



# State Representative Maria P. Donatucci



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## Gun Violence is a Public Health Epidemic

I have been working with my fellow legislators along with law enforcement officials, medical experts, community and faith leaders and many others to find solutions to gun violence that's become a public health issue in Philadelphia and across the commonwealth. In Philadelphia alone, more than 325 people have been killed due to violent crime in 2019.

As a member of the PA SAFE Caucus, I am partnering with other state legislators to advance measures that promote public safety. I have introduced House Bill 165, which would establish a voluntary "no firearm purchase list" that the Pennsylvania State Police would maintain. A person could request to be placed on the list for at least one year and up to five years. State police also would inform a person 20 days before his or her time ends on the list and provide a way to reenlist should that person desire.

This legislation also would give health care providers, family and friends the opportunity to suggest that a person who is dealing with mental health issues voluntarily surrender their firearms. If my legislation could save at least one life, then it is truly worth it. House Bill 165 was voted out of the Judiciary Committee and now goes to the full House for a vote.

In addition to the legislation, my colleagues with the Philadelphia House Delegation and I advocated for an additional \$2.5 million in the state budget to support the Gun Violence Task Force, which targets gun traffickers and gets illegal guns off the street in Philadelphia.

We must do all that we can to combat this public health crisis. All Pennsylvanians should be able to live without fear of losing their life to senseless gun violence.

## I HAVE A NEW DISTRICT OFFICE TO SERVE YOU!

2821 Island Ave., Unit 102B  
Philadelphia, PA 19153  
215-398-0017

We are here to assist you  
Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

## Get Your SEPTA Key Senior ID Card

My staff and I are here to help you submit your SEPTA Key Senior ID Card application or renewal application. Cards are valid for four years and the expiration information can be found on the front of your card.



Constituents 65 and older are eligible for a FREE ID Card. It allows you to ride SEPTA buses, trolleys, subways and regional rail for free.

Proof of age and a photo ID is required for the initial application process, so be sure to bring that along with you. Call or visit my district office with questions.

## Promoting Colorectal Cancer Awareness in Pa.



Dr. Marianne Ritchie joined me in the House chamber for a photo after the full House approved my resolution on her Blue Lights Campaign.

Colorectal cancer is a disease that has personally impacted me and my family. I lost my father to colorectal cancer in 1998. According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, it is the second-leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States, killing more than 50,600 people in 2018. Experts suggest up to 60% of deaths from colorectal cancer could be prevented if people 50 or older were regularly screened and appropriately treated.

Every year, I advocate for awareness of this disease in Pennsylvania by sponsoring a House Resolution that recognizes March as "National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month." This year was special because I also sponsored a resolution that acknowledges the Blue Lights Campaign. It is an effort by

Dr. Marianne Ritchie, a gastroenterologist at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia, to educate Pennsylvanians about colorectal cancer and encourage them to get screened.

She works with government officials and private businesses throughout Philadelphia to get many of the city's well-known buildings and structures, including the Benjamin Franklin Bridge, Lincoln Financial Field, and the Cira Centre, lit up in blue for one week in March every year.

I applaud Dr. Ritchie's efforts in raising awareness of this disease and I hope the Blue Lights Campaign and actions of the House of Representatives will help lower the number of deaths to colorectal cancer in the commonwealth.

# New Voting Machines Now in Philadelphia

I hosted two demonstrations of the new voting machines that we began using during the Nov. 5 election. The events were held at the Gateway Community Center in south Philly and at St. Paul's Methodist Church in southwest Philly. These were great opportunities for constituents to get familiar with how the new machines operate.

Representatives from the Philadelphia City Commissioner's Office were in attendance to provide the demonstration of the machines, which include a verifiable paper ballot to help increase voter confidence and security in future elections.



If you missed my demonstrations or would like a refresher course on how these new machines operate, you can visit [www.philadelphiavotes.com](http://www.philadelphiavotes.com).

## Policy Committee Looks at Pa. Film Tax Credit

It was such an honor to welcome filmmaker and Pennsylvania native M. Night Shyamalan to testify at a House Democratic Policy Committee Hearing on the film tax credit.

I requested this hearing along with Rep. Joseph Ciresi to discuss the economic impacts of the credit program and what more the state can do to expand the film industry.

Pennsylvania has been the backdrop of many popular movies and TV productions, and an attractive incentives program will keep it a viable option for drivers in the film industry. The economic benefits are vast. Expanding the film industry is not only an investment in the local arts culture, but also industries, such as the trades and small businesses.



The state has the capability to be an entertainment hub, but we can't compete with states that have a high or uncapped film tax credit.

