



Fall
2024

LIZ HANBIDGE

PA STATE REPRESENTATIVE

District Office:

1098 W. Skippack Pike • Blue Bell, PA 19422 • (610) 277-3230
Toll-Free: (833) 787-3927

Capitol Office:

P.O. Box 202061 • Harrisburg, PA 17120-2061 • (717) 783-4102

@RepHanbidge /RepHanbidge @RepLizHanbidge
 www.RepHanbidge.com RepHanbidge@pahouse.net



Dear Friends,

I hope you enjoyed a wonderful summer! I am writing to provide an update on key legislative victories, and an update on the state budget. Legislating in the majority remains a welcome change, and while I remain frustrated by some of the lack of movement on bills in the Senate, I was happy to see many bills move between the chambers during the budget negotiation process – which is positive progress!

We passed a fair, bipartisan budget that made significant investments in Pennsylvanians, their futures, and their health and safety, all without raising taxes. While the process was slow and the budget finalized a little late, it reflects a fully negotiated spending plan. It delivers more money for schools to help every child in the commonwealth and decreases the impact of cyber charter school costs. It allocates money to create jobs and helps Main Streets all across the commonwealth while reducing costs for working families. It funds programming to help Pennsylvanians at every stage of their lives and makes investments in our future and in public safety. While no budget is perfect, and this one has a few missed opportunities, it was one I was proud to vote for. I've been discussing it and other legislative issues in greater detail in my: weekly emails, which you can sign up for here <http://pahouse.com/hanbidge/emailsignup>.

As always, my district office continues to be busy serving you! Since January 2023, my office has served over 7,600 of you! We've also hosted town halls, special education information panels, license plate restoration events, a webinar helping families through the college financial aid process, an online safety event for preteens and their parents, numerous scam prevention presentations, blood drives, electronics recycling drives, and welcomed Fox Chase Cancer Center's Mobile Screening Unit to perform mammograms outside my office! My staff and I have attended numerous community events and hosted over 150 mobile offices in the district. The remainder of the year will continue to be a busy one, with more events on the horizon – see my upcoming events section to see what is approaching! We look forward to seeing you! Please also continue to communicate with me regarding what's most important to you, sharing your ideas, concerns and needs to help me better serve you!

Sincerely,



MY BILLS SIGNED INTO LAW

HB 1760

A bill I worked on with Rep. Paul Schemel (R-Franklin) to protect older Pennsylvanians was signed into law as Act 40 of 2024. The law adds elder abuse to PA's Slayer Statute and prohibits convicted elder abusers from benefiting from the estate of someone they've abused. No one should benefit after abusing the seniors in his or her life. To ensure seniors retain full power over their testamentary decision-making, the law includes language to allow for such inheritance, post-conviction, if the abused person and their abuser reconcile.

HB 1466

A bill I sponsored to protect free speech was signed into law as Act 72 of 2024. The law prohibits SLAPP suits, also known as Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation, which are meritless lawsuits designed to stifle constitutionally protected free speech on matters of public concern. They are brought by parties trying to abuse the legal system to silence criticism, and I've always considered them to be the bullies of the legal system, intended to quash free speech and burden people with expensive and time-consuming legal proceedings. Act 72 ensures that individuals and organizations can speak the truth without fear of retribution through baseless lawsuits. The law represents a collective effort to uphold justice and safeguard the rights of all Pennsylvanians.

Successful movants may recover attorney's fees, costs and damages related to such an action. The bill also includes a SLAPP-back provision, meaning if a party invokes a SLAPP suit frivolously or solely to cause unnecessary delay, the court will award attorney's fees and costs to the good-faith party. It has been a privilege to work with my colleagues to provide protections for free speech in Pennsylvania; free speech is one of the core tenants of a free and fair democracy.

HB 1958

My bill to make childcare more accessible and affordable for families and to help ensure employers retain employees is now law! I am very proud to share that what was originally HB 1958, and had passed the House with strong bipartisan support, was included in the 2024-2025 Tax Code. This is one part of legislation that I have been working on to stabilize the childcare industry and make sure working families have good, safe and affordable childcare options. The law is designed to incentivize employers to help fund childcare for their employees through a state tax credit program for participating employers. Collaborating with businesses is one of the ways we can make quality childcare more accessible and affordable for working families. Employers have been very supportive of the measure because of the issues and costs they are facing finding and retaining employees who have to deal with a lack of childcare.

MY BILLS THAT HAVE PASSED THE HOUSE BUT AWAIT A VOTE IN THE SENATE

HB 807

To better support women, HB 807 would establish partnerships between the Department of Health and medical providers to educate women on the symptoms of perimenopause and menopause, the biological changes behind the processes and how to talk to family and friends about the processes.

HB 974

To better support agency employees and public officials with disabilities, HB 974 would exempt working papers and notes prepared by or for a public official or agency employee used to assist an individual with a disability from Pennsylvania's Right-to-Know Law. It was amended in the House to also exclude records that would disclose the identity of a claimant or victim in a sexual harassment claim. HB 974 passed the House unanimously in March.

HB 1173

Play is crucial to a child's physical, social, cognitive, and emotional development, but research shows that children with disabilities tend to be excluded from outdoor play because of structural barriers in typical playgrounds. My HB 1173 would require the state's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to prioritize grant funding to park and recreation construction projects that establish or upgrade playgrounds for the inclusion of children with disabilities. Children with disabilities and their families have been shut out of play opportunities for far too long. HB 1173 passed the House unanimously in July 2023.

