



STATE REPRESENTATIVE | 119TH DISTRICT

Gerald Mullery

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Dedicated to Serving Luzerne County

Dear Neighbor,

Over the past several months, I have voted on some very important legislation affecting millions of Pennsylvanians. These are bills which have a real impact on people's everyday lives. While some of these bills sought to put earned money into workers' pockets and bank accounts, and other bills which could potentially increase the risk of COVID-19 contraction to greater numbers of our family members, friends and neighbors.

I've researched these issues, as time has permitted, by reviewing studies, graphs and medical papers. I've discussed the pandemic with public health officials, doctors, nurses, and hospital & nursing home administrators. I've listened to neighbors who've lost loved ones to the virus and many others who have been dealing with COVID-19 first-hand and have lived to share their stories. I've had countless heartbreaking conversations with friends denied timely unemployment benefits despite their lack of employment. I've tried to remove emotion from my decision-making process, but that has proven difficult.

It is not an exaggeration to say some of these votes have a life-threatening or life-sustaining impact. There is no other way to say it; it has been burdening. These votes have been challenging and stressful.

Please know I have not taken any of these decisions lightly. I understand the worst-case scenarios and certainly do not want to do anything to contribute to that. I am doing the best I can and will always try to make the best decisions, hoping they will prove to be correct.

In service,

Gerald Mullery
 State Representative

Unemployment Compensation Problems

There is no question the PA Department of Labor and Industry was not prepared to handle the influx of applications amid the COVID-19 pandemic. While the department has issued more than 7 million checks so far to workers who lost their jobs or were furloughed, many residents have gone without receiving a single dollar.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, my staff and I have helped hundreds of people who reached out to our office after their calls to UC call centers went unanswered. This has been an extremely difficult and stressful time for so many of you, and it has been made even more difficult without having an easy way to contact an unemployment compensation officer.

If you have any further questions about unemployment or any other state-related matter, don't hesitate to contact my office by phone or email at RepMullery@pahouse.net.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS RUNNING OUT?

If you exhaust your regular unemployment compensation (UC) + federal Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC),



you may qualify for **13 additional weeks** of payments through PA's **UC Extended Benefits program.**

*No application needed. After the balance of your PEUC claim hits \$0, your EB claim will set up automatically, approximately two days later.

Learn more: bit.ly/3eQwY17



My Mask Protects You, Your Mask Protects Me.

Wearing a mask is the easiest action you can take to limit the spread of COVID-19.

I believe it is our duty to wear a mask to protect those around us. Moreover, it is a sign of respect. By wearing my mask, I am showing respect for your health. By wearing your mask, you are showing respect for my health. By wearing our masks, we are respecting the healthcare providers, essential workers, senior citizens and at-risk neighbors in our community.

Everyone wants our lives to return to normal. One of the easiest and most effective things we can all do to get us on that path is to wear a mask.



A Pandemic Is Not the Time for a Rate Hike

This month, the Public Utility Commission began a series of virtual hearings to discuss PA American Water's proposed \$138.6 million rate hike request. With many families and businesses facing extreme financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic, now is certainly not the time for the PUC to approve any PA American Water rate change, which will result in Pennsylvanians having to choose between life's necessities.

I understand the challenges faced by our utility providers. I commend PA American Water and others who have taken extraordinary steps to protect our fellow Pennsylvanians during this difficult time. That said, I cannot sit idly by and silent as they seek to increase rates upon our citizens and struggling commercial and industrial neighbors.

I have sent a letter to the PUC asking them to consider everything Pennsylvania homes and businesses are enduring in these uncertain times and respectfully request that they deny PA American Water's rate hike request.



Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program



My office can help residents age 60 or older, widows and widowers age 50 or older, and people with disabilities age 18 or older file for a Property Tax/Rent Rebate. Due to financial hardships brought on by the pandemic, rebates are being processed and distributed on a first-in, first-out basis. The deadline for a 2019 PTRR application submission is December 31, 2020. Please call my office to learn more and to schedule an appointment.

Apply for a Mail-In Ballot for the General Election

Voting by Mail-in Ballot in Pennsylvania is

**NOW
AVAILABLE!**



[VotesPA.com/ApplyMailBallot](https://votespa.com/ApplyMailBallot)

The 2020 general election is less than 3 months away, but it's never too early to request a mail-in or absentee ballot! Voting by mail is a safe, easy and secure way to ensure that your voice is heard in November. Before requesting a mail-in ballot, you must first be registered to vote.

Request to vote by mail today to make sure that you receive your ballot in time and that your vote is counted. Visit [votesPA.com/ApplyMailBallot](https://votespa.com/ApplyMailBallot) to learn more about mail-in voting and request a mail-in or absentee ballot!

Governor's Civic Engagement Award Winner

I would like to congratulate Andrew Stratton, a senior at Greater Nanticoke Area High School, for receiving a 2020 Governor's Civic Engagement Award. Andrew and his team organized a successful voter registration drive for students at GNA. Andrew is one of just 12 other students in Pennsylvania to win a GCEA. They were nominated by educators for being leaders in student voter registration and for their service as poll workers on Election Day in November 2019. Congratulations to Andrew, his classmates and staff at Greater Nanticoke Area High School!

