



Isabella FITZGERALD

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
203RD LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

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SPRING 2019

Dignity for Incarcerated Women – Feminine Hygiene Products

When it comes to personal care, all women should be treated with dignity and respect. I recently introduced a bill as part of a package of legislation that would give voice and help to incarcerated women and parents in Pennsylvania.

House Bill 1008 would require state prisons to provide at least two varieties of sanitary pads and two varieties of tampons to all female inmates at no cost, regardless of their financial means. Women would not have to demonstrate proof of need or undergo a medical authorization or diagnosis to receive the products. While I appreciate that the Department of Corrections recently changed its internal policy to provide these products, my legislation is critical in cementing this change in state law and ensuring that future administrations cannot easily rescind the practice.

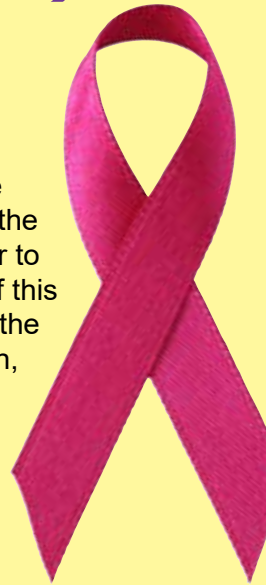
For years, incarcerated women have been forced to purchase specific feminine products from the prison commissary. Limited in size and choice, women in the criminal justice system continue to face challenges when buying or asking for feminine hygiene products, simply because of a biological need that they cannot control. It is unacceptable that these items were, at one point, not even provided to women in our prisons.

We owe our incarcerated women dignity and respect. As legislators, it is our duty to fix this issue and prevent any future administrations from taking away no-cost feminine hygiene products. This could bring parity to female inmates by providing them with the vital, basic products they need to feel comfortable as they serve their sentence.



Breast Density Screening Coverage

In 2019, more than 41,000 women will die from breast cancer in the United States. In order to promote awareness of this disease and increase the rates of early detection, it is imperative that all effective screening methods be made available and affordable.



I have introduced legislation (H.B. 1245) that would extend insurance coverage for breast cancer screening methods recommended for women with high breast density and increased risk factors.

While high breast density in women is common and not abnormal, it makes it far more difficult to detect cancer on a standard mammogram. Supplemental screening methods such as ultrasounds and magnetic resonance imaging (MRIs) can markedly improve rates of early cancer detection in women with dense breasts or at an increased risk of developing the disease. Educating women about the risk of breast cancer is futile if we do not also facilitate affordable access to early detection methods.

Childcare Centers- Environmental Health Assessments

When we send our children to day care, we do so assuming their safety will come first. However, under current law, day cares are not required to perform environmental health assessments before operating. This could mean day care centers are operating in buildings that were once home to dry cleaners, nail salons, funeral homes, and other businesses that typically use hazardous chemicals in their day-to-day operations. These chemicals could be left behind and potentially harm the children attending the day care center.

Accordingly, I will be introducing legislation to require that new day care centers, should they wish to operate in a building that previously housed a high-hazard business, perform environmental health assessments to ensure that the building is free of harmful chemicals and safe to house children.

We can never be too careful when it comes to our children.

Full Day Kindergarten

House Bill 641 would implement full-day kindergarten as a formal component of basic education. Under this bill, the board of school directors in each school district would be required to establish and maintain a full-time kindergarten program for children between the ages of three and five by the 2020-2021 school year.

This legislation would also require the Department of Education, with the assistance of a newly created Full-Day Kindergarten Implementation Advisory Committee, to develop and implement a state plan for full-day kindergarten, and to advise school districts on how to implement a full-day kindergarten program, along with providing technical assistance and other resources to school districts.

State Rep. Stephen Kinsey and I have also teamed up to sponsor a House Resolution mandating an impact study of universal free full-day kindergarten in order to better understand exactly what we would be getting into if we decided to move forward.

This study would provide a comprehensive look, including impacts on children, families, education institutions, and communities. Through this proposed legislation, the PA Department of Education would contract with an independent third party to gather feedback and analyze data from a variety of sources, including the parents and their families, and school districts. These findings and recommendations would be submitted to the General Assembly after one year to determine whether Pennsylvania should consider establishing universal access to full-day kindergarten for all children ages five and up.

Educating children in a positive, structured environment where they can begin to learn at an early age enhances their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development. All children deserve to have these benefits so they will have the best chance at succeeding as they grow older.

WHAT I'VE BEEN UP TO!!!! Martin Luther King Day of Service

I hosted a day of service in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday on January 15, 2019. Attendees participated in "A World without Gun Violence" banner project. Community Members, Philippian Baptist Church Girl Scout Troops #9326 & #9455, 14th & 35th Police District Captains and Officers as well as elected officials created banners expressing their vision of

what a world without gun violence would mean to them. The banners gave opportunity for open dialogue between the elected officials, police and attendees on how individuals felt about gun violence, ideas for change and how to remain safe in our communities. In addition, all in attendance had access to state government-related programs and resources and a weatherization workshop where each participant received FREE weatherization kits for their homes.



Semi-Automatic Assault Rifle: 72 Hour Waiting Period

Mass shootings, often committed with semi-automatic assault rifles, can often be crimes of passion, such as individuals who are enraged in the moment but would not commit a murder if they had time to calm down. One study found that requiring a waiting period prior to purchasing a gun can reduce gun homicides by 17% by providing for a “cooling off period.”

