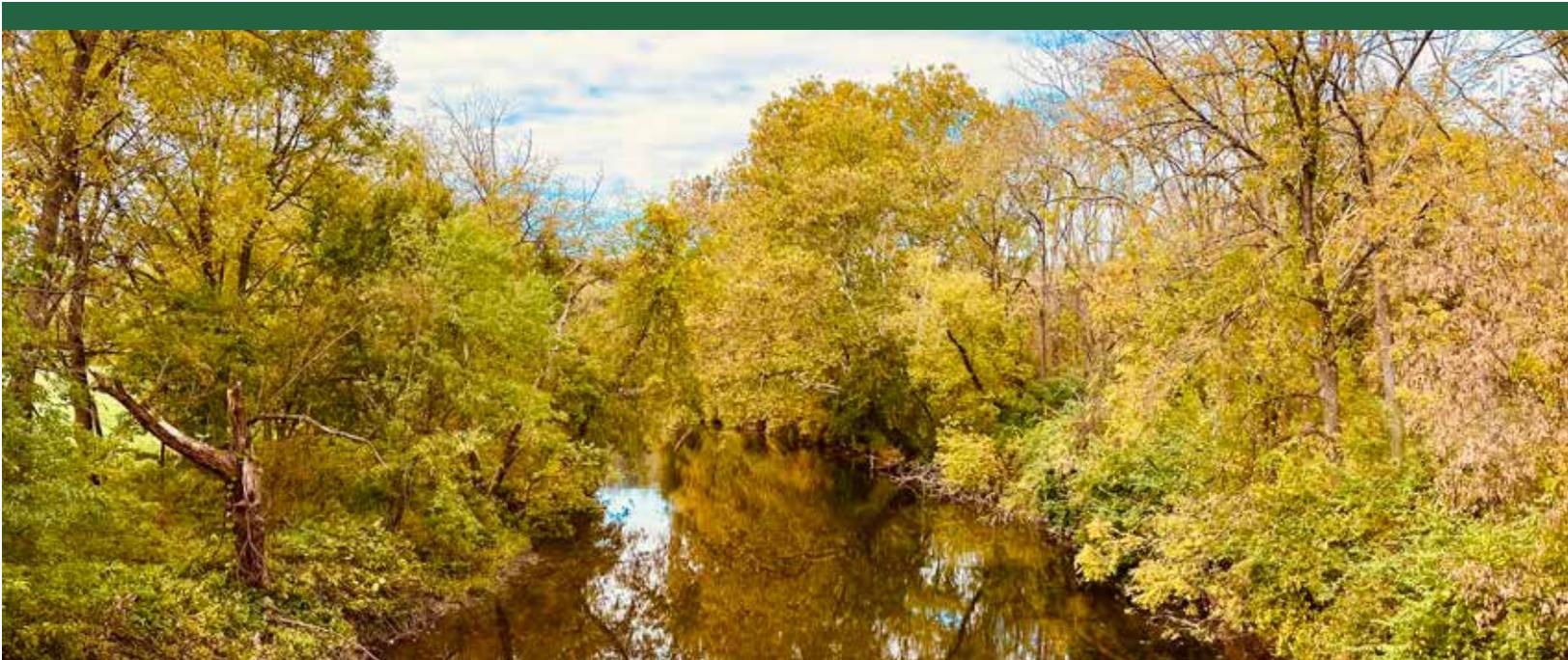


News From State Representative

# CHRISTINA SAPPEY

158th Legislative District | Chester County | Fall 2023



STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
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## DEAR NEIGHBOR,

The fall season in Chester County is unmatched in its beauty. The changing colors of the landscape paired with a plethora of local events and fall-themed activities make this area a top destination for tourism.

This season, I encourage you to visit nearby orchards, produce markets, wineries, breweries, restaurants, and annual events. Your presence supports our local economy and is a wonderful way to spend time with family and friends.

So, enjoy the nip in the morning air, the changing leaves and all that the 158th has to offer this season!

