



# THE DALEY NEWS

Fall 2020

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

## Mary Jo Daley

148TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

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### Connecting Pennsylvanians to Health Insurance Coverage

Reminder: Pennsylvanians seeking individual health insurance coverage for 2021 will use Pennie.com instead of Healthcare.gov. Open Enrollment began Nov. 1 and ends Jan. 15, 2021.

#### Dear Friends,

I'm grateful to have been reelected to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. It is an honor to serve you, and I look forward to beginning the 2021-22 legislative session.

I also wanted to express my heartfelt gratitude to all of the staff of both the commonwealth and Montgomery County. These folks worked ceaselessly to ensure the vote was fair and everyone's voice was protected.

Thank you to all the poll workers, judges of elections and constables who put in long and challenging days to ensure our system worked.

Thank you to the volunteers who give their time as poll workers, as committee people and as election protection experts. You all stand tall for democracy.

And, mostly, thank you to all who cast your votes in the 2020 General Election, whether by mail, in person, absentee ballot or provisional ballot. You vote is your voice.

In this newsletter, I hope you will find information that is useful to you. Within it, you can read updates on COVID-19 and on programs designed to assist those in need.

I write about veterans and various programs beneficial to them. You can read about school safety grants, conservation corridors and fraud prevention. And, as always, I include a list of ways my office can help you.

Finally, while my district office remains closed for walk-in visits, we continue to be available by phone (610-832-1679) or by email ([repmarijodaley@pahouse.net](mailto:repmarijodaley@pahouse.net)). If you have questions or state-related issues, we want to assist you. A list of state-related programs and services is provided in this

**YOUR  
VOTE  
COUNTS**

newsletter, but you should not feel limited to that list. If you are puzzled about whom to call, we can help you solve that puzzle.

Thank you for reading, and please stay safe during this holiday season.

Sincerely,

*Mary Jo Daley*

# Prioritizing Health & Safety

Public health authorities warned us that we would likely see a resurgence of COVID-19 this fall, and we are now seeing that this prediction was accurate. Colder weather means more time indoors, where the potential for coronavirus spread is heightened.

I am sure that we all experience pandemic fatigue, and, at the same time, I see most people wearing masks, avoiding crowds, keeping a "social" distance and regularly washing hands and using disinfectant. We are grateful for this kind of compliance.



My staff and I are saddened by the reports of deaths and the number of illnesses of our friends and neighbors. We have heard many of your stories related to unemployment compensation, concerns about in-person voting, how votes were being counted, about slowdowns with licensure, processing PennDOT requests and with filing LIHEAP applications. We also recognize that our wonderful local restaurants are suffering with limitations on the number of people they can serve, while at the same time so many of them are providing curbside takeout and other ways to help so many of us get through this crazy time.

We also know that parents of school-age children have been dealing with issues related to virtual learning, sports, childcare and after-school programs, as well as technology challenges and their own work-from-home situations and balancing their own needs with the needs of their kids.

Evidence is showing that people are becoming infected not just at large gatherings, but when they let their guard down when going about their daily routine or hanging out with small groups of friends and family they assumed were without the virus.

It is unfortunate that a virus has become a partisan issue with a debate pitting public health against the economy. I have supported the policies put



forward by Gov. Tom Wolf and Secretary Rachel Levine as based on the best medical advice available. Secretary Levine often reminds us that COVID-19 is a "novel" coronavirus, meaning it is new and unknown. It also means that guidance was based on the best available information.

As we moved through the spring, summer and fall, more and more information and guidance has been accumulated. It has been tough in so many ways, and I wonder if that is because information is generally more available.

As case numbers rise, it seems important to me to listen to people, especially those who need help and those who are at the forefront of the battle – the doctors, the nurses, the EMS workers and all who put their lives on the line for all of us.

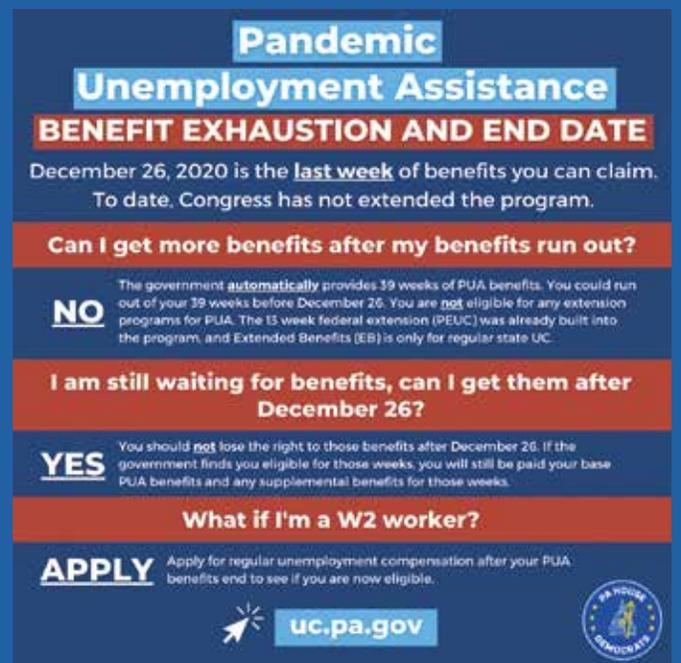
## Help is Available

COMPASS ([www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us)) is an online tool for Pennsylvanians to apply for many health and human service programs and manage benefit information. It provides a fast and easy way to access benefits anytime and anywhere.

