



LEGISLATIVE

Year in Review

159th Legislative District

REP. BRIAN KIRKLAND

Winter 2020



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Appointment to Gov. Wolf's Special Council on Gun Violence

In early December, I was appointed to join Governor Tom Wolf's Special Council on Gun Violence. I immediately began my tenure by participating in a regional hearing with the Special Council on Dec. 5 at Temple University in Philadelphia.

The Special Council was created as part of Wolf's executive order signed in August and is tasked with studying and making recommendations to prevent and reduce gun violence.

I'm honored by the appointment, and I take very

seriously the epidemic of gun violence in our commonwealth. I've already been hard at work bringing well-needed resources to the City of Chester, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to expand that work statewide. I also will continue to participate in the vital conversation over how we significantly reduce gun violence in Pennsylvania.

This appointment fits with my committee and caucus assignments with the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, which include the Children & Youth, Urban Affairs, Gaming and Tourism Committees and the PA SAFE Caucus.



Dear Neighbor,

We just reached the midpoint of my second term representing all of you in the 159th Legislative District as a state representative. It remains my distinct pleasure and honor to serve the fine folks of Chester, Chester Township, Eddystone, Lower Chichester, Marcus Hook, Parkside, Trainer, Upland and parts of Ridley and Upper Chichester.

Whether here at home in Delaware County or out in Harrisburg at the State Capitol, I am doing my best to work for you and improve the everyday lives of residents in the 159th and across the commonwealth.

In 2019, that meant a variety of legislation and events, a lot of which you can learn about in this annual Year in Review newsletter.

I've introduced legislation such as H.B. 738, which would require identification for purchase of firearm ammunition, and H.B. 740, which would ban sales of

"realistic" toy guns to children without an adult present.

Just this winter, I was appointed to join Governor Tom Wolf's Special Council on Gun Violence. Wolf created the council this summer to study and make recommendations that will help reduce gun violence in Pennsylvania.

I also introduced H.B. 1967, which would require health care providers to supply, without charge, a copy of medical charts and records to veterans who are homeless, and H.B. 1182, which would require landlords to allow early termination of a lease, without penalty, for tenants who move into facilities to receive hospice or palliative care.

Closer to home, I've hosted events and activities such as my Community Resource Fair, World Cancer Day, a financial seminar, expos for seniors and for children, a Karaoke and Family Resource Night, and my Across Colors Cultural Festival.

The 159th has also benefited from various grants that improve schools, infrastructure and the environment, as I and my House Democratic colleagues continue to push our Plan4PA, which puts people first. We're fighting for good jobs, affordable health care, quality schools, a cleaner environment, election reform and a fair economy.

To follow along for news out of Harrisburg and the 159th Legislative District, follow me on Facebook at either /RepBrianK or /Brian159th, or visit my House page at pahouse.com/Kirkland.

And please reach out to my office if you need help with any state-related issue. It's a privilege to serve as your state representative.

Sincerely,

Rep. Brian Kirkland





Saluting real heroes

It was an honor this fall to have several real heroes visit my Capitol office in Harrisburg, as I welcomed firefighters from the City of Chester.

We discussed and ultimately passed some very important legislation that will better serve our firefighters, who regularly risk their own safety just to keep us safe.

But how did these guys have the nerve to try and out-dress their state Rep.? Ha! Just kidding, fellas. Thank you for all that you do!



2019-2020 INCOME GUIDELINES for homeowners and renters

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	MAXIMUM INCOME
1	\$18,735
2	\$25,365
3	\$31,995
4	\$38,625
5	\$45,255
6	\$51,885
7	\$58,515
8	\$65,145
9	\$71,775
10	\$78,405



EACH ADDITIONAL PERSON: ADD \$6,630

Financial assistance for home heating available

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program is available for low-income families and individuals who need help staying warm this winter.

LIHEAP offers cash grants of \$200 to \$1,000 that are sent directly to the utility company to defray heating costs for eligible households, and crisis benefits of up to \$600 for households in immediate danger of being without heat. Remember: These are grants and do not have to be repaid.

Contact my office at 610-876-6420 for help.

Mark down this number!

One way I occasionally provide news updates and alerts about upcoming events is through telephone.

All calls originating from me and other House lawmakers use the same phone number, which means it sometimes gets marked as spam.

So, if you see the following number on your caller ID – 717-780-6000 – that's me calling you with important news or a reminder of events I'm holding in our area.

KNOW THIS
NUMBER:

(717)
780-
6000

School safety a priority for Chester-area school districts

This year, I was proud to congratulate area school districts for securing school safety grants from Pennsylvania's School Safety and Security Committee.

