



STATE REP. JENNIFER O'MARA

SUMMER 2024

165TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



Constituent Services Office: 26 East Fourth Street • Media, PA 19063 • P: (610) 544-9878
Capitol Office: 217 Irvis Office Building • P.O. Box 202165 • Harrisburg, PA 17120 • P: (717) 783-4090

Dear Neighbor,

Welcome to the Fall 2024 edition of my newsletter! I hope that you and your family had a fantastic summer and are gearing up for the school year. In this newsletter, you will find information about the 2024-2025 state budget, updates on my legislative initiatives (including some major victories!), and a new section featuring new laws that will impact your life soon. We also included helpful information about ways my office can be of service to you.

I also wanted to take a second and thank you all for being a part of a community that is willing to put our differences aside to help one another. I have been inspired countless times as I hear stories of a family facing a tragedy and their neighbors rallying around them with financial and emotional support, or by the camaraderie generated as we root for our Delco friends in the Olympics or Little League World Series. We may be a nation that is politically divided at times,

but I truly believe we are a community that finds common ground despite the rhetoric. Thank you for helping me make Delco such an amazing place to call home.

Sincerely,



New Mobile Office Hours

Last December, my full-time office moved to a larger, more accessible location with dedicated parking in Media (26 E. 4th St.). Since then, we've welcomed hundreds of residents to our new office. With this move now complete, our Springfield office will be closing permanently at the end of November. However, I am pleased to announce the Springfield Library is graciously hosting us for weekly mobile office hours! **Starting Dec. 3, a member of my staff will be in the quiet room at the adult section of the Springfield Library every Tuesday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to assist constituents. As always, you can still reach my office at (610) 544-9878.**



Sign Up For My E-Newsletter

Scan the QR code to sign up for my e-newsletter. Stay up-to-date on how I am working for YOU in Harrisburg!

Budget News

In early July, the legislature passed the state's annual budget and Gov. Josh Shapiro signed it into law. I voted in favor of this budget because it's a fair and balanced plan that prioritizes Pennsylvanians in every stage of life. We invested a historic \$1.3 billion in education with a 7.2% increase in special education, increased funding for students' mental health and physical safety, and provided money for menstrual products to help students focus on learning.

Further, this spending plan makes investments supporting:

- Pennsylvania seniors by allotting for rate increases under Medicaid for nursing homes and home- and community-based services.
- Servicemembers by allocating an additional \$14 million to the state Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to provide services for veterans and their families.
- Those living with intellectual disabilities, increasing the Community Waiver program by \$261 million.
- Public transit, delivering a one-time \$53 million boost to SEPTA with another \$108 million to transit authorities across PA.
- Working parents by allotting an extra \$26.2 million in subsidized child care services and creating an employer child care tax credit – incentivizing Pennsylvania businesses to help cover their employees' child care costs.
- Student teachers by providing \$20 million for stipends.
- Community safety with \$56.5 million in Violence Intervention and Prevention through PCCD.
- Community revitalization efforts by launching the \$20 million Main Street Matters program under the Department of Community and Economic Development, which will provide grants to enhance local economies.

New Laws that Impact You

Learn about new laws that have recently taken effect or will soon take effect, and how they will impact your life.

Distracted Driving is Now Against the Law

Earlier this year, the legislature passed a distracted driving law, which makes using a cellphone while driving a chargeable offense. Drivers can use their phones to alert emergency responders, make phone calls, use a GPS, or listen to music if they are using hands-free technology. It will take effect next year and have a one-year warning period before tickets will be issued.

Pharmacies Doing More For You

This new law provides for the oversight of pharmacy benefit manager contracts with pharmacies in Pennsylvania, creates consumer protections in purchasing medications, and creates Department of Insurance oversight of PBMs. It also allows pharmacists to administer COVID and flu vaccines to children 5 and up, and other injectable medications and vaccines to children 8 and up – something I have been working on as a legislator this year through H.B. 2037 and advocated for its inclusion in this law.

EV Owners Will See a New Fee

EV and plug-in hybrid vehicles will see a new \$200 fee soon that replaces the Alternative Fuels Tax with plug-in hybrid vehicles getting a 30% discount on the fee. This fee will be imposed during the registration process and mirrors how much the average gas car owner pays per year in gas tax, which is approximately \$290.

