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 31st Legislative District

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FALL 2018

*Dear Neighbor,*

Having delivered a bipartisan budget before the June 30 deadline, members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly headed back to their districts for the remainder of the summer. Here in the 31st Legislative District (Lower Makefield Township, Morrisville, Newtown Borough, Newtown Township and Yardley), my legislative office staff and I have been working hard for our residents. Ryan, Patrick, Debbie, Regina, Mary Alice and our summer interns, Phil, Henry, Julia and Isaac, have been helping me help constituents, study policy, write legislation, perform ceremonial functions, engage in community outreach and advocate for our communities and our residents.

We've helped municipalities and organizations apply for and obtain grant funding, and we've helped our residents with state issues and programs. I have participated in myriad events within and on behalf of the legislative district, and we all work every day to serve the needs of our residents in many ways. This newsletter highlights some of our summer activity, and you can always follow us on a day-to-day basis on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/RepPerryWarren](https://www.facebook.com/RepPerryWarren) and on my website at [pahouse.com/Warren](http://pahouse.com/Warren), or, better yet, stop by our district office or visit us on our scheduled days at Morrisville Borough Hall.

Now, it's back to school for our students and educators, and back to Harrisburg for the legislature. I will be working to pass legislation that will improve and enhance our lives. And, in Harrisburg and at home, our legislative staff and I will be *Working for You*.

It is an honor and a privilege to represent our communities. Please call upon us whenever we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

## Putting People First by Fighting the Heroin and Opioid Epidemic



The heroin and opioid epidemic has impacted Pennsylvanians from every walk of life, regardless of income level, ethnicity or age. The extent of the crisis isn't confined to just the people who fall victim to addiction or overdose, but also to the family members, neighbors, colleagues and friends who witness the devastation.

Every day in Pennsylvania, at least 10 Pennsylvanians die from a heroin or opioid overdose. The Pennsylvania Department of Health reports that more Pennsylvanians die from opioid overdoses than from vehicle accidents.

Governor Tom Wolf declared Pennsylvania's heroin and opioid epidemic a statewide disaster emergency in January 2018 to aid the state's ability to address the epidemic.

The recently passed budget includes funding to put people first in combating the opioid epidemic, including:

- An additional \$4.5 million to provide home visiting services to approximately 800 families affected by substance use disorder.
- A \$26.5 million federal funding grant will support existing efforts and expand access to treatment services.
- Through its funding, the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs will continue to provide grants to county authorities across the state to implement and expand access to substance use disorder treatment, prevention and education programs.

If you or someone you know is battling a prescription drug or heroin addiction, call the state's 24/7 helpline, 1-800-662-HELP, for information about treatment resources. Your call will be completely confidential. You can also visit [www.dhs.pa.gov](http://www.dhs.pa.gov) for more information about available treatment services.

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# Safe2Say Legislation Signed into Law

Legislation to improve school safety across the Commonwealth was signed into law this summer after the House and Senate passed the bipartisan Safe2Say bill.

The Safe2Say Program will provide methods of anonymous reporting for students, teachers, parents and others concerning unsafe, violent or criminal activities in schools or the threat of such dangers.

The law appropriates \$60 million for this school safety measure, which will go to schools to implement a wide range of safety measures, including mental health counseling, another legislative priority I have championed.

The legislation requires the state attorney general to:

- Ensure that the identity of the individual making a report remains anonymous to any person, including law enforcement and employees of the Safe2Say Program Office;
- Forward information received to the appropriate law enforcement agency or school official;
- Train individuals such as emergency dispatch workers, local law enforcement and school personnel on appropriate awareness and response; and
- Develop educational materials and promote program awareness for participating school districts.

This legislation – with the funding and investigative power of the Attorney General’s Office – will go a long way in providing students and community members a safe way to report, and schools to address, danger.

# Register and Vote

## Important 2018 General Election Deadlines

**October 9**

Last day to register to vote or change your registration

**October 30** (by 5 p.m.)

Last day to apply for an absentee ballot

**November 2** (by 5 p.m.)

Last day for county election offices to receive absentee ballots

**November 6**  
Election Day

You may vote by absentee ballot if you are unable to make it to the polls because of illness, disability, or if you will be out of your municipality on Election Day.

Applications for absentee ballots are available at my district office, through Bucks County Voter Services, or online at <http://www.buckscounty.org/government/ElectionInformation>.



