



Fall  
2019

# DANIELLE FRIEL <sup>155</sup> OTTEN

## PA STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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## LETTER TO PUC IS A COMMUNITY EFFORT



In June, the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) announced an opportunity for public comment on its Proposed Rulemaking on Hazardous Liquid Public Utility Safety Standards. After learning of this opportunity, my office collaborated with members of our community, who have been working on this issue for several years to draft a public letter and list of recommendations for expanded pipeline safety standards.

This rulemaking was an opportunity for all of us to add our voices to the conversation about pipeline regulations and to share feedback informed by our own experiences. Our letter contains specific recommendations for regulations surrounding all aspects of pipeline safety, including construction

methods, leak detection, public notification, liability and property rights-of-way.

With your help, my office staff and I were able to collect more than 300 signatures from constituents and other Pennsylvania residents impacted by Mariner East and other pipelines across the state. We hope the PUC will take our recommendations into consideration when amending the PA Public Utility Code. Amending the code will enable the PUC to more comprehensively regulate public utilities that transport petroleum products and other hazardous liquids in intrastate commerce.

Thank you to everyone who helped draft our recommendations and signed on to our letter, which can be found via [www.pahouse.com/otten](http://www.pahouse.com/otten).

## Dear Neighbor,

As your state representative, my role is to ensure that constituents of the 155th Legislative District are represented in the law-making process in Harrisburg. The work my colleagues and I do and the laws that are passed affect each of our everyday lives. On behalf of my constituents, I participate in policy hearings, committee meetings and floor debates. However, the work I do in Harrisburg would not be possible without our vocal and active community. Your input and involvement ensure that the interests of the 155th District are well represented.

While my focus is on being the best legislator for our district, my district staff strives to be the best at delivering constituent services.

Should you need to contact me regarding a problem or concern with state government, please feel free to email, write or call our district office. I also encourage you to stop by to say hello, share your views on legislative matters and get help with state-related services. We strive to provide a welcoming, informative and helpful experience to our constituents.

Sincerely,

State Representative, 155th Legislative District

# PIPELINE EARLY DETECTION AND WARNING BOARD

On July 29, I announced the introduction of House Bill 1735, which would establish a Pipeline Early Detection and Warning Board and empower the board to collect fees from pipeline operators. The fees would be used to develop early detection and warning systems to alert communities in the event of a pipeline incident.

My legislation properly places the costs associated with early detection and warning systems on pipeline operators rather than on our communities, taxpayers or first responders.

I worked with Uwchlan Safety Coalition founder and organizer Rebecca Britton to draft the legislation. Rebecca lives near the Mariner East pipeline and is a school board director for the Downingtown Area School District. As a school board director, she shares responsibility for six schools in the path or potential impact radius of the pipeline.

H.B. 1735 is an extension of the work that Rebecca and I began with our community long before either one of us thought about running for office. When we have refineries exploding at one end of the state and pipelines exploding at the other, it is incumbent upon us as elected officials to codify how we will protect public safety and hold pipeline operators responsible for the costs associated with early detection, warning and response to pipeline leaks.

You can visit my website, [www.pahouse.com/otten](http://www.pahouse.com/otten), to learn more about this bill and how it properly places shifting costs and responsibility on pipeline operators – not the public!



## LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT AMENDMENT

When first adopted, the Pennsylvania Constitution was widely regarded as one of the greatest of its time, but court cases and legislation have threatened some of its most important values. Today, our state constitution is too often exploited by special interests, denying our communities the legal authority to protect their own health and safety or move toward a sustainable future.

That is why I'm proposing an amendment to the Pennsylvania constitution to recognize the fundamental right of the people to local self-government. Under existing law, corporations can sue state and federal governments to override community attempts to protect

themselves from corporate projects with the potential to cause great personal or environmental harm.