As always, your issues and concerns are important to me. Please feel free to call, email or make an appointment to speak to me or my staff. Serving the 158th is an honor for our whole team and we will be happy to hear from you!

All the best,

# SAPPEY LEGISLATION PASSES THE HOUSE

*Earlier this session, several pieces of legislation I have authored passed the House with broad bi-partisan support and were referred to the Senate.*

## **HB 1272: Keeping Workers in the Workforce**

A State Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is an investment in our workforce which provides relief to those who earn enough money to make ends meet, but too high an income to qualify for social safety-net programs. The United Way of PA (UWP) refers to individuals in this financial category as “ALICE” or Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed. Workers who fall into this category can have their lives impacted immensely by an unexpected cost such as a car repair or medical expense.

House Bill 1272 provides crucial support for working families who face financial obstacles, so that they can continue being productive members of the workforce. This legislation is modeled after the Federal EITC which is already in place. Pennsylvanians who meet the financial requirements for the Federal program qualify for the state EITC. Thirty-three other states have implemented EITC’s in their respective jurisdictions and it is time for Pennsylvania to join them.



## **HB 813: Protecting our Kids**

In April, I was honored to join the PA Office of Child Advocate (OCA) and HEAL PA to mark the beginning of Child Abuse Prevention Month.

The OCA was created to protect children from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. It provides a direct line of assistance for our most vulnerable young people. Currently, the OCA is operating in PA under an executive order from 2019. While Governor Shapiro intends to extend this order, the current process puts the OCA at risk for being dissolved by a future administration. To expand support for our children, I am advocating to establish a permanent Office of the Child Advocate through my legislation, HB 813.

This legislation codifies the Office of Child Advocate as a permanent independent agency. The permanency of this agency will serve a critical role in our government to ensure our children have a voice. I believe we have a shared responsibility to do all we can to help keep kids safe.

## **HB 1210: Protection for Pets in Domestic Violence**

This bill expands protection from abuse orders (PFA) to include animals and house pets in domestic violence situations. A PFA order is a legal proceeding, filed with a judge, meant to prevent an abuser from having contact with a victim, or face serious legal consequences.

Sadly, it is common for abusers to harm beloved pets after a domestic violence victim has filed a PFA. Pets are family members and play an essential role in offering comfort to individuals experiencing abuse. It is important that we take action to safeguard animals in conjunction with the well-being of those suffering from domestic violence.

House Bill 1210 received the support of more than 70 law enforcement, domestic violence, and animal advocacy organizations. The widespread backing of this legislation signifies this very real aspect of domestic violence and the need for enhanced protections.



## **HB 1231: Improving the State Planning Board**

House Bill 1231 adds a representative to the State Planning Board from the PA Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) and the PA Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC). The State Planning Board plays an important role in planning and land use regulations, identifies, and preserves historic heritage and is the governing body for the physical development of communities throughout the Commonwealth. The addition of representatives from PEMA and PHMC will provide necessary expertise in the areas of flood control and strategic planning that is beneficial to reports and recommendations from the State Planning Board.

I have had numerous conversations with residents regarding the impacts of more severe and frequent storms, as well as their desire to preserve historic landmarks and the bucolic beauty of our region. The addition of PEMA and PHMC representatives will allow the Commonwealth to plan with both of these realities in mind.

## **HR 115: Trauma and Mental Health Awareness Day**

Having a healthier population is good for the well-being of our communities and the economy of our state. House Resolution 115 designated May 25th, 2023 as Trauma and Mental Health Awareness Day. The resolution's purpose is to raise awareness and remove stigma around trauma and mental health issues.

Studies have shown that traumatic experiences in childhood, such as abuse, neglect, and exposure to violence, can contribute to negative health outcomes and poorer social consequences for individuals who endured these circumstances. These adverse childhood experiences, known as ACEs, are viewed by some health officials as one of the largest unaddressed public health threats in our nation today. Research has shown that the impact of trauma on individuals can be reversed with proper access to mental health treatment and services. Through the creation of the Office of Advocacy & Reform and by implementing the Trauma-Informed PA Plan, the Commonwealth has started the process of expanding mental health resources and making Pennsylvania a trauma-informed and healing-centered state.

