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Perry Warren
 31st Legislative District

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SUMMER 2018

Dear Neighbor,

As we prepared to go to press with this summer newsletter, I am pleased to report that by votes of 188-10 in the House of Representatives and 47-2 in the Senate, the General Assembly passed the 2018-19 state budget. Governor Tom Wolf signed the budget bill on June 22, hours after it was passed by the Senate.

I listed among my goals as your state representative to end the gridlock in Harrisburg, to support education and to create well-paying jobs. The 2018-19 budget was passed, not only on time but a week early, with wide bipartisan support.

The budget includes increased investment in Pre-K, K-12, higher education and special education. It includes increased funding for workforce training and child care. And, it provides additional funding for opioid and substance abuse treatment and for autism and intellectual disabilities programs.

I am happy to have played a part in achieving an on-time bipartisan budget that supports education and jobs, as well as critical social services.

There is still work to be done. House leadership did not call for a vote on the independent redistricting bill or on any of the gun safety bills that were approved by the House Judiciary Committee. And, child protection bills that I have introduced and supported still await a vote.

On the local level, our communities have received important grants that will enhance our quality of life; PennDOT has worked with us in conducting traffic studies, in helping to improve truck traffic and in paving some (though not all) of our roads most in need of repair; and, our residents continue to accomplish remarkable achievements.

It is an honor serving as your state representative. Please contact me at our district office whenever my staff and I can be of service.

Sincerely,



I participated in a rally on April 10 in the Capitol Rotunda supporting #EqualPayDay for all women. As the father of three strong young women, and the husband of one, I know firsthand how hard they all work. They and all women deserve and have earned the opportunity for equal pay. I co-sponsored House Bill 1243, which would make equal pay the law in Pennsylvania. The bill is in the Labor and Industry Committee, and I look forward to the opportunity to vote 'yea' when it comes to the Full House. Let's make pay inequality disappear in this commonwealth!

Stay updated!

To make sure you see the latest state legislative news from Harrisburg or to keep up with programs, services, or projects and events in the district, please use these following ways to connect with me and my office.

You can follow me on Facebook at Facebook.com/RepPerryWarren. You also can follow me on Twitter @RepPerryWarren.

You also can join My Email Update List. I maintain an email list for those who wish to receive periodic email updates from me about public meetings, traffic alerts, community events, state and local programs and services, and other items of interest to the community.

If you would like to be added to that list, please email my office at RepWarren@pahouse.net or visit my website at www.pahouse.com/Warren.

Redistricting reform eludes pre-summer agenda

You might have noticed that I am no longer a co-sponsor of House Bill 722.

In its original form, the bill was designed to eliminate partisan gerrymandering in creating legislative districts in Pennsylvania.

The bill was supported by good-government activists and citizens throughout the state and drew bipartisan support in the House. In fact, the bill was co-sponsored by 110 members – and it only takes 102 votes to pass a bill.

Things were looking promising for H.B. 722, and for ending gerrymandering once and for all in Pennsylvania.

That is to say, they were – until the House State Government Committee took up the bill.

On April 11, Republicans in the committee adopted an amendment to the bill, eviscerating its intent. Their amendment gutted the bill's proposed creation of an independent commission of people to draw district lines and replaced it with language that would put the legislature's majority party in control of drawing the districts.

Governor Tom Wolf called this amendment "partisan politics at its worst."

Senate Bill 22, which was similar to the original H.B. 722, in June became the leading bill to replace it, but it, too, was heavily amended in committee and lost a great deal of its nonpartisan design. Further sinking its chance for success, some 500-plus amendments were attached to it once it was available for a full vote in the House.

The Legislative Reference Bureau, which drafts bills and amendments in the General Assembly, went on record at the time, saying that the number of amendments to the bill broke their record for most drafted in a day.

Unfortunately, House leadership did not call the bill up for a vote at all.

The result, due to time and notice requirements, is that the independent redistricting bill likely will not be passed this year.

Of course, that doesn't mean that I will not continue fighting for an independent means of fairly drawing legislative district boundaries. You deserve a truly independent and politically blind process to determine your representation in Harrisburg and in Congress, and I will continue to advocate to end partisan gerrymandering.

Gun safety reform bills move from committee

The Pennsylvania House Judiciary Committee this year finally held hearings and votes on bills dealing with gun safety and violence prevention. Several of the bills moved from committee.

The bills that were approved by the committee include:

■ H.B. 1872, which would ban devices such as "bump stocks" that assist in rapid firing.

■ H.B. 2060, which would ensure that domestic abusers be required to relinquish weapons to an appropriate authority in a timely fashion.

■ H.B. 2227, which would allow concerned family members and law enforcement to file for extreme risk protective orders to prohibit firearm possession by individuals who are at risk of causing harm to themselves or others.

