

GET THE FACTS YOU NEED ABOUT MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT

Do you know everything you need to know about your Medicare Part D coverage? If you join a private Medicare or prescription drug plan, your details could change and it could cost you money. Medicare open enrollment begins on Oct. 15 and ends Dec. 7. If you are making a change or need help reviewing your options, my office is here to help. We are now an Apprise Medicare Part D Enrollment Site. My office staff will be available BY APPOINTMENT ONLY from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the following dates:

Oct. 21, 28

Nov. 4, 18, 25

Dec. 2

Give my office a call at (610) 266-1273 to schedule your appointment.



Rep. McNeill joined Bethlehem Mayor Bob Donchez and U.S. Rep. Charlie Dent at the 25th anniversary of the Bethlehem Recycling Center.



HELPING OLDER PENNSYLVANIANS

I recently voted for legislation that allows thousands of Pennsylvania senior citizens to keep their prescription drug coverage. The new law will maintain eligibility for seniors in PACE and PACENET if their Social Security cost-of-living adjustment pushes them over the income eligibility limit through 2015. Without this legislative fix, more than 40,000 seniors would have lost their prescription drug coverage because their relatively small cost-of-living increase caused them to go over the income limit. This could have ended up costing them hundreds or even thousands of dollars a year in prescription benefits. The law also lets applicants exclude the cost of their Medicare Part B premiums from being counted as income.

In addition to assisting hundreds of area seniors in applying for PACE, my office has helped over 1,000 constituents sign up for the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program, and aided countless others with reduced vehicle registrations, utility assistance programs, free or reduced transportation, Department of Public Welfare benefits, and more.

In April, I hosted my second Senior Fair, which included free health screenings, refreshments and information on state programs for older Pennsylvanians. If you are 65 or older and you need help paying for your prescriptions, or you think you may be eligible for the property tax or rent rebate, please contact my office.

MUNICIPAL THEFT BILL PASSES HOUSE

A bill that I co-sponsored to toughen penalties for individuals convicted of municipal theft unanimously passed the House and awaits a vote in the Senate. In addition to increasing penalties for municipal employees who steal from local governments, the bill would also target individuals who embezzle funds or otherwise take property from charitable organizations they are entrusted to lead. Unfortunately, the embezzlement of funds isn't limited to municipal government. It is all too common for youth sports leagues, volunteer fire companies and civic organizations to find their accounts bled dry by dishonest individuals who believe they can get away with it. This bill would send a strong message to anyone who might consider skimming funds away from organizations dedicated to the public good that they will be punished.

CRIZ PROGRAM HELPING BETHLEHEM

Last year, I helped to establish the new City Revitalization and Improvement Zone (CRIZ) program that is benefitting Bethlehem. I am extremely proud to be a part of a bipartisan effort that will move the city forward. The CRIZ program authorizes the investment of tax revenues in designated zones to enable new investment in local economies, by redeveloping eligible vacant, blighted and/or abandoned properties for commercial, hospitality, conference, retail, community or other mixed-use purposes. This program is based on the wildly successful program currently in use in Allentown, which has resulted in over \$500 million in new investment. It will improve investor confidence in Bethlehem, it will lead to job creation and enhancement of the tax base, and it will improve the quality of life in the city.



Rep. McNeill joined area leaders at a press conference announcing the details of the CRIZ program in Bethlehem.

RESOLUTION HONORS 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF OLD HOME WEEK

In June, the state House of Representatives unanimously adopted my resolution recognizing the 100th Anniversary of Old Home Week Celebration of the Borough of Catasauqua. The first Old Home Week was held from June 28, 1914 until July 4, 1914, and also observed the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Crane Iron Works. The Old Home Week also celebrated Catasauqua's good fortune attributed to the operation of the Crane Iron Works, and included daily themes featuring churches, schools, fraternal, civic organizations, fire companies, and other local organizations. The residents of Catasauqua celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Old Home Week celebration from June 27, 2014 to July 6, 2014. The celebration featured many events focused on Catasauqua's history and the potential for the borough's future.

MCNEILL OPPOSES ADDITIONAL DRILLING ON STATE LAND

I am opposed to Gov. Tom Corbett's recent decision to rescind a moratorium on leasing additional land in state parks and forests for gas drilling.

Pennsylvania's 2.2 million acres of state forests and 120 state parks provide important wildlife habitat, water resources, air quality protection, and outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the commonwealth. Additional drilling will jeopardize our land, air and water.

In early July, the Corbett administration announced that it has agreed to a partial settlement in the Commonwealth Court case challenging its plan to lease more state land. The administration agreed not to lease any more state land for drilling until the court makes a ruling in the case, and in return the Pennsylvania Environmental Defense Foundation has agreed to drop its request for the court to prevent the state from using revenues from the Oil and Gas Lease Fund to pay for general operations at the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

The court is expected to hear oral arguments in the case in October. In the meantime, DCNR will continue to work to prepare for leasing of state parks and forest land, but will not take any final action until the judge issues a ruling. We must protect our state resources so I am hopeful the court will rule against this flawed proposal.



Rep. McNeill congratulated Miss PA US International Sable Butler from Catasauqua in the House Chamber.