Speed Enforcement on the Turnpike

Automated speed enforcement is now a permanent initiative in work zones that aims to enhance safety for both drivers and workers by utilizing vehicle-mounted systems to detect and record speeding violations on the Turnpike. Civil penalties are issued to registered owners. Recent legislation adjustments include a 15-day warning period for first violations and a reset of all violations for every motorist, regardless of previous offenses.

Road to 2026



Did you know? Our region is welcoming the world in just two years! America is celebrating our 250th anniversary in 2026 and the festivities are starting now. To celebrate the occasion, Gov. Shapiro rolled out new license plates, coming in 2025, and welcome signs that are being installed now.

While we can look forward to the PGA Championship coming to Delco, the MLB All-Star Game, the FIFA World Cup and more, America250PA Delco is currently hosting county-wide community engagement and you are invited to join!

Visit www.america250padelco.org to see the upcoming list of events.



Rep. O'Mara's Legislative Update

Include PTSI in Workers' Comp for First Responders:

I've always fought to reduce mental health stigma, and for emergency responders to have easy access to the care and tools they need to effectively serve their communities. House Bill 1632 combines these values by adding Post-Traumatic Stress Injury as an eligible claim for first responders filing for worker's compensation. Enduring depression or PTSD should never be normalized as part of the job, and this legislation would help ensure mental health care is accessible to Pennsylvania's police officers, firefighters, and EMS personnel.

Last action: Passed the House on May 8, 2024, at 154-46; awaits consideration in the Senate.



Student Fee Transparency Act:

Higher education costs have been on the rise for decades and adding "student fees" complicates this problem as Pennsylvanians navigate their financial planning. This is why I introduced H.B. 1686, which would require colleges/universities to clearly disclose these fees. Additionally, institutions must disclose how this money is spent. With this type of transparency, students and families can make more informed choices about their education and major financial decisions.

Last action: Incorporated into the 2023-24 budget and became law on July 11, 2024.

Expanding Access to Mental Health Care:

The National Counseling Compact consists of 36 member states that allow mental health professionals to practice within its network without needing multiple licenses. House Bill 2300 proposes Pennsylvania join this compact so we can mitigate the long wait times patients experience for mental health care. This would help increase accessibility to patients utilizing telehealth care from out-of-state providers and expand care options for Pennsylvanians who live near one of our six bordering states.

Last action: Referred to the House Professional Licensure Committee on May 20, 2024.

Parental Notification Of Bullying At School:

Many parents are unaware if their child is involved in incidents of bullying. As caregivers, they have both a right and responsibility to ensure that their child has the resources they need to navigate difficult situations, correct problematic behavior, and strengthen their overall well-being. My bill, H.B. 1293, would support this by requiring schools to notify parents/guardians if their child is involved in or experiences bullying. This legislation works to take proactive steps to show our kids that we care and want to help.

Last action: Passed the house on July 11, 2024, at 196-6; awaiting consideration in the Senate.

Energy Efficiency Standards

This bill would adopt energy efficiency and water conservation standards for new commercial items like kitchen equipment (fryers, dishwashers, ovens), fluorescent lamps, and bathroom fixtures sold in the Commonwealth. This type of standard can play a critical role to help Pennsylvania tackle climate change, reduce air pollution, conserve water resources, and save consumers and businesses money on their utility bills.

Last action: Passed the House on May 7, 2024, at 102-99; awaits consideration in the Senate.



To see a full list of my legislation, use the QR code.

DELIVERING FOR DELCO

\$1,175,595 total grants in 2024

\$725,595 Roadway Improvements

\$295,000 Police Departments

\$130,000 Fire Companies

\$25,000 School Security

Resources and Services for You



Property Tax/Rent Rebate Extended

The deadline for the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program has been extended to Dec. 31. This program provides a rebate ranging from \$380 to \$1,000 to eligible older adults and people with disabilities age 18 and older. The maximum household income was increased from previous years to \$45,000 for tax year 2023. Only half of the accrued Social Security dispersals count toward the \$45,000 cap. Application booklets are available at my office. We also offer in-person assistance in submitting the application; please call my office at (610) 544-9878 to set up an appointment.



Election Day

This year's election will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 5. All eligible voters must be registered by Oct. 21. If you want to vote by mail, the last day to request a mail-in or absentee ballot is Oct. 29 at 5 p.m. Remember, you have to re-request to vote by mail every year. Use the QR code to request it now.

