

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
JOANNA E. McCLINTON

SERVING THE COMMUNITY

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The holidays are a great time to connect with family and reflect on all of the year's blessings. I was pleased that I was able to participate in several holiday events where local families received food for their holiday tables, including one in Darby, where I partnered with the Keith Dawson Foundation and Darby Borough and other local businesses and organizations to ensure families in our community had a nourishing holiday.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

Dear Neighbor,

Happy New Year! I hope the holiday season brought love, peace and renewal to you and your family. I was delighted to see so many neighbors throughout the season at turkey giveaways, my senior Health and Wellness Expo, and other events in our community.

I enjoy local events because they are great opportunities to connect and hear about the issues that are impacting you. Plus, I can share information from Harrisburg and about important state-related programs and resources. To make sure you know about upcoming events, sign up for my weekly email on my website at www.pahouse.com/McClinton, or follow me on social media @RepMcClinton.



Josanna E. McClinton

PROBATION REFORM AND CLEAN SLATE 3.0 ARE LAW!

Clean Slate 3.0

In my last newsletter, I provided an update about pieces of legislation moving through the state legislature, including Clean Slate 3.0. Now I'm happy to report that Clean Slate 3.0 is law!

Clean Slate 3.0 makes low-level, non-violent drug felonies eligible for automated sealing. This measure builds on two prior rounds of Clean Slate, which has already sealed 40 million cases, improving the lives of 1.2 million Pennsylvanians and their families. Visit the Philadelphia Defenders Association (phillydefenders.org) or Legal Aid of Southeastern PA (www.lasp.org) to see if you qualify.

Probation Reform

Pennsylvania is a place for second chances, but for too long our state's probation system was a revolving door of probation to prison that trapped many in a cycle of imprisonment – even for minor technical violations of probation.

Now, a newly signed law refocuses our probation system on helping Pennsylvanians avoid incarceration for minor technical violations, so they stay on the right path. The new law empowers judges to consider a person's individual challenges and needs when setting probation conditions as well as their ability to pay fines and restitution.

It also requires mandatory probation reviews sooner and incentivizes the opportunity for early termination for people who maintain employment or pursue education while on probation.



Recruiting New Police Officers

A shortage of police officers in Pennsylvania is driving new ideas about recruitment, because having enough officers is an important piece to our public safety puzzle, and getting the right person in uniform starts with recruiting.

A new law will expand the pool of eligible applicants who can protect our communities by updating antiquated standards used to assess candidates for the police academy. These outdated standards have made recruiting municipal police officers more difficult statewide.

These measures will make a difference in having enough law enforcement officers in our communities to reduce the burden on our current officers and help keep our communities safe.

Funding for Indigent Defense

As a former public defender, I know how important it is to have representation in the courtroom. In fact, the right to a defense, even if you can't afford an attorney, is so critical to our justice system that it is enshrined in our federal and state constitutions.

Navigating the justice system without an attorney is complicated, and ineffective counsel not only hurts the accused, but drains resources and burdens the legal system with delays. But making public defenders available can improve fairness and drive reform in the justice system.

Until now only two states - Pennsylvania and South Dakota - didn't provide funding to help offer defense to low-income people. However, this year's state budget directed \$7.5 million to fund indigent defense to ensure people have equal access to legal counsel.

Photos from Around the District

Senior Health & Wellness Expo

In early December, I was thrilled to host my annual Celebrate with Seniors Health and Wellness Expo at Motivation High School. I think everyone had a great time learning tips about healthy eating and keeping fit, and hearing about the state programs that can offer assistance in 2024.



Fall Festival

In October, Rep. Jordan Harris and I hosted our annual Southwest Fall Festival at the Common Place. This year, the Philadelphia Police Department's 12th District and Salt & Light Church co-sponsored the event, which had free food, games, bounce houses, face painting and other fun family activities. My staff was also able to help families with state government-related programs like the Children's Health Insurance Program.



