



Spring
2019

DANIELLE FRIEL ¹⁵⁵ OTTEN

PA STATE REPRESENTATIVE

District Office:

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COMMUNITIES THAT CARE OF GREATER DOWNINGTOWN RECEIVES GRANT

I'm proud to announce that \$60,000 in state funding is headed to Communities That Care of Greater Downingtown to expand the organization's number of Youth Prevention Councils.

My office and I were happy to help facilitate the grant award, which comes from Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development funding for community improvement initiatives.

The money will enable CTC of Greater Downingtown to continue its mission of creating a safe, supportive

community that promotes mental and behavioral health and positive choices for our youth. Together we advocated for this funding, and together we'll continue to work on approaches that successfully guide our youth through their teens and into adulthood.

CTC plans to use the grant to increase the number of Youth Prevention Councils in Downingtown area schools and community from three to 14 and create smaller "mini-grants" to enable the student councils to develop their own youth-led initiatives and peer-to-peer campaigns.

Creating a Lasting Green Space

The first piece of legislation I introduced passed the House unanimously. House Bill 387 authorizes Marsh Creek State Park to release a parcel of land adjacent to the Pennsylvania Turnpike in exchange for a parcel of land that allows the park to expand its trail network and protect wetlands and a wildlife habitat.

The land along the turnpike, consisting primarily of rock and road berm, was originally purchased with public Project 70 funds, meaning that it cannot be sold or transferred unless it's replaced with land of an equal or greater value. The legislation releases that strip of land from Project 70 restrictions, and instead places Project 70 protections on the wooded, wetland parcel to be acquired by the park.

The parcel covered by the bill is part of a larger, 57-acre land preservation project coordinated between the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Natural Lands Trust and the Turnpike Commission. The parcel of land released from Project 70 restrictions will allow the Turnpike Commission to widen the road.

A win for conservation, Chester County residents, and all Pennsylvanians!





ADDRESSING A THROWAWAY SOCIETY

In April, I worked with my colleagues in the House to introduce the Zero Waste PA package of bills. My own zero-waste legislation has the goal of diverting organic waste from our landfills and incinerators, resulting in waste reduction, municipal cost savings, and economic and environmental benefits through the creation of a market for organic waste composting. Together, each piece of legislation in the Zero Waste PA package brings our state closer to the real change we need right now.

By recycling, reusing and repurposing, and reducing our reliance on single-use plastics, we can all help to clean our air, water, and land and address the environmental harm caused by our throwaway society. As a legislator, I'm working in Harrisburg to limit the types of waste and petrochemical products that industries produce and consume on a much larger scale.

As customers, we can do our part to reject single-use plastics and send a strong message to retailers and restaurants to switch to paper straws or bags, for example, but legislation is needed to truly stop the proliferation of harmful plastics. Big plastic is not unlike big tobacco. Environmentally unsafe manufacturing practices and products create real victims. In addition to the environmental damage they cause, the fossil fuels used in plastics production are a risk to our health and public safety. We simply must find better answers.

Pennsylvania has a real opportunity to turn away from fossil fuels and petroproducts and instead become a hub for renewable energy and sustainable industry, and a home for companies that want to lead the way in developing modern, eco-friendly products for the entire world to use. Investment in renewables would help Pennsylvania position itself as a leader in the economy of the future, and create new safe, stable, and sustainable jobs for us, right here in the state.

ADVOCATING FOR PIPELINE SAFETY

In March, I joined 13 of my House and Senate colleagues in signing a letter urging Gov. Tom Wolf to impose a moratorium on the transmission of natural gas liquid products through the Mariner East pipeline system until the mandated safety protocols are in place for local responders to properly manage a pipeline emergency. The letter urges the governor to preserve the health, welfare and safety of people who live, work and raise their families in the high-consequence areas of Chester and Delaware counties within the impact radius of Mariner East.

We have pipelines currently transporting highly volatile products through our communities, and our local first responders are not able to adequately plan their emergency response or mitigate our risk because the pipeline operators, Sunoco and Energy Transfer, have failed to provide an adequate Emergency Response Plan.

This month, I introduced legislation to create a Pipeline Early Detection and Warning System. My bill places the costs of pipeline incident detection and warning systems on pipeline operators rather than taxpayers and ensures that warning systems are in place before pipelines go into operation, allowing our municipalities, school districts, and emergency responders to develop emergency response plans to fulfill their legal requirements and help to keep our communities safe.



IMPROVING YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

I serve on the House Children & Youth Committee, and youth mental health is of tremendous importance to me, both personally and legislatively. I am excited to announce that I have been approved to hold a legislative policy hearing on youth mental health here in the 155th Legislative District in the fall.

In preparation for that hearing, my staff and I have convened a Youth Mental Health Working Group made up of educators, clinicians, students, parents, and community members with relevant experience or interest in this issue, with a goal of making recommendations to legislators, school districts, and the community as a whole.

On May 23, my office hosted a parent-focused Youth Mental Health discussion about five culprits that interfere with a child's development, along with strategies to empower parents. We had a productive discussion about related legislation, including anti-bullying bills that I am co-sponsoring, the Beyond Safe Schools initiative, and other pending mental health legislation. I welcome your input on these bills!



