

**Capitol Office:**

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State Representative | 77th Legislative District  
**SCOTT CONKLIN**



# COVID-19: HELPING OUR COMMUNITIES RECOVER

Make no doubt about it – our communities have been hit hard since early March when the pandemic hit our state. We’re now beginning the process of recovering and moving forward in the right direction – that includes our schools, businesses, health care entities – everyone.

I supported several measures in the House to help our state recover in the right way, including House Bill 2506, which would allow restaurants with existing outdoor space to reopen, following CDC and state mitigation guidelines. I also supported House Bill 2440, which would allow outdoor sportsmen clubs and shooting ranges to reopen and also classify these businesses, including those related to the sale and production of firearms and ammunition, as life-sustaining.

I know our local businesses, even if they’ve been able to fully reopen, are hurting. That’s why I also supported House Bill 2369, which would provide low-cost grant and loan programs to help them meet payroll and other expenses.

In late April, I supported the regional expansion of allowable business activities for real estate professionals, including appraisers, notaries, home inspectors and title companies. The updated guidance meant these professionals could conduct business safely, following state and federal health guidance. This expansion meant that Pennsylvanians who

had been unable to sell or buy a home could do so, and these professionals were able to resume their work and help get our economy back on track.

I also introduced a bill that would allow service organizations to stay afloat during emergency declarations. This measure would make a change to the state’s Small Games of Chance Act and allow up to 100% of game proceeds to be used to cover expenses, such as rent, payroll and utilities. These groups are the backbone of our communities, and this bill would be a lifeline for these organizations during an emergency disaster, allowing them to eventually reopen and provide vital support to communities.

As many Pennsylvanians remain out of work and are making tough choices, it’s not fair to ask them to make sacrifices and tighten their belts if we’re not willing to do the same. I will be introducing a bill to suspend cost-of-living adjustments for members of the General Assembly and state administration officials. As elected officials, it’s imperative we do our part to ensure we don’t add an additional financial burden on our already cash-strapped residents.

Please know that I remain dedicated to doing all I can to help each of you as we move forward in this recovery process.

# ASSISTANCE WITH ENERGY COSTS

The newly established LIHEAP Recovery Crisis Program offers grants to help those who are having trouble paying their utility bills due to COVID-19.

The program provides up to \$800 for households that have had their utility service shut off, or who are in jeopardy of being without utility service.

To qualify, a person's income can be no greater than \$18,735 yearly. This limit increases by \$6,630 for each additional person in the household.

This grant program will run through August 31, 2020.

**Applications and more information can be found by visiting [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us) or by calling 1-877-395-8930.**

## OUT AND ABOUT IN THE COMMUNITY



Rep. Conklin addressing constituents virtually in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Rep. Conklin honoring Don Hahn for his service to the State College Borough as council member, mayor, and most recently, district magisterial judge!



Centre County Solar Array groundbreaking ceremony. County correctional facilities now have solar power providing their energy.



Meeting with the University Park Undergraduate Association (UPUA) Governmental Affairs Committee.



Rep. Conklin speaking at the UFCW Local 1776 Steward Conference with Union President Wendell Young.

# SMALL BUSINESS HELP

A second application window for grants to help small businesses adversely impacted by the pandemic is expected to open in August.

The COVID-19 Relief Statewide Small Business Assistance Program began in late June and will provide \$225 million in grants to eligible small businesses to

cover operating expenses incurred during the state's shutdown order and the transition to reopening. The funding can also be used for training and guidance for business owners as they work toward reopening.

**The funding will be available through three specific programs:**

■ **\$100 million for the Main Street Business Revitalization Program for small businesses that experienced loss as a result of the March 2020 order relating to the closure of all non-life-sustaining businesses, including those businesses that have or will incur costs to adapt to new business operations.**

■ **\$100 million for the Historically Disadvantaged Business Revitalization Program for small businesses that experienced loss as a result of the business closure order and costs incurred related to reopening, and in which socially and economically disadvantaged individuals own at least a 51% interest and also control management and daily business operations.**

■ **\$25 million for the Loan Payment Deferment and Loss Reserve Program, which will allow Community Development Financial Institutions the opportunity to offer forbearance and payment relief for existing portfolio businesses struggling due to the pandemic's impact.**

Our small businesses are truly the lifeblood of our communities, and this funding will assist them in their efforts to recover from the pandemic and get back on their feet.

**More information can be found at [pabusinessgrants.com](http://pabusinessgrants.com). Please contact my State College office at 814-238-5477 or my Philipsburg office at 814-342-4872 for assistance and additional small business resources.**

## INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITIES

I'm pleased to provide you with a brief update on several grants awarded in the district, including:

**\$10,000** awarded to Pennsylvania State University to cover costs related to the Pennsylvania Youth Survey, a statewide survey of junior and high school students to assess a variety of risk factors, including bullying, violence, and the use and abuse of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.

**\$80,000** in school safety initiative grants for the Bald Eagle Area and State College Area school districts to use toward safety-related training and technology.

**\$100,000** to Centre Safe (*formerly known as the Centre County Women's Resource Center*) to support its work with victims of child sexual abuse.

**\$115,000** for Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life at Pennsylvania State University for security and safety enhancements.

**\$2 million** to pave and install guiderails on four roadways in Rush Township, Centre County.





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## 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
- Obtaining and completing state forms
- Voter registration and absentee ballot applications
- Unemployment compensation, disability, and workers' compensation
- Birth and death certificates
- Pennsylvania income tax questions or problems
- 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
- And much more!

## KEEP YOUR PETS SAFE THIS SUMMER

With summer here, as a pet owner, I know how important it is to take proper precautions to keep our furry friends safe. When the temperatures and humidity begin to rise, it can also adversely affect our pets, especially if they don't have adequate shelter or water while they're outside.

While many of us know that it's unsafe to leave our pets alone in a parked vehicle, too many times we still hear news of pets who are still kept inside vehicles or those who are neglected outside who end up becoming very sick or worse.

If you witness a pet alone in a vehicle on a hot, humid day, contact law enforcement immediately. The Motor Vehicle Extreme Heat Protection Act allows police and humane officers to remove unattended pets from vehicles that they believe are in imminent danger.

**Please follow these tips to keep your pet healthy, comfortable and safe during these hot, humid months of summer:**

- Never leave your pet in a parked vehicle, even for a minute or even with the air conditioner running. On an 85-degree day, the temperature inside a car with the windows opened slightly can reach over 100 degrees within 10 minutes. In 30 minutes, temperatures can rise to 120 degrees, which can cause your pet to suffer irreversible organ damage or die.
- Watch the humidity – if humidity is too high, it's more difficult for your pet to cool themselves through panting, and their body temperature could quickly skyrocket to dangerous levels.
- Ensure your pet has plenty of water while outside and add ice to your pet's water when possible. Tree shade or tarps are best to protect your pet from the heat, versus a doghouse or other type of enclosure, because they are less likely to obstruct air flow.
- Limit exercising with your pet on hot, humid days, and adjust the intensity and duration of your workouts. For example, on very hot days, limit exercise to early morning or evening hours.
- Watch for signs of heatstroke in your pet: heavy panting, glazed eyes, difficulty breathing, excessive thirst, fever, dizziness, vomiting, a deep red or purple tongue. Animals who are very young, very old, are overweight or who have heart or respiratory disease are most at risk for heat stroke.