The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance benefit ends at the end of this calendar year. Dec. 26, 2020, is the last week of benefits you can claim. Congress has not extended the program. See the accompanying graphic for more information or visit [uc.pa.gov](http://uc.pa.gov).

If you or somebody you know needs help finding local food assistance options, visit [whyhunger.org/find-food](http://whyhunger.org/find-food) or call 1-800-5HUNGRY to find nearby agencies that are able to provide food during this ongoing health and economic crisis.

While the temporary moratorium on utility service shutoffs has been lifted, Aqua has informed me that it will continue to work with customers in trying to avoid those situations. Please visit [www.aquaamerica.com/our-states/pennsylvania/helping-hand.aspx](http://www.aquaamerica.com/our-states/pennsylvania/helping-hand.aspx) for more information.



## Join State Rep. Mary Jo Daley for Virtual Coffee & Conversations



Though not yet in person, I am bringing back my Coffee & Conversation events. These events provide us a chance to just sit back, sip on some coffee (or tea, or hot chocolate, etc.) and chat about the issues that are important to you and to me.

My first VIRTUAL Coffee & Conversation event is scheduled for:

**Thursday, Dec. 10 at 9 a.m.**

In order to have a meaningful discussion, we are limiting attendance to six constituents. Please call our office (610-832-1679) to reserve a spot. Stay tuned for details on other opportunities in the near future.

# School Safety



Recently, I was happy to announce more than \$178,000 in state Safe School grants for public and private schools here in the 148<sup>th</sup> Legislative District. These grants will help educational facilities prevent, reduce and cope with violent incidents, to purchase safety and security-related equipment, and to provide for training and compensation of school resource and police officers.

It's impossible to understate the value of a safe and secure learning environment, and that will be even more critical once all students, teachers and faculty are able to return to full-time, in-person educational settings.

Here is a breakdown of local grant recipients:

- ✓ **Colonial School District:** \$24,987 toward equipment, \$1,500 toward programs.
- ✓ **Kohelet Yeshiva High School:** \$40,000 toward school resource officer program, \$25,000 toward equipment.
- ✓ **Merion-Mercy Academy:** \$6,593 toward equipment.
- ✓ **Mesivta High School of Greater Philadelphia:** \$40,000 toward school police officer program.
- ✓ **Gan Chabad of the Main Line:** \$40,000 toward school police officer program.

# Stay Informed!

Want to learn more about what is happening in our district and in Harrisburg? Sign up for my email and follow me on social media! We often have constituents tell us that they really enjoy reading our newsletter.

You can receive my regular email updates by visiting my PA House page: [www.RepMJDaley.com](http://www.RepMJDaley.com). Then scroll down to "Stay Informed" and sign up!

You can also follow me on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/RepMJDaley](http://www.facebook.com/RepMJDaley)) and on Twitter ([twitter.com/RepMJDaley](https://twitter.com/RepMJDaley)).

For the latest and best information about COVID-19, rely on the CDC ([cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://cdc.gov/coronavirus)), the PA Health Department ([www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus](http://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus)) and the Montgomery County Office of Public Health ([www.montcopa.org/covid-19](http://www.montcopa.org/covid-19)).



# SALUTE TO VETERANS

While my staff and I were very disappointed that we were unable to gather in person for our annual Veterans Day Event, I still want to showcase my deep appreciation to all veterans and family of veterans for your sacrifice and service to our country.

Throughout our history, military service members have put on their uniforms to protect the values and liberties on which this nation was built, but that dedication does not stop once the uniform comes off. Veterans play a vital role throughout their communities across the country.

Today and every day, we celebrate veterans' immeasurable contributions, draw inspiration from your example, and strive to give you our full support as a grateful nation. Thank you for serving our country and protecting our freedoms.