The amendment would place the rights of citizens over the interests of private corporations. This would empower communities and their municipal governments to enact local laws without interference from corporations, or pre-emption by state or federal government. Such a change would give out municipalities the power to protect our neighborhoods from pipeline operations. I will continue to share updates on this proposed amendment.





# YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH UPDATE

I serve on the House Children & Youth Committee, and youth mental health is an issue of tremendous importance to me, personally and legislatively.

In preparation for my legislative policy hearing on youth mental health on October 18th, my staff and I have convened a Youth Mental Health Working Group made up of educators, clinicians, students, parents and community members with experience or interest in this issue, with a goal of making recommendations to legislators, school districts and the community as whole.

Our group has focused on addressing the systemic challenges facing children and young adults struggling with mental illness, the difficulty in accessing appropriate care, the cultural and environmental factors that can interfere with a child's mental and emotional wellness, and the impact of our youth mental health crisis on our children, families, schools, communities and workforce. We've researched the programs and protective practices that have worked at a local and community level, like giving our kids time to play, reducing screen time, fostering mentorships and healthy relationships, and building awareness of and access to the resources available to children, parents and care providers.

With this group, I am working on legislation that would require K-12 public schools to provide time for free-play recess or unstructured breaks each day, plus a minimum of 30 minutes of lunch each day. However, it's important for us to recognize that while mental health problems often manifest in schools—and schools are often tasked with implementing solutions—this is not a school problem, it is a community problem. It is up to all of us to find answers that will help our children.



## YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH POLICY HEARING

I will host a legislative Policy Hearing on youth mental health on Friday, Oct. 18, from 10 a.m to noon, at the Lionville YMCA on Devon Drive in Exton.

Legislators from throughout the region will be invited to hear testimony about our growing youth mental health crisis and its impact on our children, families, schools, communities and workforce.

Panelists will include psychotherapists and counselors to discuss the scope of the crisis; parents and teens sharing their perspectives, and school administrators, researchers and others working to find solutions. The hearing is open to the public, however, space is limited. Please contact my office with any questions.

**If you or someone you know is in crisis, please call Chester County Crisis at 610-280-3270, or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255, or text the Crisis Text Line: 74141.**

# DO YOU NEED A REAL ID?

Beginning Oct. 1, 2020, you will need a federally accepted form of identification to board a commercial flight or visit a military base or secure federal building. These forms include a valid passport, a military ID, or a REAL ID-compliant driver's license or photo ID.



You will not need a REAL ID-compliant license to drive. If you keep your passport current or have a valid military ID, you do not need REAL ID; however, many people find a REAL ID card more convenient to carry than a passport.

If you wish to apply for REAL ID, my office can help you through the process of tracking down the documents you need.

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

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

# 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](http://www.patreasury.gov) to see if you have property with the state. If you need assistance, my staff can help you search or claim property in your name.



## CHIP

CHIP is the Children's Health Insurance Program – Pennsylvania's program to provide health insurance to uninsured children and teens. Regardless of why your child might not have health insurance, CHIP might be able to help you. Parents who are uncertain if their child will qualify are encouraged to call CHIP at 1-800-986-5437 or visit [CHIPcoversPAKids.com](http://CHIPcoversPAKids.com).

## SENIOR SERVICES

The prime source for information on services and programs that benefit older adults in PA is the Department of Aging. This department has agencies in all 67 counties to help you with transportation, prescription assistance, employment, placement and casework services, and much more! For more information, please call my office or the Chester County Department of Aging Services.



## VOTING

My office can provide Voter Registration Forms and Absentee Ballot applications. You can also visit the Chester County Board of Elections, call 1-877-VOTESPA to request a form, or download forms or register online through the PA Department of State website at [www.votespa.com](http://www.votespa.com).

## PROPERTY TAX/ RENT REBATE DEADLINE EXTENDED TO DECEMBER 31

Pennsylvanians 65 or older, widows and widowers 50 or older, and persons 18 or older with disabilities may be eligible for a rebate on property tax or rent paid last year. The income limit is \$35,000 a year for homeowners and \$15,000 annually for renters. Half of Social Security income is excluded. The maximum standard rebate is \$650. Our office can help you complete and submit your application, or you can find forms online at [www.revenue.pa.gov](http://www.revenue.pa.gov).