## Fighting the Heroin and Opioid Epidemic

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**What are opioids?** Opioids include prescription medications used to treat pain such as morphine, codeine, methadone, oxycodone, hydrocodone, fentanyl, hydromorphone and buprenorphine, as well as illegal drugs like heroin.

**How do they work?** Opioids bind to specific receptors in the brain, spinal cord and gastrointestinal track to reduce the body’s ability to perceive pain. Opioids stimulate the brain’s reward centers, which can affect systems which regulate mood, breathing and blood pressure.

**When does an overdose occur?** An opioid overdose can occur when a patient misuses a prescription opioid or heroin, takes someone else’s opioid prescription or takes the drug in combination with alcohol or medications that

depress breathing, heart rate and other functions of the central nervous system.

**Who is at risk?** Anyone who uses opioids for long-term management of chronic cancer or non-cancer pain, and those who use heroin.

**Why is the long-term use of opioids a problem?** First, people develop a tolerance for the drug, and so have to take higher or more frequent doses to continue to experience the same effect. Then, if a person stops taking an opioid after long term use, he or she experiences a loss of tolerance, which can be equally dangerous. If a person goes back to taking the drug, he or she can experience negative effects, including overdosing, even if that amount hadn’t caused them a problem before.

# Bill Would Prohibit Insurers from Denying Pre-existing Conditions

Imagine you lost your health insurance through economic circumstances, loss or change of employment, divorce, emancipation or another reason. Then imagine if no other insurance company would write a policy for you because of a pre-existing medical condition.

Under the Affordable Care Act, health insurers are prohibited from denying coverage based on pre-existing conditions. However, a lawsuit filed earlier this year could allow insurers to do that if they so choose; and I'm working to stop that from occurring in Pennsylvania.

Earlier this year, 20 states filed a lawsuit against the federal government to challenge the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act. The lawsuit could render the entire ACA invalid.

If the lawsuit is successful, millions of people across the United States and in Pennsylvania may be left without health insurance or face paying higher premiums to keep coverage. However, by passing a state law, we can at least preserve the



pre-existing condition protection if the entire ACA is invalidated by the courts or repealed by Congress.

For this reason, I am supporting legislation to prohibit health insurers from using an individual's pre-existing medical condition to deny or exclude coverage under a health insurance policy. I recently discussed those plans in detail during a public hearing in Allentown, along with my House colleagues and health care insurance leaders from across the state. I hope that we'll see action on it soon in Harrisburg.

## Talking Infrastructure

Thank you to the over 2,000 residents who participated in my telephone town hall this summer regarding infrastructure and its funding. Representatives of [PennDOT](#) and the [Morrisville Municipal Authority](#) were on the call, as we heard from residents of our communities on issues related to infrastructure and funding.

We talked about improvements to I-95; the state's plan for structurally deficient bridges; high-speed internet in rural areas; new technology for pothole repairs; construction of pipelines carrying natural gas; what types of jobs would be created by investments in infrastructure; and how the state is investing in green infrastructure.

Investing in better roads, bridges and public transportation creates jobs and helps companies build and expand here in Pennsylvania. It's a part of House Democrats' Plan for PA, which you can read more about at [www.plan4pa.com](http://www.plan4pa.com).



*I am focused on policy efforts in Harrisburg to help build a better bridge from schools to jobs as well as reforms to build a stronger and more diverse workforce in Pennsylvania. I attended a House Democratic Policy Committee hearing on connecting workers to jobs here in the region. We discussed the importance of supporting our workforce development agencies, local business community, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, and colleges and universities to create positive outcomes and well paying jobs.*

## Toward a Fairer Property Tax System

Many Pennsylvanians, especially seniors, are struggling to pay their property taxes. There are several legislative proposals that could provide relief, and I want you to know that I am constantly examining them.

Some proposals would provide relief to homeowners and renters by expanding the Property Tax and Rent Rebate Program, which is currently available for seniors and people with disabilities; some of those proposals would also add other qualifying persons. There are other bills that would reduce property taxes by replacing the money with other revenue sources or by instituting a natural gas severance tax. All these proposals have merit for larger discussions both here in our communities and school districts and in Harrisburg. Rest assured that when they happen, I'll be there to learn and lend your voice.