The county election office must receive your mail-in ballot by 8 p.m. on Nov. 5. Please know that a Nov. 5 postmark is not sufficient.

For people who choose to vote in person, polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

You can visit vote.pa.gov for more information or call my office at (610) 544-9878.



Faded License Plates

Did you know that a registration plate is considered illegible if any of it is unrecognizable from 50 feet away, exhibits blistering, peeling, discoloration, or loses reflectivity? Upon request, you can get a new license plate for free when a state licensed mechanic or law enforcement deems it illegible. To make license plate certification convenient, my office will be hosting two events with different police departments on Oct. 3 and Oct. 29. More information on this is available in the Upcoming Events section in this newsletter.



Veterans – access all the benefits and programs you're entitled to

Once a month, my office hosts a Veterans Service Officer who can help connect veterans to the benefits they've earned and programs they may be eligible for. If you're interested in making an appointment with my office's VSO, call us at (610) 544-9878 to reserve a spot.

Rep. O'Mara will have a Veteran Service Officer on hand once a month!

SECOND MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH
10 A.M. – 2 P.M.

We can help with:

- VA claims
- Reduced property taxes
- Educational benefits and more!

CALL TO MAKE YOUR APPOINTMENT 610.544.9878



STATE REPRESENTATIVE **JENNIFER O'MARA** 165TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

Around the District



Katherine and I had the opportunity to visit the goats from the Amazing Grace herd in Morton.



I was honored to stop by Delco Day 9 with a citation recognizing 6/10 as Delco Day.



I discussed and learned about renewable energy options, biodiversity efforts, and more at the Environmental Expo!



I had a great time celebrating the 134th Anniversary of Korean American Citizens Day at Rose Tree Park.



I started off Pride month with thousands of our friends at Pride on State in Media!



I joined my fellow representatives and Riddle Hospital staff in celebrating John Goddar, who was named PA's Advanced Life Support Practitioner of the Year.



I had the incredible opportunity to visit the home of the Philadelphia Eagles to learn about their renowned Go Green initiative and see a hydrogen powered vehicle.



I was honored to recognize Memorial Day in both Media and Springfield.



My staff and I had a blast marching in the parades and festivities in both Springfield and Marple-Newtown!



I joined Lt. Governor Austin Davis to share how we are all working to address gun violence at every level of government.



STATE REP.
JENNIFER
O'MARA
165TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

26 East Fourth Street
Media, PA 19063

lpo.kw.0824



UPCOMING EVENTS

***Requires advanced registration. To sign up, call my office at (610) 544-9878**

Medicare 101 Presentation*

Wednesday, Sept. 4 | 6 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Virtual (Zoom)

Tune in for a presentation on the basics of Medicare.

Town Hall

Tuesday, Sept. 17 | 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Springfield Township Building

Join me for a discussion on state-related issues.

Vaccine Clinic*

Friday, Sept. 13 | noon to 5 p.m.
Media Office

Springfield Pharmacy is teaming up with my office for a flu and COVID-19 vaccine clinic.

Mental Health Fair – NEW DATE

Saturday, Sept. 21 | 10 a.m. to noon
Media Community Center

Stop by to get resources from various local organizations and talk to experts.

License Plate Restoration Event*

Thursday, Oct. 3 | 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.
601 Baltimore Pike, Springfield, PA

If your license plate is faded, peeling, or hard to read, we can process an application for a new one for you, free of charge!

Senior Fair

Wednesday, Oct. 9 | 9 a.m. to noon
Springfield YMCA

Stop by to learn about resources available for seniors, get a free SEPTA senior pass, and more!

Drive Through Flu Clinic*

Saturday, Oct. 19, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Morton Borough Hall Parking Lot

My office is partnering with Acme to offer a free drive through flu clinic.

Shred Event with Senator Kearney

Saturday, Oct. 26, 9 a.m. to noon
Springfield Mall Parking Lot

Bring your personal documents to be shredded, limited to four boxes.

License Plate Restoration Event*

Tuesday, Oct. 29, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Marple Police Department

If your license plate is faded, peeling, or hard to read, we can process an application for a new one for you, free of charge!

Veterans Breakfast*

Monday, Nov. 11, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.
Springfield Country Club

Veterans and their families are invited to join me for a FREE breakfast.