

State Representative to the 50th Legislative District



Pam  
**SNYDER**



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Summer 2019

## HERE TO SERVE YOU!

### Broadband expansion efforts continue

Millions of Pennsylvania residents have access to some form of high-speed broadband internet, but the same can't be said of thousands of people who live in rural areas of our state. That's despite the passage of measures in 1993 and 2004 that were to ensure all areas of the commonwealth have access to a modern broadband telecommunications network by 2015.

Obviously, that hasn't happened, and that's extremely frustrating.

All Pennsylvanians – regardless of where they live – must have access to quality, reliable broadband service.

I remain dedicated to making that happen.

This lack of access for unserved and under-served areas of our state means:

- Students can't complete assignments at home.
- People can't take online classes.
- Companies are less likely to locate in these areas, due to lack of reliable access.
- Telemedicine can't be utilized.
- Our agriculture sector can't compete.

Recently, my bill that would direct the state to take inventory of communications assets – with the goal of providing broadband access — was approved in the House's State Government Committee.

**House Bill 305** would mandate the state Department of General Services conduct a thorough inventory of all state department, agency, commission or institution-owned communication towers, poles, bridges and facilities to

leverage existing assets to provide access to areas without broadband service.

I also have two other measures that are being considered:

- **House Resolution 354** would direct the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct an audit on the compliance of telecommunications carriers with high-speed broadband universal service deployment mandates. This committee would be responsible for determining whether these carriers have fulfilled their commitments to provide broadband availability to everyone in their distribution networks as of Dec. 31, 2015, as required by Act 67 of 1993 and Act 183 of 2004.
- **House Resolution 64** would establish a bipartisan, bicameral commission to provide recommendations to deploy broadband services.

A new report from the Center for Rural Pennsylvania proves what I have been saying for nearly three years: our state is significantly lacking in high speed broadband access.

If we can't connect to the world, we can't connect to anything. It's an issue that is important to everyone.

If Pennsylvania is going to truly hold its own in attracting businesses and investments in the commonwealth, effectively teach our students, and provide cutting-edge medicine, it is vital we be connected – not just certain areas of our state, but all Pennsylvanians.



### Bipartisan bill would enable school districts to exclude property taxes

I have partnered with state Reps. Marcia Hahn and Rosemary Brown to establish a property tax reform program that would enable school districts to exclude up to 100 percent of a homeowner's school property tax bill.

The measure would provide for the elimination of owner-occupied residential school property taxes via the homestead and farmland exclusion, also known as the property tax relief program. The measure would increase the state's personal income tax by 1.8%. That increase – from 3.07% to 4.87% – represents the amount needed to offset the property tax.

I hear from seniors and homeowners regularly about this property tax burden and how unfair and costly it is to them. We realize that our school districts need adequate funding to operate, but not on the backs of taxpayers.

The Personal Income Tax is considered one of the more stable taxes levied in our state, and this would ensure districts will have the necessary funding for their schools.

We also know how property taxes can fluctuate, due to economic downturns over the past few years, and we feel this is a viable solution for both taxpayers and school districts.

Back in 2017, an amendment to the state's constitution was approved that would provide for the expansion of the property tax relief program. This amendment increased the allowable homestead and farmstead exclusion to 100% of its assessed value. This change – if fully funded – would allow school districts to eliminate the collection of property taxes.

Our bill, House Bill 1200, was modeled after a measure that was introduced during the 2017-18 legislative session.

# Honoring a fallen hero



I was honored and humbled to take part in a special bridge dedication for Army Private First Class Brent A. McClellan, a native of Clarksville, who served with dignity and honor during the Vietnam War.

The dedication ceremony was held at State Route 1011 (Castile Run Road) between Jefferson Township and Clarksville Borough on May 24. It was especially fitting that this ceremony was held prior to the start of the Memorial Day holiday, and a reminder of the ultimate sacrifice he gave for the freedoms we hold dear.

McClellan, a 1963 graduate of Jefferson-Morgan High School, served as an infantryman when he was killed in an ambush in Vietnam on Feb. 28, 1966. Prior to his service in Vietnam, McClellan served in the honor guard at Fort Myers in Virginia, where he was chosen to stand by the grave of President John F. Kennedy.

He received the Purple Heart, the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

I had the opportunity to meet with McClellan's family and learn so much about this brave man. I was truly touched.

As we travel this bridge, let it serve as a reminder of his bravery, dedication, and service.



## Farm Bill package will ensure a strong agriculture future for Pa.

I remain committed to supporting Pennsylvania's farmers and ensuring a strong agriculture future. That's why I'm backing the state's first-ever PA Farm Bill.

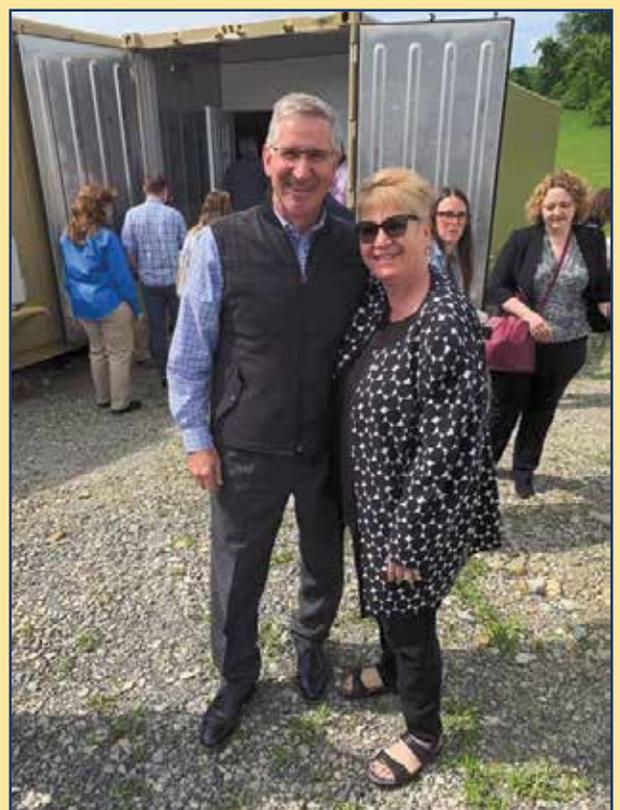
It's a comprehensive package that would invest more than \$24 million in the state's agriculture industry. If passed, these measures would provide opportunities and resources to expand animal agriculture, remove regulatory burdens, implement disaster response resources, and increase marketing opportunities for Pennsylvania-grown products.