# 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. Seniors traveling to New Jersey or Delaware are eligible for a half-fare discount with their SEPTA Key Senior ID Card.

My district office can process applications and take photos for seniors who need a card. **You must be at least 65 years of age.** No appointment is necessary. Please bring with you a form of ID with a date of birth on it, such as a PA driver's license or non-driver ID, U.S. Passport or birth certificate.



**Active constituents and community members are the heart of our legislative district! I am grateful to have had the chance to connect with so many of our neighbors over the summer, and I look forward to meeting and engaging with many more of you at home or in Harrisburg this fall.**



*Lilly Minor, a senior at Owen J. Roberts, came to my office after finding that students often have no access to menstrual hygiene products in school bathrooms. I worked with Lilly to draft legislation to provide menstrual hygiene products at no cost in each bathroom of public schools serving students in grades 6 through 12. Lilly and representatives from several advocacy groups will come to Harrisburg on Oct. 22 to support Lilly's Bill, H.B. 1708.*



*On July 25, I attended a policy hearing titled "Working Toward A Sustainable Future," hosted by Rep. Carolyn Comitta. I will continue to advocate for sustainability to protect our clean air and water, create jobs, and ensure a positive future for Pennsylvania.*



*On June 19, hundreds of concerned Pennsylvanians traveled to Harrisburg to advocate for bipartisan legislation to transition the commonwealth to 100% renewable energy. Many dedicated constituents visited my Harrisburg office to discuss strategies to secure a renewable energy future here in Pennsylvania. As your state representative, I will continue to fight for a clean, safe and sustainable future.*

# Mobile Office Hours

## Mobile Office at the Spring City Food Pantry

First Thursday of every month  
10 a.m. – Noon

Fellowship Room  
First United Church of Christ  
145 Chestnut Street  
Spring City, PA 19475

## Mobile Office at Henrietta Hankin Library

Second Tuesday of every month  
9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Henrietta Hankin Library  
215 Windgate Drive  
Chester Springs, PA 19425

## MY OFFICE CAN HELP YOU WITH:

- Car registrations, special tags, titles and license applications
- Disability plates and placards
- Questions about REAL ID
- Birth certificate applications
- Information on financial assistance for higher education
- Unemployment compensation problems
- Issues with Department of Human Services (SNAP benefits, Medical Assistance)
- Requests for literature of all kinds (bills, regulations, statutes, PA maps, senior citizen information, student aid information, etc.)
- Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding local accomplishments and family milestones
- Complaints or questions about utilities and the PUC
- Consumer complaints
- Complaints about state road conditions
- Tours of the State Capitol for individuals or groups
- PACE cards for senior citizens
- Complaints and problems with insurance companies
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate questions
- SEPTA Senior Key ID Cards
- ...and more!

*Please call or visit our district office Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. for help with these and other state related services. Visit [pahouse.com/Otten](http://pahouse.com/Otten) to sign up for our email newsletters.*

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## CONSTITUENT SURVEY

Gun violence in our communities has become a public health crisis. I believe that we can agree on commonsense gun safety legislation to protect our communities while upholding the Second Amendment. Please scan the QR code or go to [tinyurl.com/FallSurvey155](http://tinyurl.com/FallSurvey155) to take this short survey and share your views with me.

- ☐ Are you a gun owner?
- ☐ Do you support universal background checks?
- ☐ Do you support Extreme Risk Protective Orders (ERPOs), also known as “red flag laws?”
- ☐ Should gun-purchase loopholes be closed?
- ☐ Should certain military-style weapons be banned?
- ☐ Should high-capacity magazines be banned?



[tinyurl.com/FallSurvey155](http://tinyurl.com/FallSurvey155)

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