HB 2166

HB 2166, which would modify the fees paid by next of kin to receive coroner, toxicology, and autopsy reports, passed the House in June. I sponsored this bill after meeting a constituent who had lost a loved one but could not afford to pay the \$700 photocopying fee required by the county coroner's office to obtain reports she felt would help her get closure. After some research, I found out that a 2018 law change now required photocopies of those reports to cost so much because the funds were to be used for coroner training. I was appalled that the General Assembly would put the cost of a county function, training coroners, on to grieving families by charging them \$700 to copy already existing reports. The bill passed on party lines. Under my bill, next of kin could pay \$100 for an autopsy report and \$50 each for a toxicology report and coroner's report. Allowing grieving families to find closure if they choose to by obtaining copies of these reports in a more affordable way is the right thing to do.

CONSTITUENT SERVICES CORNER:

My office is here to help you with any state government-related issue you might have, such as:

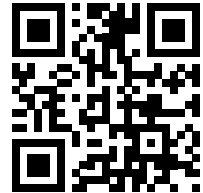
- Driver & vehicle services renewals (Department of Transportation)
- Disability plate & placard applications (Department of Transportation)
- Unemployment compensation (Department of Labor & Industry)
- Applications for birth/death certificates (Division of Vital Records)
- Providing property tax/rent rebate and other tax forms (Department of Revenue)
- SEPTA Key Card applications (SEPTA)
- SNAP, LIHEAP, etc. (Department of Human Services)
- Free Notary Services (for nonpolitical documents)

Please do not hesitate to contact my District Office if you have any questions and/or issues at (610) 277-3230.

Below are a few programs that may be beneficial to you:

UNCLAIMED PROPERTY

The Pennsylvania Treasury is required to hold various financial assets until the rightful owner is located. This results in hundreds of millions of dollars in unclaimed property every year, often because of something as simple as a misspelled name or an out-of-date address. Scan the QR code on the right to see if you have property to claim!



PROPERTY TAX/RENT REBATE PROGRAM (PTRR) – STATE & LOCAL

Since 1971, the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program has provided more than \$7.1 billion in property tax and rent relief. The rebate program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians ages 65 and older; widows and widowers ages 50 and older; and people with disabilities ages 18 and older. The income limit is \$45,000 for homeowners and renters, and half of Social Security income is excluded.

Additionally, both the North Penn and Wissahickon School Districts have developed their own school district rebate to assist seniors and those who are permanently disabled. Applicants must first qualify for the state rebate program to be eligible for the school district program.

My office can assist you in completing your 2023 Property Tax/Rent Rebate Application. The deadline to apply for this program has been extended to December 31. Please call my office at (610) 277-3230 to schedule an appointment.

SEPTA SENIOR KEY CARD

Our office is proud to continue our partnership with SEPTA to help constituents access SEPTA Key Cards! This card is provided to residents aged 65 or older and offers free rides on all SEPTA transit routes including buses, trolleys, subway, and regional rail. Additionally, seniors who wish to take SEPTA to Delaware or New Jersey will receive a 50% discount on fare when they tap their Key Senior Card.

We can assist in your application for an initial SEPTA Key Senior Photo Card. Stop by our office Monday-Friday between the hours of 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM, to apply for your card today! The process takes about five minutes, and you are required to bring a government issued ID that lists your birthdate (like a driver's license or photo ID). The current time for SEPTA to process your application and send your Key Card is four to six weeks. My office can assist you in renewing your expired or soon-to-be expired card. Please call my office at (610) 277-3230 and we will assist you in getting a new card issued to you in the mail! Unfortunately, the site will not allow us to create a duplicate Key Card. In order to receive a replacement for a lost/stolen card you can send a \$5 check or money order made payable to SEPTA to:

SEPTA

P.O. Box 824833

Philadelphia, PA 19182

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 7:

Electronics Recycling Event with Rep. Melissa Cerrato
Temple University Ambler, 580 Meetinghouse Road, Ambler
10 AM – 12 PM

September 21:

Lower Gwynedd Fall Festival
Wissahickon High School, 521 Houston Road, Ambler
12 PM – 5 PM

September 28:

Whitpain Fall Festival
Montgomery County Community College
340 Dekalb Pike, Blue Bell
12 PM – 4 PM

September 28:

North Wales Day
North Wales Borough,
Main Street from Walnut Street to Church Street and Church Street
from Main Street to South 4th Street.
11 AM – 5 PM

October 17:

Senior Resource Fair
Lansdale Area Family YMCA, 608 E. Main Street, Lansdale
10 AM – 1 PM

October 19:

Upper Gwynedd Fall Fest
1 Parkside Place, North Wales
11 AM – 3 PM

October 26:

Family Resource Fair and Trunk-or-Treat with
Reps. Melissa Cerrato & Ben Sanchez
Ambler Area YMCA, 1325 McKean Road, Ambler
2 PM – 4 PM

LIZ IN THE COMMUNITY





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PA STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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lpo.kg.0824

**LOOKING FOR FREE NOTARY SERVICES?
HAVE A PENNDOT ISSUE?
NEED A SENIOR SEPTA PASS?**

WE CAN HELP! LEARN MORE INSIDE!