While it's no secret that our state is a leader in agriculture – whether it's food, dairy or meat – it's important that we continue to be proactive in supporting this great industry, but also ensure there are vital supports in place to ensure its strong future.

My bill, which is included in this package, would create a grant program to reimburse federal meat inspection costs for small or new processors.

Additional measures include the creation of an agriculture business development center to assist farmers, an expansion of the successful PA Preferred program, and the establishment of a state-level specialty crop block grant program to encourage the farming of high-priority crops, such as hemp, hops and hardwoods.

I will continue to keep you updated on the progress of the PA Farm Bill.



*Rep. Snyder with state Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding.*

## Motorcycle lemon law



Automobile owners have had these protections for some time...so why shouldn't motorcycle owners?

I've been fighting for a motorcycle lemon

law since I became a legislator, and this session, the state House overwhelmingly passed my bill to extend Pennsylvania's Lemon Law protections to those who purchase or lease a new motorcycle.

Motorcycles – just like cars, vans, and trucks – are major investments, and they're subject to the same potential defects, including those that can affect their safety.

Currently, state law requires a manufacturer to fix any defect that substantially impairs the use, value or safety of a new motor vehicle if the problem occurs in the first year of ownership or within 12,000 miles. My measure would extend those same protections to consumers who purchase or lease a motorcycle by broadening the definition of "new motor vehicle" to include motorcycles.

My bill is currently being considered in the state Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure committee.

## GRANT UPDATES

I'm pleased to provide you with a brief update on several grants for the district since January:

- \$227,050 to support partnerships to connect local businesses and students, providing students with job training opportunities and resources for in-demand technical careers.
- \$140,000 in PAsmart grants for the Central Greene, Jefferson-Morgan and West Greene School Districts to help districts implement computer science programs into their curriculum.
- \$540,000 for three road improvement projects in Washington Township, Waynesburg Borough and Waynesburg University in Greene County.
- Nearly \$2.1 million to improve rail freight tracks in Greene and Fayette counties.
- \$149,000 for school security planning and technology for the West Greene School District in Greene County.
- \$313,000 for more than two dozen local fire and ambulance companies in Greene, Fayette and Westmoreland counties for repairing, building or renovating facilities.
- \$23,000 to expand breakfast programs for students in Bethlehem-Center and Carmichaels school districts.
- \$1 million to improve sewer infrastructure in Waynesburg Borough, Greene County.

## Coal's bright future

We have a bright future with coal!

I understand and appreciate the hard work our miners do, and I recently had a chance to tour the Cumberland mine near Waynesburg in Greene County.

Our miners work hard to ensure that the power stays on, no matter the weather. I felt fortunate to be able to spend some time with them and will continue to be their biggest advocate!

As co-chair of the bipartisan, bicameral Legislative Coal Caucus, I remain committed to supporting and enhancing Pennsylvania's coal mining industry.

Coal has – and remains – a vital part of the 50<sup>th</sup> Legislative District, and I am truly honored to have been named to serve on this caucus.

Our district is also home to the Bailey Mine Complex, considered one of the largest coal mines in North America. My role in this caucus will help my colleagues understand the significant role coal plays in our state.

Pennsylvania is considered the third-largest coal producing state in the country, accounting for 20% of the power generated in Pennsylvania last year and 30% of the electricity produced in the United States. In addition, the coal industry provides approximately 18,000 jobs statewide, producing the energy we need for manufacturing and a variety of industries and businesses.

I am proud to represent our miners, and I am equally proud to be the legislator in Harrisburg that is always championing coal.



## Electronics collections to be offered on September 25

Once again, my office has partnered with the Greene County Commissioners and offering an electronics collection event on Wednesday, September 25 from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Greene County Fairgrounds.

We've been very successful in the past two years to collect thousands of car loads of electronic devices from residents, and these collections ensure that harmful chemicals aren't released into the environment through improper disposal, and they go a long way in helping our overall recycling efforts in the community.

Please note that only **one television per vehicle load** can be accepted, and some waste-handling fees will apply for items

containing Freon and for fluorescent tubes.

Electronic items that will be accepted include computers – including laptops, printers and monitors – stereos, cameras, video cassette recorders, telephones, electronic cables, games and calculators.

Items that will not be accepted include sweepers, hair dryers, curling irons, sewing machines, compact discs, alkaline batteries, small kitchen appliances, smoke detectors, thermostats, manuals, paper and Styrofoam.

Please call my Carmichaels office at 724-966-8953 if you have any questions.



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 Rep. Pam Snyder

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## Kids Fest a success!

The second Kids Fest on April 13 at the Greene County Fairgrounds was a huge success (and the weather couldn't have been better)!

Thank you to everyone who helped make it fun and educational, including the Greene County Human Services team, the Greene County Commissioners, my staff and a variety of local vendors and businesses for making it happen!



**We look forward to seeing you again next year!**