A portrait of Andrew Stratton, a young man with dark hair, wearing a dark suit and a white shirt with a tie. He is smiling and looking towards the camera.

VOTESPA.COM/GCEA

By being a poll worker, young people can see how this age-old process is **performed from all angles**, and truly get the full scope of the **voting experience**.

ANDREW STRATTON
2020 Governor's Civic Engagement Award Winner
Greater Nanticoke Area High School

The logo for the Governor's Civic Engagement Award. It features a stylized eagle with its wings spread, perched on a banner that reads 'GOVERNOR'S CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AWARD'.

Honoring and Remembering Mayor Ace

Over the summer, Luzerne County lost one of its most faithful and devoted public servants, former Edwardsville Mayor Bernard "Ace" Dubaskas.

Mayor Dubaskas was known in the community for his love of two things: his family and his town, Edwardsville. He dedicated more than 3 decades of his life to serving in public office in Edwardsville on both the Borough Council and as Mayor. That is no easy feat, but he made it look effortless and he did it without controversy.



Last month, I was pleased to join state Rep. Aaron Kaufer, R-Luzerne, in the House chamber to honor and remember Mayor Dubaskas. His family lost their patriarch, and Edwardsville and Luzerne County lost a truly dedicated and unwavering public servant. We all share in the loss that his family has experienced. We love you and miss you, Mayor Ace.

Around Luzerne County



It was my pleasure to join Plymouth Council, Mayor Coughlin and four Plymouth police chiefs at the unveiling and dedication of Eagle Scout Nathaniel Wren's fallen officer memorial. Outstanding work, Nathaniel!

Mullery secures state funds for local water improvement projects

H2O PA Program:

- \$508,833 for Rice Township to make repairs to the Ice Lakes Dam.

PA Small Water and Sewer Program:

- \$78,341 for White Haven Borough to make improvements to the storm sewer system along Pine and Berwick Streets.
- \$391,000 for Hazle Township for the Hollywood Area Sewer Rehabilitation and Replacement project.

"The residents and officials of Rice Township have faced numerous challenges and setbacks over the past five years to get the Ice Lakes Dam repaired. To be able to secure state funds, which will fully cover the cost of the repairs, will end this nightmare and return the beauty and tranquility of the Ice Lakes for residents and visitors to enjoy."

Fighting Blight in Newport Township

Blighted properties are a nuisance for both residents and visitors to communities. This past December, I was able to secure \$60,000 in grant funding for a blight removal project in Newport Township's Glen Lyon section.

Township officials had been working to acquire the 125-131 East Main Street properties for a long time, and a partial collapse of the largest property on the lot required requests for emergency funding.

Removing blighted properties is not a quick or easy process. There is a great deal of work that goes on behind the scenes to acquire the property and remove the blighted structures and improve our community. This could not be accomplished without the help of our township officials and local partners.



Rose Tucker Adult Center Improvements



In July, I was pleased to assist the Rose Tucker Active Adult Center in Nanticoke in receiving \$14,191 in state funding.

Many wonderful activities are provided at the Rose Tucker Center and it's great to see them receive funding from the state to continue helping older residents in the Nanticoke area.

It is especially important, now amid the COVID-19 pandemic, that our senior residents are able to have active, healthy and productive lives.

The funds are from the Pennsylvania Department of Aging's 2019-20 Senior Community Center grants – totaling \$2 million statewide.

Nanticoke Softball Team State Title Tenth Anniversary

As school, collegiate and professional sports continue to figure out how to keep players, coaches and fans safe amid the COVID-19 pandemic, it's a good idea to look back and remember one of the greatest sports stories for Luzerne County. This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Nanticoke Trojanettes winning the AA Softball State Title.

The game against Philipsburg-Osceola was played at Robb Field at Shippensburg University on June 18, 2010. It was a nail biter to the very end with a 1-1 tie through the first 10 innings. Then in the 11th, with the potential game-winning runner on second base, sophomore Maggie Gola rose to the occasion, striking a whopping 2-run double and the Trojanettes took home the state championship.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Gerald Mullery

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lpo.jc.0820

My office can help you with:

- ✓ Car registrations, special tags, handicap placards, titles and driver's license applications
- ✓ Information on financial assistance for higher education
- ✓ Assistance in obtaining and completing state forms of all kinds
- ✓ 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)
- ✓ Pennsylvania income tax questions or problems
- ✓ Requests for literature of all kinds – 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
- ✓ Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions
- ✓ Problems or questions about the state lottery
- ✓ PACE cards for senior citizens
- ✓ Consumer complaints
- ✓ Liquor Control Board concerns or questions
- ✓ Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups
- ✓ Information about federal, state and local government agencies

If you need help with any state government-related services, please feel free to contact my office at 570-740-7031 for assistance.