



# STATE REPRESENTATIVE

# Liz Hanbidge

## 61ST LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

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Dear Neighbors:

It's been my privilege to be your representative over the past year, and I'm looking forward to another exciting year ahead!

My first year in office included many highlights: introducing and supporting bills that I think will improve the lives of everyday Pennsylvanians, floor debates and rallies, welcoming groups to the Capitol, and seeing many of you at local events. I was also able to host the first county-wide Democratic legislative summit with federal, state, and county officials discussing the issues most directly affecting our lives, and, as the Chair for the Democratic Caucus of Montgomery County, I am in the process of hosting a series of trainings aimed at helping state representatives' offices provide better services, training local township employees and officials about state-level grants, and helping local nonprofits identify and apply for grants.

I very much enjoyed hosting my 8th local town hall and open house event in January, in addition to the other events I've hosted throughout the district this year. Some of my most popular events included a Suicide Prevention Symposium, a Juvenile Addiction Prevention Forum, three REAL ID Informational Forums, a Young Adult Financial Literacy Forum, a Spotted Lanternfly Forum, a Disability Policy Committee Hearing, a Community Shredding Event, and a Senior Health and Wellness Expo.

In the interest of constantly improving the state-government services and access that my office and I offer, I want to highlight some of the feedback we received from our recent district survey. While we hosted town hall events at many different times and via different mediums (including both telephone and in-person) the majority of you (73%) preferred in-person forums. The preferred town hall times are Saturday mornings (22%) and weeknights (32%), and the majority of people receiving my weekly email find the content balance and frequency to be appropriate.

Please keep in touch with me about your needs and the legislative endeavors you feel are most important for me to champion. Some of the bills that I've sponsored have developed from conversations I've had with constituents about issues they're facing or things that are especially meaningful to them. I can best represent you if I know you and your needs, so help me keep the conversation going. I enjoy hearing from you!

Sincerely,

*Liz Hanbidge*

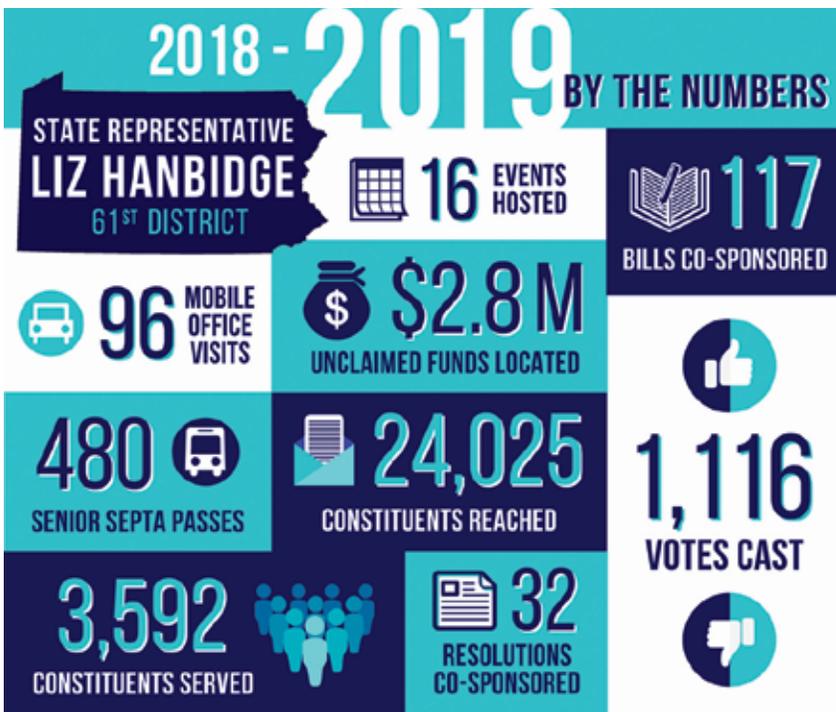


#### MEET THE STAFF

**Melissa - District Director**  
**Meredith - Communications Director**  
**Meg - Constituent Services Advisor**  
**Nicole - Constituent Services Advisor**  
**Maureen - Constituent Services Advisor**

Standing from left are Meredith Sisson, Meg Diehl, Melissa Cosmo, Nicole Thompson

Seated from left are Rep. Liz Hanbidge and Maureen Ruf



# CENSUS INFORMATION

The 2020 Census determines how many Congressional seats and electoral votes each state gets and helps decide how billions of federal tax dollars will be allocated over the next decade. Pennsylvania lost more funding than 48 other states in 2010 because of a poor showing in the Census.

To ensure an accurate census count for our district, everyone in the district needs to return their Census information! There are more ways to reply than ever this year.

Additionally, Montgomery County needs over 1000 census workers. You can apply and learn more about the importance of the Census at [Census.gov](http://Census.gov).