Visit to Walnut Street Elementary in Darby

It was great to spend time with some of my youngest neighbors during a visit to Walnut Street Elementary in December. The sixth graders there asked me some hard-hitting questions and are really passionate about strengthening our community. It is a blessing to represent them, and I know our future is in good hands with them at the helm.



Salute to Veterans

I was proud to salute so many local veterans who attended an event that Rep. Regina Young and I hosted in November. Our veterans, no matter when they served, have sacrificed their own comfort to keep us safe.



Blanche A. Nixon Library Groundbreaking

The Blanche A. Nixon Library has been a Cobbs Creek fixture for nearly 100 years and it is getting a makeover! Using federal, state, and local funds, the library is undergoing major renovations to make it safer and more accessible to community members, so we can continue to gather, collaborate, and enjoy the space together.



Myers Rec Center Groundbreaking

Myers Rec has been serving southwest Philadelphia for generations. I was so proud to secure \$4.5 million in state funding to help transform this community treasure and celebrate its groundbreaking with so many neighbors.

PROGRAMS FOR WEST PHILLY AND DELCO FAMILIES AND SENIORS

Expanded Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit Triples for Working Families

There is good news for working families in the 2023/24 state budget – the Child and Dependent Care Enhancement Tax Credit has tripled! Beginning this year, when families file their 2023 state taxes, they will be eligible for this expanded tax credit to help offset the cost of childcare or dependent care.

The credit will now be equal to the federal tax credit amount that Pennsylvania taxpayers receive!

NEW IN 2024
CHILD & DEPENDENT CARE TAX CREDIT

	Income Under \$43,000		Earning Above \$43,000	
	Prior to Change	Expanded Tax Credit	Prior to Change	Expanded Tax Credit
Max Credit for One Eligible Dependent	\$315	\$1,050	\$180	\$600
Max Credit for Two+ Eligible Dependents	\$630	\$2,100	\$360	\$1,200

Prescription Coverage for Seniors

PACE and PACENET provide prescription drug coverage to seniors aged 65 or older and help hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvanians afford their medications every year.

Seniors qualify for the programs based on their income, and the state legislature recently updated the law so any Pennsylvanian who was enrolled in PACE and PACENET as of Dec. 31, 2022, is still eligible if they exceed the maximum income limits because of a Social Security cost-of-living adjustment.

PACE is available to single older Pennsylvanians earning \$14,500 or less, or married couples earning \$17,700 or less. PACENET is available for individuals earning between \$14,500 and \$33,500 or married couples earning between \$17,700 and \$41,500.

If you are not currently enrolled in PACE or PACENET, but think you may qualify, you can apply online or contact my office for help.

As the Temperature Drops, LIHEAP Season is Here

Winter weather is here. Shorter days and colder nights drive up costs to heat your home. If you are having problems paying your home heating bill this winter, LIHEAP - or the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program - may be able to help. It offers payment assistance, energy crisis assistance, weatherization and energy-related home repairs to qualifying households.

LIHEAP can help families by providing a cash grant that is paid directly to the utility company or fuel provider. If a household is in danger of being without heat it may also qualify for a one-time crisis grant, which ranges from \$500 to \$1,500 and is an additional benefit that may be used for issues like a broken furnace or lack of fuel, and does not need to be repaid.

Requirements to qualify vary by income and household size, for example a family of four can earn up to \$45,000. You don't need to be on public assistance or have an unpaid heating bill, and the program is open to homeowners and renters.

People can apply online (COMPASS) or contact my office for assistance.

Need Energy Assistance?
2023-2024 LIHEAP Applications are Now Open!

2023-2024 Income Guidelines	
Household Size	Maximum Annual Income
1	\$21,870
2	\$29,580
3	\$37,290
4	\$45,000
5	\$52,710
6	\$60,420
7	\$68,130
8	\$75,840
9	\$83,550
10	\$91,260

Each additional person \$7,710



State Representative • 191st Legislative District

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