FOUR CHESTER COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS RECEIVE GRANTS TO ENHANCE SAFETY AND SECURITY

This spring, Phoenixville Area School District, Spring-Ford Area School District, Coatesville Area School District, and Renaissance Academy Charter School were awarded a total of \$778,119 in state grants to enhance school safety and security.

It will be the choice of the school districts to determine how exactly the funds will be used. Eligible purposes include paying for

security assessments, emergency preparedness, violence prevention, intervention training programs, school police officer training, and counseling services.

Students and educators deserve safe school environments that allow the focus to be kept on learning, and parents should have peace of mind when their children get on the school bus.

Going forward, my House Democratic colleagues are looking at ways to go beyond our \$60 million statewide investment in making sure that Pennsylvania students are safe at school. The Beyond Safe Schools package of bills is intended to improve and strengthen supports that go beyond physical safety measures.

Learn more about the proposals at PaHouse.com/BeyondSafeSchools.

DO YOU NEED A REAL ID?

My office can help you through the process of tracking down the documents you need to apply for REAL ID.

REAL IDs are now available to all residents who want them! Beginning October 1, 2020, Pennsylvanians will need a REAL ID-compliant driver's license, photo ID card, or another form of federally-acceptable identification (such as a valid passport or military ID) to board a domestic commercial flight or enter a federal building or military installation that requires ID.

To have your documents verified and receive your ID at the time of service, visit one of the three REAL ID Centers in our region:

- ☐ 143 S. Gulph Road, King of Prussia
- ☐ 1700 Markley Street, Norristown
- ☐ 2904 South 70th Street, Philadelphia

To find out whether REAL ID is right for you, or for more information about the application process, please visit www.PENNDot.gov/REALID.



PROPERTY TAX/ RENT REBATE APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Applications for the state's Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program for taxes or rent paid in 2018 are now available online and in my office. The program provides rebates up to \$650 on rent or property tax paid by Pennsylvanians 65 or older, widows and widowers 50 or older, and people with disabilities 18 or older.

The application is available on the Department of Revenue's website at www.revenue.pa.gov.

The income limit for applicants is \$35,000 a year for homeowners and \$15,000 annually for renters. Half of Social Security income and all Social Security cost-of-living increases are excluded.

Claimants must reapply for rebates every year because they are based on annual income and property taxes or rent paid each year. Spouses, personal representatives or estates may file rebate claims on behalf of deceased claimants who lived at least one day in 2018 and meet all other eligibility criteria.

My office also can help complete and submit the application.

Please call or visit our district office for help with these and other state-related services.

631 Pottstown Pike • Exton, PA 19341
(484) 200-8259
Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Please visit pahouse.com/otten to sign up for our email newsletters.

THE STATE COULD BE HOLDING YOUR UNCLAIMED PROPERTY

The Pennsylvania Treasury is seeking the owners of more than \$3.4 billion in unclaimed property. One in 10 Pennsylvanians has money to claim that is legally theirs. Types of unclaimed property can include checks from employers and utility companies, dividends and interest from savings accounts and stocks, and credit balances.

My office regularly checks the database for district residents to see if their names are listed, but you can conduct a search for yourself any time.

Visit www.patreasury.gov to see if you have property with the state.

If you need help, my staff can help you search or claim property in your name.

MY OFFICE CAN HELP SENIORS OBTAIN SEPTA KEY CARDS



Seniors who present a SEPTA Key Senior ID Card ride for free on all SEPTA service lines within Pennsylvania.

My district office can help complete applications and take photos for seniors who need a card. Bring with you a form of identification with a date of birth on it, such as a Pennsylvania driver's license or non-driver ID, U.S. Passport, or birth certificate.

Seniors who travel to and from New Jersey and Delaware also are eligible for a half-fare discount.



We hold Active Constituents meetings in our district office at 6:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. Your voices help to shape my legislative agenda and inform my votes in Harrisburg. Please call our office for more information and join us if you can!



Thank you to everyone who joined me during my Active Constituents meetings this spring. Your voices inform my votes in Harrisburg, and I look forward to seeing new faces in the future!



On March 27, I had the privilege of hearing the concerns of constituents and easement owners as part of the Mariner East Pipeline Town Hall: Know Your Rights! I was joined by Rep. Carolyn Comitta, Rep. Kristine Howard, and community advocates to listen to the powerful stories from affected landowners while providing answers and information to as many concerns as possible.



On March 19, I joined neighbors, community advocates, Sen. Andy Dinniman, and our colleagues in the House and Senate for the SOS Rally to call for Safety Over Sunoco and a moratorium on Mariner East. We announced the formation of the bipartisan Pipeline Safety Caucus and an evolving legislative package to ensure that the safety of our communities is put before the profits of oil and gas corporations.



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Mobile Office Hours

Visit my district office or watch for a mobile office in your neighborhood to receive help with state-related services and ask questions about legislative issues.

Mobile Office at the Spring City Food Pantry
10 a.m. – Noon
First Thursday of every month
Fellowship room at
the First United Church of Christ
145 Chestnut St, Spring City, PA 19475