayes's

District Office Services

My team and I can help you with:

- Property Tax/Rent Rebate
- Unemployment Compensation
- Disability Placards
- Prescription Assistance Program (PACENET)
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- PRT Senior ConnectCard Applications
- Registering on the Do Not Call List
- Unclaimed property through the Pennsylvania Treasury

2015-2017 Centre Avenue, Floor 1
 Pittsburgh, PA 15219

☎ (412) 665-5502

✉ RepMayes@PAHouse.net

🌐 RepLaTashaMayes.com

My staff and I are available to assist seniors in the 24th Legislative District. As a note, applications for the 2023 Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program will close Sunday, December 31st, 2023. In 2024, the program will expand, raising the income limit to \$45,000 for both homeowners and renters and increasing the maximum rebate \$650 to \$1,000. In Pennsylvania, more than 575,000 seniors will qualify, including 16,500 more seniors in Allegheny County!