In an instance on July 30, 2016, a man entered a party attended by his ex-girlfriend with a legally purchased AR-15, taking three innocent lives and injuring a fourth person in the attack. At his sentencing in 2017, he

stated that he had acted in a state of shock after feeling, “hopeless, suicidal and outraged with jealousy.” He added that had his ability to quickly purchase an assault rifle been impeded, he would likely not have committed the shooting.

I plan to introduce legislation that would establish a 72-hour waiting period for purchases of semi-automatic assault rifles in hopes of reducing the mass shootings that have plagued our nation and devastated our communities. We need to work to protect all Pennsylvanians from future firearm violence.

Economic Empowerment Business Summit

The Economic Empowerment Business Summit, “Continuing the Journey” was held on January 19, 2019 at the Masjidullah Center for Human Excellence. Attendees took part in a choice of five workshops:

- How To Start A Business
- How To Grow and Sustain Your Business
- Women Entrepreneurship
- Millennials On The Move
- How to Manage your Balance and Avoid the Pitfalls of Litigation



Congressman Dwight Evans was the Keynote Speaker of our Economic Empowerment Business Summit.



It was a privilege to be able to get our children and community leaders together.



61st Ward Town Hall



It was a pleasure to meet with my constituents and hear their concerns at our 61st Ward Town Hall!

Philly Spring Clean-Up

When we work together, we can make great changes to our community! I was excited for our turnout at the Spring Clean-Up event. I hope to see you at our next one.



Property Tax Rebate Assistance – Deadline, June 30th!

Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program applications for the 2018 tax year are available online – and my staff can help you file yours for free!

You can get your application at www.revenue.pa.gov or by calling 1-888-222-9190.

The rebate program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians 65 or older, widows and widowers 50 or older, and people with disabilities 18 or older. The income limit is \$35,000 a year for homeowners and \$15,000 annually for renters. Half of Social Security income is excluded and the maximum standard rebate is \$650.

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.

The deadline to apply for a rebate on property taxes or rent paid in 2018 is June 30, and the rebates normally are distributed beginning July 1. So, the sooner you file, the sooner you will receive your money!

Remember to contact my office for free Property Tax/Rent Rebate assistance. My staff and I are here to serve you!

Upcoming Events

35th Ward

TOWN HALL & HEALTH FAIR

Hosted by State Reps. Isabella Fitzgerald, Jared Solomon, & Jason Dawkins

Saturday, June 15
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Lawncrest Recreation Center

6000 Rising Sun Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19111

Speakers:

State Representative Isabella Fitzgerald
State Representative Jared Solomon
State Representative Jason Dawkins

Attending:

Phila. Homestead • Phila. Senior Citizen Real Estate Tax Freeze • PCA Customer Assistance Program (CAP) • Vision & Hearing Screenings Matching Energy Assistance Fund (MEAF) • Exercise & Workout Class Low Income Usage Reduction Program (LIURP) • Pa. Dept. of Aging Pa. Dept. of Health • Pa. Dept. of Human Services Phila. Dept. of Health

Providing information on:

Pa. Property Tax/Rent Rebate • Pa. Unclaimed Property Senior Septa Keycard (65 years & Older) • PennDot On-line Registration

Come meet the Representatives of the 35th Ward and their staff. They will be available to provide constituents with information on state government-related programs and services available.



State Representative
ISABELLA FITZGERALD
203rd Legislative District
(215) 549-0220



State Representative
JARED G. SOLOMON
202nd Legislative District
(215) 342-6340



State Representative
JASON DAWKINS
179th Legislative District
(215) 744-7901

Senior SEPTA Photo ID

My office is partnering with SEPTA to process SEPTA Key Senior Photo ID Card applications.

SEPTA staff will be present and take photos for the SEPTA Key Senior cards, after which the card will be mailed directly to you.

Applicants should bring one of the following types of identification:

- Pennsylvania Driver/Non-Driver ID
- Birth Certificate or Baptismal Certificate
- Yellow PACE Card (Pharmaceutical Assistance Contract for the Elderly)
- Statement of Age Verification from the U.S. Social Security Administration
- Armed Forces Discharge/ Separation Papers
- Resident Alien Card or Passport/ Naturalization Papers

Please note that SEPTA phased out the paper PA Senior Citizen Transit ID Card. Seniors will need the SEPTA Key Senior Photo ID card to receive free rides on Transit and Regional Rail.

Valid Pennsylvania Driver's Licenses and Non-Driver IDs with a magnetic stripe on the back can still be swiped at turnstiles and fare boxes; new licenses issued by PennDOT on or after July 2017 do not have magnetic stripes and cannot be used.



- **Saturday, June 15** – 35th Ward Town Hall and Health Fair
- **Thursday, July 4** – Lawncrest Independence Day Parade
- **Tuesday, July 9** – Farmers Market Kick-Off Day
- **Tuesday, July 30** – Economic Empowerment Business Summit Next Steps – How To Start A Business
- **Tuesday, August 6** – National Night Out
- **Thursday, August 22** – Back to School - Kutz For Kids



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My office can help you with:

- Car registrations, special tags, titles and license applications
- Information on financial assistance for higher education
- Unemployment compensation problems
- Birth certificate applications
- Pennsylvania income tax problems
- Problems with the Department of Human Services (food stamps, income assistance)
- Requests for literature of all kinds – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania 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
- Problems or questions about PennDOT
- Tours of the State Capitol for individuals or groups
- Disability plates and placards
- PACE cards for senior citizens
- Complaints and problems with insurance companies
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions
- Problems or questions about the state lottery
- Local government officials' problems with state agencies

Any problem with state government!

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twitter.com/Replzzy.



Stay connected to what's happening in Harrisburg and in the community by signing up for my email updates. Go to www.pahouse.com/Replzzy to sign up. You can also follow me on social media!