## Identity Theft Occurs Online, but also Through Lost, Improperly Disposed Papers

While the incidence of internet identity theft is growing, you still are more likely to become a victim by more traditional means, such as improperly discarding credit card data or other financial or personal information.

Under Pennsylvania law, a person who assumes or uses the identity or identifying information of another person without that person's consent for any unlawful purpose commits identity theft. Identifying information includes a person's name, birth date, photograph, Social Security number, driver's license, credit record or other personal information.

Each instance of using someone's identity without consent is a separate offense. The first offense is a first-degree misdemeanor if the loss is less than \$2,000, or a third-degree felony if the loss is higher. A third or subsequent offense is a second-degree felony. If the victim is 60 or older, the offense is graded one degree higher.

in addition to laws that deter illegal behavior, you can help keep yourself safe by shredding and disposing of your unneeded documents that contain secure information.

## Pennsylvania to Start Making Real ID Available

Pennsylvanians who want a driver's license that allows them to board domestic commercial flights and enter certain secure federal buildings can soon get one.



The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation has started prequalifying residents for Real IDs when they become available next March. The cost is \$30 for the ID.

The new ID will meet federal antiterrorism standards but is not necessary to legally drive.

Residents who want a Real ID must provide two proofs of current address, a non-laminated Social Security card, and proof of identification (such as a passport or birth certificate) to a PennDOT Driver License Photo Exam Center if they received their first Pennsylvania driver's license before September 2003.

For more information, please visit [www.dmv.pa.gov](http://www.dmv.pa.gov).

I will host an Identity Protection and Shredding Event this fall.

**FREE PAPER SHREDDING EVENT**

**SATURDAY, NOV. 10, 2018**

**9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

**LOCATION:**

**Holy Family University  
Newtown Campus**

**1 Campus Drive, Newtown, PA 18940**

The event is open to the public. For the shredding portion, the shredding company requests a limit of 3 boxes per person and that all plastic, notebooks, folders and non-sensitive papers be removed before shredding.



*It felt like traveling the world as my staff and I toured the magically transformed Pennsbury High School at the pre-prom walkthrough. This year's theme was 'Destination Prom' and the students did an incredible job of transforming their*

*school into exotic destinations around the world.*

*I am pictured with Pennsbury School Board member Debra Wachspres. Congratulations to the students, staff, administration and families who worked so hard to create this experience for the students.*



*The 121 Pennsylvania State Parks play not only an important role in environmental conservation, but also make a big impact on Pennsylvania's economy. That's why I was happy to join Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Cindy*

*Adams Dunn to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the state park system at Washington Crossing Historic Park in June.*

## Lower Makefield Township Manager Retirement



*Thank you and congratulations on your retirement to Terry Fedorchak, who served as Lower Makefield Township Manager for 25 years. I presented Terry with a citation from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in recognition of his 43 years of service to Pennsylvania townships. Lower Makefield*

*Township Police Chief Kenneth Coluzzi, and Supervisors John Lewis, Kristin Tyler, Fred Weiss, Dan Grenier, and Suzanne Blundi paused their meeting for a photo with and a round of applause for Terry Fedorchak.*

## Congratulations to all of the New Eagle Scouts in the District



*I've enjoyed presenting citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives to Eagle Scouts. Pictured are some of our residents who have earned the distinction of Eagle Scout.*

*Eagle Scouts embody the principles of citizenship and leadership, and their projects benefit local parks, schools, food pantries, and many other community institutions. Our community is a better place because of them!*



*Please contact my office if you would like me to attend and present a citation at an Eagle Scout Court of Honor.*





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**Rep. Perry Warren**

## INSIDE:

- Congratulations to new Eagle Scouts
- Real ID ready to order
- Protecting insurance consumers

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**State Representative Perry Warren • 31st Legislative District**

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*The fourth grade students at Quarry Hill Elementary School in Lower Makefield Township eagerly participated in considering legislation as part of the 20th annual “Pennsylvania Day” at the school. I acted as Speaker of the House as the student representatives, governor and lieutenant governor debated and voted on bills.*

*They passed a bill prohibiting keeping giraffes as pets. They voted against a bill that would require that trick-or-treating be allowed only on the last Saturday in October.*

*My staff and I were amazed by the energy level and the knowledge and understanding of the process of these students. It’s always a pleasure to engage young minds on the importance of government. If you’re interested in having me present to your class or school, please contact my office.*