That included a grant of \$443,172 in May for Chester-Upland School District, and then another \$133,635 from the Pennsylvania Department of Education for equipment, programs and school resource and police officers for Chester Community Charter School, The Chester Charter Scholars Academy and Chester-Upland in October.

School safety is, and will always remain, a priority for all of us. I'm hopeful these grants help create an improved feeling of safety and security for our children.



\$576K IN SCHOOL SAFETY GRANTS

Let's abolish death by incarceration

In Pennsylvania, if you're sentenced to life in prison, you do not have the possibility of parole. End of story.

That's what our laws say. But our laws need to be reformed.

Not all people sentenced to life in prison are convicted of murder or sex crimes. Some people who receive those sentences, for example, are suffering from the disease of addiction and are handed such a sentence after multiple drug arrests.

I believe that life sentences without the possibility of parole are wrong.

People who have reformed themselves should be able to work toward a path that leads them out of a life behind bars.

House Bill 135 and S.B. 942 – both introduced in 2019 – would not only offer a humane solution to our flawed system, but they would save an incredible amount of money that would otherwise be spent to house and care for people incarcerated for their lifetime.

It is time to end death by incarceration in Pennsylvania.



NEW GRANTS AWARDED

Developments on tap for county parks

In November, I announced two grants totaling \$97,800 to be used toward local parks and recreation improvements.

The grants were among dozens awarded by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources through its Community Conservation Partnerships Program.

Here in Delco, \$57,800 was awarded for rehabilitation and further development of Upland County Park in Upland, plus \$40,000 to Upper Chichester Township to prepare a Comprehensive Recreation, Park and Open Space Plan.

This is outstanding news for both Upland Borough and Upper Chichester, as our local parks and recreation sites provide a necessary sense of community. I'm glad both municipalities will benefit from this funding to improve and develop these spaces.

At Upland County Park, the funding will help construct wall seating, pedestrian walkways, parking area and stormwater management measure, plus the installation of fitness stations and play equipment with required safety surfacing. Additionally, there are site improvements planned related to ADA access, landscaping and more.

Does the state have something that belongs to you?

Have you checked the Pennsylvania Treasury's Unclaimed Property database?

Unclaimed property can include a closed bank account, uncashed checks, certificates of deposit or lost stocks and bonds sent to the state because the owner could not be found.

My office can help you search the database to see if there's property in your name and help you claim it. Contact my office at 610-876-6420 or search online at www.patreasury.gov.

CONTINUING THE ICONIC ACROSS COLORS CULTURAL FESTIVAL



In August, we celebrated the 25th annual Across Colors Cultural Festival.

With artists Blind Date, Breakwater, Gospel Disciples and Best Kept Soul, plus countless activities available for children and adults alike, it was an incredible day in Chester celebrating music and culture.

I'm looking forward to doing this again in 2020!



Junior lawmakers enjoy summer camp in Trainer

Junior lawmakers took the time to write me in Harrisburg, so I decided to repay their enterprising spirit by teaming with a local church in Trainer by inviting them to a free summer camp with trivia and prizes.



Marcus Hook Community Day 2019!!

Marcus Hook Community Day always delivers a great time, and 2019 was no exception.



Karaoke and Family Resource Night

Some of us can carry a tune. Rest of us? Well, we can at least try. But we all can benefit from learning about the resources available in our area.

That's exactly what my Karaoke and Family Resource Night is designed to do: teach you about services available while serenading one another with some fabulous vocals!



Scholarships for our youth

It is always my distinct pleasure to honor various accomplishments from our residents, especially our youth. Whether it's winning essay contests or earning scholarships at the Juneteenth Festival, our determined citizens always make me proud.





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Do you need a REAL ID?

Beginning Oct. 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 flight or enter a secure federal building or military installation.

Information about REAL ID can be found on PennDOT's website, under the REAL ID section: www.dmv.pa.gov/REALID. Please contact my office at 610-876-6420 for help obtaining your REAL ID or with any questions or concerns.



Improving our district

Parts of the 159th earned some substantial grants, loans and tax credits in 2019 aimed at improving our lives in a variety of ways.

That includes:

- \$1.4 million for Delaware County family, women, victim and related services from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.
- \$113,000 in fresh food grants to elementary schools in Chester-Upland, Chichester and Ridley school districts via the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.
- \$9.98 million low-interest loan to improve stormwater systems to mitigate localized flooding and erosion and to improve water quality in the City of Chester.
- \$52,000 in tax credits to the City of Chester through the Neighborhood Assistance Program to promote community participation and collaborations among nonprofits, businesses and residents.

My office also regularly reaches out to the community through various events and gatherings, many of which are included in this newsletter. That also includes:

- World Cancer Day Luncheon in Eddystone to provide information and hear stories that touch our hearts.
- Passing out turkeys in Chester and Trainer so folks can enjoy healthier, happier holidays!