## SIGN UP FOR MY WEEKLY EMAIL

I send out a weekly email about legislative happenings, local events, traffic updates, office services and upcoming events. If you haven't done so already, I encourage you to sign up on my website at [www.PAHouse.com/Hanbidge/EmailSignUp](http://www.PAHouse.com/Hanbidge/EmailSignUp)

## ✓ Modernizing the vote for 2020

Effective for the April 2020 Primary Election  
More info | [www.votespa.com](http://www.votespa.com) | Register online



### More ways to vote



**No-excuse mail-in voting**  
New option to vote by mail  
Without providing an excuse



**Permanent mail-in ballot list**  
Receive applications for  
mail-in or absentee ballots  
for all elections

### More accessible elections



**More time to register**  
Deadline to register to vote is  
now 15 days before  
an election



**Extended voting period**  
Request a mail-in or absentee  
ballot up to 50 days before  
an election

**Extended deadline**  
Submit mail-in or absentee ballot  
by 8 p.m. on Election Day

## VOTE 2020 AND ACT 77 UPDATE

After the passage of Act 77 of 2019, Pennsylvania is ushering in numerous changes to our voting system, and I need your help spreading the word about these reforms. This is the first time in more than 80 years that the state has seen such changes to our voting systems. These changes allow more secure and convenient voting for all but didn't include funds for telling voters about the new law.

Please tell your friends, neighbors, family and colleagues that they can now vote by mail without an excuse! For the general election, the new system, which includes paper ballots in our county and the elimination of straight party voting, is expected to take significantly longer per voter, so it may be more convenient to use the mail-in option. At present, Montgomery County Voter Services hasn't updated its website to reflect the changes but is expected to do so sometime this month.

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – MY PENDING LEGISLATION

## HOUSE BILL 2246

The doctor-patient relationship is one founded upon trust, yet patients are unaware of what happens to them while they are under anesthesia. In some teaching hospitals, medical students may be asked to perform a pelvic, rectal, or prostate exam on an anesthetized patient without his or her explicit consent, a clear violation of that trust.

My bill seeking to stop pelvic, rectal, and prostate exams from being unnecessarily performed by medical students on unconscious patients doesn't limit how doctors treat patients, or how emergency procedures are handled, it

simply requires explicit consent when medical students are performing unnecessary invasive examinations for training purposes.

If you want to join me in working to protect patients' rights, I've created an email form to help spread the word about the bill. You can find it on my website at [www.pahouse.com/Hanbridge](http://www.pahouse.com/Hanbridge). Your email can help ensure it gets a Committee vote and then moves to the House floor.

## HOUSE BILL 2192

Bisphenol A (BPA) is an estrogen-mimicking industrial chemical used primarily in the production of polycarbonate plastics and epoxy resins – including food and beverage storage containers such as plastic water bottles. In June 2012, the Food and Drug Administration banned the use of BPA in baby bottles and children's drinking cups, expressing concern that the chemical can have potentially harmful effects on fetuses, infants, and young children. However, without congressional action, states have been left to enact their own regulations concerning the use of BPA in other consumer products.

In an effort to protect Pennsylvania's youngest citizens from the potential dangers associated with BPA exposure, I have introduced legislation to keep BPA out of all food and beverage containers intended for infant use – including baby bottles, cups, pacifiers, teether items, food containers, and similar items. In addition, any substance used in place of BPA would not be permitted to include carcinogens or reproductive toxicants as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

My bill was referred to the Consumer Affairs Committee on Jan. 10, 2020.

## HOUSE BILL 2193

Each year, hundreds of thousands of horses are sold at auctions around the nation. Some auctions are known for the high caliber of horses that they sell. Unfortunately, many horses are sold at "slaughter auctions," where they are sold for a per-pound price like cattle, loaded onto trucks and taken across the border to Mexico or Canada to be slaughtered for human consumption.

While most horses that are brought to auctions are simply no longer wanted by their owners, some horses come to these auctions through illegitimate means. Many horses have been lost by, or stolen from, owners who want them back, and many of them have identifying markings or microchip implants in them.

In an effort to cut down on the number of horses sold at "slaughter auctions," I have introduced legislation that would require horse auctions within the Commonwealth to determine if a horse has a tattoo, brand marking, or implanted microchip. The auction company would be required to place this information, with pictures, on its publicly accessible website at least 72 hours before the horse may be sold at an auction. The auction company would also be required to keep records of all horse markings for one year after the sale.

This bill was referred to the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee on Jan. 10, 2020.

## SEPTA PASS UPDATE

Please note that SEPTA is providing a one-year extension of all SEPTA Key Senior ID Cards expiring in 2020. Seniors with a card expiring in 2020 can continue to ride SEPTA using their current card for 12 months beyond the printed date of expiration. Our office will continue to work with SEPTA as they develop a process to allow my office to handle card renewals.



## HOUSE BILL 1843

More than 100,000 Pennsylvania children suffer from food or insect allergies, and over 1,000 of these children have an allergy so severe that an exposure could be fatal. Although many insurance companies do cover epinephrine injections, it has come to my attention that many low-cost, short-term insurance plans that low-income families rely on do not cover these prescriptions for children. It is unacceptable that any child be denied access to this lifesaving intervention.