## **HR 108: Recognizing PA Public Gardens**

To commemorate the importance of public gardens throughout the state, I introduced House Resolution 108. Pennsylvania's public gardens receive 4.2 million visitors annually and are an economic driver for the state's tourism industry. In addition to providing visitors with fresh air and scenic beauty, public gardens preserve thousands of acres of natural resources through conservation. Public gardens also create career paths and employment opportunities which further support the state's economy. Longwood Gardens, located in the 158th district, is an excellent example of the impact public gardens can have in a variety of work sectors. Longwood offers educational programs for future horticulturists and master gardeners, as well as, employs plumbers, electricians, architects, engineers and many other professions through its exhibits, light, and fountain shows. HB 108 recognizes the multifaceted positive impact that public gardens provide to all Pennsylvanians.

## **HB 1170: Supporting our Dairy Industry**

The Legislative Budget and Finance Committee conducted a study of past, present, and future issues impacting dairy producers across the commonwealth. One of the recommendations from this study was to rename the PA Milk Marketing Board to the PA Milk Board. To implement this change, I introduced House Bill 1170. The new name more accurately reflects the oversight role of the Board which includes monitoring and enforcing minimum payments to milk producers while licensing milk dealers, haulers, testers, and samplers operating in Pennsylvania.



# SUMMER 2023 SURVEY RESULTS

WHEN PROVIDED WITH A LIST OF 27 PUBLIC POLICY TOPICS, THE FOLLOWING WERE SELECTED AS THE TOP FIVE PRIORITIES BY CONSTITUENTS:



RESPONDING CONSTITUENTS PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING FEEDBACK ON THESE TWO ISSUES:

SUPPORT LEGALIZING RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA:

SUPPORT LIQUOR PRIVATIZATION:



*Thank you to everyone who participated in my summer survey. Your feedback is critical to my work as your representative, and I am thrilled with the number of responses my office received.*

## BROADBAND ACCESS EXPANSION

There are more than 276,000 Commonwealth households without internet access and over 52,000 without reliable access.

The Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority (PBDA) has worked diligently with local and community organizations to reach out to residents to find out how they are impacted by internet availability, and what is the most equitable way to provide broadband access to the greatest number of people possible.

Broadband is the availability of secure high-speed internet. Widely accessible high-speed internet will benefit our Commonwealth immensely in the long term. The PDBA is actively working to increase connectivity to foster economic growth and an innovative environment, to provide the critical infrastructure for the future, and to grow workforce development and educational achievement opportunities regardless of zip code.

This July, the PBDA announced the approval of the five-year action plan to expand internet access across our Commonwealth using \$1.16 billion in funding through the federal Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program. The five-year action plan identifies potential challenges to full deployment and discusses various implementation strategies. Additionally, it details how PBDA will work with a myriad of partners at the community and local level with the shared goals of improving digital access.

The adoption of this plan puts us another step closer to making sure that every Pennsylvanian has access to reliable, high-speed internet. This plan was shaped by feedback from residents and stakeholders through surveys, public comment opportunities and conversations with communities, and this public feedback will allow the state to drive out resources in an affordable and equitable way for all Pennsylvanians.

I was proud to have helped establish the PBDA and will continue to support their efforts as well as encourage local organizations and governments to have their voices heard to make sure broadband rolls out to areas that need it most. Several concerned citizens in Southern Chester County have advocated tirelessly for equitable and improved technology service to help close the digital divide in our area. I am pleased to see their efforts come to fruition with the announcement of this five-year action plan to expand access.

# SUPPORT FOR OUR VETERANS

This session, I have worked on legislation to improve benefits for veterans. I introduced **HB1227** which would expand the Disabled Veterans' Real Estate Tax Exemption Program through an amendment to the PA Constitution. This bill would remove wartime service requirements for Pennsylvania veterans who have received a disability rating of 100% by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. In addition, surviving spouses of members of the U.S. Armed Forces who were killed in action or missing and presumed dead, or who received a disability rating of 100% by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and subsequently passed away, would also have access to this property tax relief.