I want to ensure that veterans and veterans' families living in the 148th Legislative District know that these resources and programs are available by visiting either the PA Department of Military and Veterans Affairs ([www.dmva.pa.gov](http://www.dmva.pa.gov)) or the Montgomery County Office of Veterans Affairs ([www.montcopa.org/266/Veterans-Affairs](http://www.montcopa.org/266/Veterans-Affairs)):

- ✓ **Amputee and Paralyzed Veteran Program:** Provides a \$150 per month pension to veterans who served honorably, were PA residents on entering the military, suffered a service-connected injury or disease resulting in loss – or lost use of – two or more extremities, and have at least a 40% disability rating in each limb. A similar pension program exists for blind veterans.
- ✓ **Educational Gratuity Program:** Provides financial aid for children of honorably discharged veterans who have service-connected disabilities and served during a period of war or armed conflict, or children of veterans who die or died in service during a period of war or armed conflict.
- ✓ **Military Family Education Program:** Allows Pennsylvania National Guard members who re-enlist for an additional six years of service to earn five years of higher education
- benefits for their spouse or children. The program provides 10 semesters of tuition-free education for family members at state-approved schools.
- ✓ **VETConnect:** Launched recently, this initiative is designed to better serve the commonwealth's nearly 800,000 veterans by identifying and cultivating new community partnerships to simultaneously broaden referral capabilities and connect veterans to the best possible resources, regardless of the township, county or region where they reside.
- ✓ **Veterans Crisis Line:** Free, confidential support is available for veterans who are feeling anxious, depressed or alone. Calling the crisis line at 1-800-273-8255 will put you in touch with a caring, qualified responder. The crisis line is available for all veterans, service members, National Guard and reserve, and family and friends.
- ✓ **Veterans Registry:** The DMVA provides an online registry to keep veterans and their families connected to state benefits, programs and services. It also allows veterans and family members to opt in to receive news, updates and the department's weekly DMVA Digest.
- ✓ **Veterans Temporary Assistance:** This program can provide veterans or their beneficiaries temporary financial assistance for such life necessities as food, clothing and shelter. Applicants who meet eligibility requirements can receive up to \$1,600 over a 12-month period.
- ✓ **Veterans Resource Online Directory:** The DMVA has a comprehensive listing of resources – from business and finance to veterans' health and vital records – all in one place.





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## Conservation Corridors

Pennsylvania is one of the national leaders among states for consumer spending on outdoor recreational activities. Unfortunately, we are also among the national leaders when it comes to vehicular collisions with wildlife.

Pennsylvania is home for a magnificent diversity of plants and wildlife and a great array of ecosystems. Preserving and connecting high-quality habitat for plants and wildlife can create habitat strongholds so that species can continue to thrive as they face stressors and changing environmental conditions. For these reasons, I introduced House Resolution 670, which would prompt a study of Pennsylvania's wildlife habitats.

The study would focus on the interconnectivity of Pennsylvania's corridors, as well as their locations, condition and ownership. Identifying existing corridors would provide important information for legislators, administrative departments, state agencies and non-profit organizations. The study would benefit both the tourism and the outdoor recreation agendas with information to attract people to our beautiful state.

This study has raised interest with several nonprofit organizations, such as the Endangered Species Coalition and the Pennsylvania Habitat Connectivity.

## Scams & Fraud

On Nov. 19, I teamed with the PA Department of Banking and Securities to present a virtual forum titled "How to Protect Loved Ones from Elder Financial Exploitation."

We did this because social isolation is one of the biggest risk factors when it comes to financial exploitation. And now, more than ever, it's up

to all of us to protect one another – especially the elderly – from fraud.

If you missed the forum, that's OK. There are many resources available to help you recognize signs of financial exploitation and how to immediately report any suspicions of abuse occurring in the community.

Visit the following websites to learn more. Collectively, we can take down the perpetrators who too often strike during times in a senior's life when they are more vulnerable, such as the ongoing health crisis or after the death of a loved one.

- ✓ **Elder Abuse:** [www.dobs.pa.gov/Documents/Publications/Brochures/ElderAbuseGuide.pdf](http://www.dobs.pa.gov/Documents/Publications/Brochures/ElderAbuseGuide.pdf)
- ✓ **Identity Theft:** [www.attorneygeneral.gov/protect-yourself/identity-theft/](http://www.attorneygeneral.gov/protect-yourself/identity-theft/)
- ✓ **Senior Scams:** [www.attorneygeneral.gov/protect-yourself/seniors/](http://www.attorneygeneral.gov/protect-yourself/seniors/)
- ✓ **Medicaid Fraud:** [www.attorneygeneral.gov/protect-yourself/medicaid-fraud/](http://www.attorneygeneral.gov/protect-yourself/medicaid-fraud/)
- ✓ **Welfare Fraud:** <https://www.osig.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx>
- ✓ **Unemployment Insurance Fraud:** <https://www.uc.pa.gov/Pages/Report-Fraud-Here.aspx>
- ✓ **Social Security Fraud:** [oig.ssa.gov/report](http://oig.ssa.gov/report)