■ H.B. 273, which would allow people

with mental or physical health concerns to voluntarily surrender their firearms.

■ H.B. 2266 and H.B. 2267, which would require expedited reporting of mental health records to state police.

Of the bills considered by the Judiciary Committee, only H.B. 1400, requiring universal background checks, failed by one vote, 13 to 14.

I also hope that my legislation to keep people from the FBI's no-fly list from being able to purchase a gun also will make it to committee consideration and ultimately be passed.

Much of the testimony we heard throughout the spring showed that legislators and Pennsylvanians want to take concrete action to curb gun violence. As a member of the PA SAFE Caucus, I am encouraged and hopeful that the legislature will have the opportunity to vote on – and will vote in favor of – these important gun safety bills.



Celebrating community theatre

I introduced House Resolution 916 – adopted unanimously – which recognized June 3-9 as “Community Theatre Week” in Pennsylvania.

Marcia Wittmann and Lisa Reiser, from Newtown Arts Company in Newtown, and Maryalice Rubins-Topoleski and Hayley Rubins-Topoleski, from ActorsNET in Morrisville came to the Capitol to celebrate Community Theater Week.

Community theatre organizations bring the arts to life for audiences of all ages and socio-economic backgrounds. From the actors on stage to the behind-the-scenes crew, all who put together community programs educate and enrich our lives.

I also presented a citation from the House of Representatives to Newtown Arts Company to recognize its 35th year of creating theatrical productions.

The community theater opened its 2018 season at The Newtown Theatre with “The Secret Garden.”



The volunteer group involves performers and artists from all over our area, in the past including some members of my family. The citation recognized Newtown Arts Company’s mission to raise scholarship funds for students pursuing fine arts in higher education — over \$140,000 to date.

Pictured are Newtown residents and board members Bonnie Dettra, Diana Bilyk and Nancy Pickering, one of the founding members of the organization.

Also Lower Makefield resident Lou Volpe was inducted into the Bucks County Playhouse Hall of Fame.



Mr. Volpe is the retired drama teacher at Harry S. Truman High School and the inspiration behind the NBC TV show “Rise.” He is very active in the Bucks County Playhouse education program and has had an impact on the life values and theatrical goals of thousands of kids. Congratulations, Lou!

Supporting protections for children

Two new bills that I have sponsored will help protect children.

The first bill, which I have sponsored with Rep. Kate Harper, R-Montgomery, and Rep. Frank Farry, R-Langhorne, would create a separate offense if an offender commits a personal injury crime against a family member that is witnessed by a child. The Bucks County and Montgomery County District Attorneys requested that Rep. Harper, Rep. Farry and I work on this bipartisan bill to protect children from domestic violence.

I sponsored a second bill that would require offenders who commit an offense in the presence of children and enter into an ARD (Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition) program wait five years to have the offense formally expunged. Under current law, expungement is immediate.

Together, these bills would deter criminal activity in the presence of children and preserve the records of offenses committed in the presence of children.

Carrying the Load



Veterans, emergency responders and active military, local officials and other volunteers walked from Washington Crossing to Yardley as part of Carry the Load’s nearly 1,600-mile march from West Point, NY, to Dallas, TX.

When veterans and emergency-responders serve, they carry all of us. The walk is to honor their sacrifice, and to give us a chance to carry them.

N.J. bill to protect tax pact is welcome news for commuters

A bill protecting the New Jersey-Pennsylvania tax reciprocity pact passed the New Jersey General Assembly and is on its way to New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy.

The agreement at the heart of New Jersey Senate Bill 878 allows Pennsylvania residents who work in New Jersey to pay Pennsylvania income taxes and vice versa.

Under the bill, it would take an act of the New Jersey state legislature to undo the pact, which has been in place on good faith for more than 30 years.

This issue came to light in 2016 when then New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie threatened to break the pact. With this bill, the pact should be shored up and our residents can rest a little easier knowing that their tax obligations won't shift on a political whim.

I wrote to New Jersey Assemblyman Reed Gusciora, expressing my support for the bill. And, after it passed in the General Assembly, I wrote a similar letter of support to Gov. Murphy.

There are 46,000 Bucks County residents who work in New Jersey who would be adversely affected if the tax reciprocity agreement were terminated. With the approval of N.J. S.B. 878, our residents will be able to budget and make work and life plans without fear that they will be compelled to pay New Jersey income taxes.

SEPTA Key Replaces Transit Payment Methods

SEPTA plans to transition to the new electronic fare-payment SEPTA Key card on its transit lines (buses, trolleys, and subways) by the end of the summer, replacing most other forms of senior identification and commuter payment.