The House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness Committee, which I am a member of, has passed the following pieces of legislation, going on to the full House where they passed with bipartisan support. These bills await further action in the Senate.

Please contact my office at (484) 200-8264 for more information about any of these bills..

## **HB 269**

Would make DD-214s, military discharge papers, inaccessible to anyone other than a veteran or an immediate family member or authorized agent of the veteran for 85 years, rather than the current 75 years. This legislation is needed because as life-expectancy has increased some veteran records have been accessed for fraudulent purposes. Our honored veterans should not have to deal with fraudsters attempting to steal their identities in their golden years.

## **HB 892**

Establishes the Veterans' Outreach and Support Network to help veterans transition from military service to civilian life. The Department of Military and Veteran Affairs (DMVA) would be required to coordinate with network partners, including other state agencies, county directors or veterans affairs, veterans service organizations, the healthcare provider community, and non-profits identified by the department, to optimize services for veterans.

## **HB 1086**

Creates the PA Veterans Registry to improve access to community outreach services. The PA Veterans Registry would be free to veterans and their families. It provides information about federal, state, and local government benefits, programs, and services. The Veterans Registry Bill would also give the County Directors of Veterans Affairs access to the registry and allow them to proactively reach veterans using the DMVA's PA VETConnect program. PA VETConnect helps with determining the needs of veterans, as well as their families and beneficiaries, and connects them with available resources.

## **HB 804**

Would guarantee in-state tuition for reassigned military families thereby ensuring that dependents of military personnel enrolled at a PA public college or university are guaranteed in-state tuition rates, even if their parent is re-assigned out-of-state or deployed while they are enrolled in school.

# COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

## **Hamorton Historic District**

The 158th Legislative District is home to many unique places that contain rich history and cultural importance. Starting with this issue, I will be spotlighting some of these locations and sharing what makes them significant to Chester County and residents of the 158th.

Located at the intersection of Routes 1 and 52 in Kennett Township, the Hamorton Historic District dates back to the mid-1700s. This village, which became Hamorton, was known for its bark mill, which extracted tannic acid from oak bark for use in tanning. By the mid-1800s, Hamorton's bustling commercial district included a wide range of businesses including saddle making, blacksmiths, cabinet makers and the like. This commercial district was crucial to supporting the surrounding rural agricultural economy.

In the mid-1800s, Hamorton residents were largely Quaker, making the area a focal point of the abolition movement. Hamorton Hall provided a gathering place dedicated to free discussion and activities against slavery. Quakers operated a village "free store" which boycotted goods produced by slave labor. In 1845, a boarding school for girls of all ethnic backgrounds was opened and became a meeting place for doctors who organized what is now known as the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania.

By the early 20th century, Hamorton was known as a "company town" for Pierre Samuel Dupont who constructed additional housing for employees of nearby Longwood Gardens. A few descendants of those employees remain living in Hamorton.

The Hamorton Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1990. Steady residential and commercial growth in our region has increased traffic on Route 1, taking a great toll on this important area. If you travel through Hamorton, please slow down, appreciate the remarkable history that took place and those who still reside in the village today.



# **CHRISTINA SAPPEY**

698 Unionville Road  
Kennett Square, PA 19348



*Spanish version of this  
newsletter available here.*

lpo.kw.1023

## **YOU'RE INVITED!**

**ANNUAL VETERANS BREAKFAST &  
RECOGNITION CEREMONY**

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9  
9 AM TO 11 AM**

**Kennett Square VFW 5467**

704 W. Baltimore Pike, Kennett Square, PA

Veterans and their families are invited to join me for breakfast in recognition of their service. Information on state services and resources for veterans will be available.

Please RSVP by November 1 to [repsappey@pahouse.net](mailto:repsappey@pahouse.net) or call (484) 200-8264.