We have all read the stories over the past few years of Pennsylvania families facing the rising cost of medicines and the increasing frustration over exorbitant prices of prescription drugs. Unfortunately, very little action has been taken at the federal level to control these

rising costs. Our current political environment has also bred uncertainty as it relates to healthcare access and affordability. What may be covered today may not be covered tomorrow.

The governor of Illinois just signed the first law in the country requiring any state-regulated health insurance company to cover the cost of doctor-prescribed medically necessary epinephrine pens for children under age 18. Rep. Kristine Howard and I have introduced this bill to make Pennsylvania the second state in the U.S. to require coverage of epinephrine pens for children across our commonwealth.

The bill has been referred to the Insurance Committee.

## HOUSE BILL 1656

Researchers in Iowa State University's Ivy College of Business analyzed national mortgage data from 1990 to 2015 and found the approval rate for same-sex couples was 3% to 8% lower than heterosexual couples. Based on this data, same-sex applicants were 73% more likely to be denied and, if approved, paid more in interest and fees.

Taken over the course of a 30-year mortgage, increased interest rates can add up to tens of thousands of dollars for same-sex couples. While

the research cites a difference in finance fees averaging less than 0.5 percent, the combined costs added up to as much as \$86 million annually.

While mortgage applicants are not required to disclose their sexual orientation, researchers suggest that perception and internal bias is just as damaging in terms of discrimination. The federal Fair Housing and Equal Credit Opportunity Acts prohibit discrimination based on a borrower's race, gender, marital status or

religion, but neither specifically lists sexual orientation.

My legislation aims to combat this discrimination by amending PA's Credit Services Act. The bill adds denying credit or increasing charges and fees based on sexual orientation, gender identity or expression as a "prohibited activity" for credit service companies.

My bill was referred to the Commerce Committee on June 19, 2019.

## HOUSE BILL 2105 – HOUSE RESOLUTION 628

According to the US Census Bureau, 1.1 million Pennsylvanians – 8.6% of the state's population – live with hearing loss. Additionally, approximately 15% of American adults report trouble hearing. Among adults aged 70 and older who could benefit from hearing aids, fewer than 30% have ever used them.

In Pennsylvania, hearing aids are only required to be covered for Medicaid recipients under age 21, while all other populations in need of hearing assistance are forced to pay for hearing aids out-of-pocket.

Hearing aids range in costs of \$1,000 - \$4,000 – with an average cost of \$2,300.

To address these high out-of-pocket costs and help Pennsylvanians who struggle with hearing loss, I have introduced a bill that would require health insurance policies to provide coverage for hearing aids.

This bill was referred to the Insurance Committee on December 9, 2019.

As a companion to this bill, I sponsored House Resolution 628 urging the Congress of the United States to act on legislation that would expand Medicare coverage to include hearing aids. Although the bill was expected to be "controversial," it was unanimously reported out of committee and should receive strong support on the House Floor.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Scam Prevention Forum for Seniors



February 19, 2020  
10 a.m. - 12 p.m.  
Foulkeways at Gwynedd  
Gwynedd, PA

## Town Hall



March 30, 2020  
6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
Towamencin Township Building  
Lansdale, PA

## Veteran's Expo



April 19, 2020  
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Montgomery County Community College,  
College Hall  
Blue Bell, PA

## Shredding Event



May 16, 2020  
9 a.m. - 11 a.m.  
Wissahickon High School  
Ambler, PA

## REP. HANBIDGE IN THE COMMUNITY



Celebrating National Dogs in Politics Day with Rep. Hanbidge's dog, Kaida, at a Local Government Committee precommittee meeting.



First Town Hall of 2020, held at Foulkeways at Gwynedd.



House resolution observing October as Civics Education Awareness Month and honoring the Montgomery County Bar Association's 10th year of its 6th grade civics "Law and Liberty" program.



Honoring North Penn's Athletic Achievements on the House floor.



Representative Liz Hanbidge

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## WHAT'S INSIDE?

- ★ Upcoming Events
- ★ Legislative Updates
- ★ Voting and Census News

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## MY OFFICE CAN HELP YOU WITH

- PennDOT issues – vehicle registrations, special tags, handicap placards and driver's license applications
- Obtaining and completing state forms
- Voter registration and absentee ballot applications
- Unemployment compensation, disability and workers' compensation
- Birth and death certificates
- Problems with the Department of Human Services (food stamps, medical and income assistance)
- Requests for literature – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information
- Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding accomplishments and family milestones
- Complaints or questions about utilities and the Public Utility Commission
- Complaints and problems with insurance companies
- Renewal of state-issued licenses or certifications
- Unclaimed Property/Treasurer's Office claims
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions
- PACE/PACENET prescription-drug applications for senior citizens
- LIHEAP
- Consumer complaints
- Liquor Control Board concerns or questions
- Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups

**If you need help with any state or government-related services, please feel free to contact my office at 610-277-3230 for assistance.**