Token sales stopped at SEPTA locations on April 30 and will phase out at non-SEPTA retail locations this summer. Magnetic stripe Trans/TrailPass and paper transfer sales will also end as of Aug. 1.

SEPTA Key cards include a reloadable Travel Wallet, which allows customers to pay-as-you-ride and can also be loaded with SEPTA Passes. SEPTA Key cards may be purchased for \$4.95, but as a special promotion, SEPTA will credit that fee to a customer's Card Travel Wallet if the card is registered within 30 days at <http://SEPTAKey.org/> or by calling 1-855-567-3782.

Seniors will no longer be able to use paper Pennsylvania Senior Citizen Transit ID Cards for SEPTA travel starting on Sept. 1, and SEPTA no longer accepts Pennsylvania driver's licenses issued after July 2017 or Medicare cards.

Those 65 or older can apply for a free SEPTA Senior Key Card at my District Office, eliminating the need to travel to SEPTA headquarters. The SEPTA Photo ID card will then be mailed to you by SEPTA.

Pennsylvania Disability Transit ID cards will no longer be accepted starting on Oct. 1, replaced by the SEPTA Key Reduced Fare Card. The application must be completed by a physician and applied for in-person at SEPTA Headquarters or at the Accessible Travel Center at Suburban Station.

SEPTA is currently testing the rollout of SEPTA Key on Regional Rail, which is expected to occur later this year. For more information about SEPTA Key and sale locations, please visit www.septa.org/key/.

Gathering Documents For Real ID Driver's Licenses



Citizens are advised to begin preparing now if they wish to obtain Real ID-compliant driver's licenses next year. The federal Real ID Act requires enhanced security features on driver's licenses if they are to be used for identification purposes for domestic air travel or federal facility access.

You can continue to use your Pennsylvania driver's license

for all identification purposes through at least Oct. 10, 2018 and most likely until PennDOT is ready to issue Real ID-compliant licenses.

When applying for a Real ID license next year, citizens who obtained their first license or ID card before September 2003 will need to in person visit a licensing facility and provide documentation.

A website for online Real ID-compliant license applications will become available next year. For more information on the program and required documents, visit www.dmv.pa.gov/REALID.

Real ID-compliant licenses will carry a one-time \$30 fee in addition to the standard renewal fee for a regular license or ID (currently \$30.50).

Solar project in Newtown Township receives funding

Bucks County Type & Design Inc. was awarded an \$81,457 state grant for a solar project at its commercial building.

The Solar Energy Program funding request was approved by the Commonwealth Financing Authority. The funds will support the purchase and installation of a solar photovoltaic system for its commercial building in Newtown Township.

Our state is making solid investments into our local businesses and alternative

energy. We have the opportunity to expand energy efficiency opportunities that will financially and environmentally benefit our communities.

The total project cost of \$193,358 will provide 40 percent of the electricity used in the commercial building that houses a printing business owned by Bucks County Type & Design Inc. The benefits of this installation will also generate 95,676 kilowatts of electricity per year.



Swamp Road repaving

As a result of my request and my office's 2017 "ride-around" with representatives from PennDOT and local officials, PennDOT wrote to inform me that it has awarded contracts to repave Swamp Road from the Newtown Bypass to Second Street Pike.

The work is scheduled to be completed in 2018, and I will update through my email alerts when I get firm dates. You can sign up for email alerts on my website at www.pahouse.com/Warren.



I presented citations from the House of Representatives to the National Merit Scholarship finalists from Council Rock North High School. As my daughter was a graduating senior this year, I know and have known many of these outstanding students for years. Congratulations!



Chief Matt Gerhard and President Will Fabian of Newtown Fire Association are pictured with me at their annual banquet, where they celebrated the 25th anniversary of the opening of Station 55.



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Rep. Perry Warren

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Real estate tax exemption available for veterans

The Pennsylvania Disabled Veteran Real Estate Tax Exemption program provides real estate tax exemption for any honorably discharged veteran who is 100 percent disabled, a resident of the commonwealth and has a financial need.

If you qualify, or if you have questions about qualifying, you can call the Bucks County VA Office at 215-345-3307 to learn about applying.

Veteran's eligibility criteria include:

- Served in the military honorably
- Served during established war service dates as determined by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Must have a total or 100 percent permanent service-connected disability rating by the U.S. Department of Veterans

Affairs or as the result of military service the veteran is blind or paraplegic or has sustained the loss of two or more limbs

- Must be a resident of the Commonwealth
- Must occupy the real estate as his/her principal dwelling

Must prove financial need:

- Veteran must prove financial need according to the criteria established by the State Veterans Commission
- Applicants with an annual income of \$88,607 or less are given a rebuttable presumption to have a need for the exemption
- ** Upon the death of a qualified veteran, tax exemption may pass on to the unmarried surviving spouse if financial need can be shown.