I believe if we don't continue supporting and eventually increase the cap on this credit, Pennsylvania will miss the boat and the opportunity to become the go-to state for the entertainment industry to film.

# Legislative Corner

Here is just some of the legislation that I have authored and sponsored this session so far:

**H.B. 166** – Equal pay legislation that would prohibit discriminatory pay based on gender and would place new penalties on employers that participate in discriminatory wage practices.

**H.B. 168** – When closing a school – traditional or charter – because of finances, low enrollment, charter revocation or other reason, this legislation would provide a process for administrators to follow during the closure.

**H.B. 170** – Would increase the fines in the Equal Pay Law, up to \$5,000. The penalties in the Equal Pay Law have not been updated since 1959.

**H.B. 799** – Would require school buses carrying children 12 years of age and younger to be equipped or fitted with retractable seat belts.

**H.B. 1605** – Would help crack down on home thefts through fraudulent property transfers.

**Safe Campuses Act** – This legislation would establish the Pennsylvania Safe Campuses Act. It would require all post-secondary schools, colleges and universities to adopt policies and establish programs to make students, staff and officials aware of the risk of sexual assault and intimate partner violence.



I have been advocating for years for equal pay in Pennsylvania and I will continue to do so until it finally happens!



I participated in a House Democratic Policy Committee hearing to discuss workforce development in Pennsylvania. It's important to me that we create opportunities to recruit and train a workforce to prepare for quality-wage jobs.



I joined some of my colleagues and advocates to call for an increase in the minimum wage in Pennsylvania. Our commonwealth has not raised the wage in a decade, and it's long overdue.

## 185th District Receives \$6 Million in State Grants

As your state representative, I continuously advocate for state funding that helps improve the quality of life for your family and our community. I was pleased to learn that several projects in our district were awarded a combined \$6 million in state grants.

The recipients are:

- **WURD Radio LLC** – \$500,000 for improvements to its station and office space as well as repair of two AM tower antennas.
- **Passyunk Energy Center LLC** – \$2 million to install solar equipment at its Passyunk site. It will help fulfill a commitment to zero emission energy throughout the commonwealth.
- **Industrial Metals Manufacturing LLC** – \$3 million to renovate Building 57 on the former U.S. Navy Yard.
- **FDR Park** – \$250,000 to install play equipment with required safety surfacing, ADA access, landscaping, a project sign and related site improvements.
- **Girard Park** – \$275,000 for renovations.

Our men and women in blue risk their lives every day to protect our family, friends and neighbors. I was proud to obtain state funding to help the Darby Township and Colwyn Township Police Departments purchase new police cars to continue their never-ending commitments to serving our communities. Congratulations!





State Representative

**Maria P. Donatucci**

185th Legislative District

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Harrisburg, PA 17120-2185

## INSIDE:

- New District Office
- SEPTA Key Senior ID Card
- Fighting for workers' rights

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## Fighting for workers' rights

As a former member of AFSCME 47, I proudly stood with our labor unions in fighting for the rights of our workers: a family sustaining wage, affordable health care and protections on the job. This rally coincided with my colleagues and I introducing a bill package that would strengthen workers' rights.

A part of the Pennsylvania Workers' Bill of Rights package is my legislation, House Bill 998, which would require employers to provide paid sick leave for their employees. Workers would be able to use paid sick leave to get treatment if they or a family member is sick. The paid sick leave could also be used if someone has become a victim of domestic violence or sexual assault.

It's time for Pennsylvania to provide the needs and rights of all workers!



## Apply Now for Your Property Tax/Rent Rebate

You have until Dec. 31 to apply for your Property Tax/Rent Rebate. You may qualify to receive a state rebate for rent or property taxes you paid in 2018 if you are:

- 65 or older;
- 50 or older and widowed; or
- 18 or older with a permanent disability.

The income limit to qualify for a property tax or rent rebate is \$35,000 or less for homeowners and \$15,000 or less for renters. You only need to count HALF of your Social Security benefits when calculating your income for this program.

Contact my constituent service offices for more information, an application or FREE assistance with the program.

## REAL ID Reminder

Beginning Oct. 1, 2020, a REAL ID-compliant driver's license or ID card, or a U.S. Passport or Military ID, will be necessary to board a domestic commercial flight or enter a secure federal facility.

To obtain a REAL ID-compliant driver's license or ID card, you will need to bring all of the following documentation to a full-service Driver's License Center:

- Proof of identity (original birth certificate with a raised seal, or a valid U.S. Passport)
- A Social Security Card
- Proof of all legal name changes (marriage license or court order from applicable county's family court)
- Two proofs of current, physical PA address (unexpired PA license or ID and a no-more-than 90-day-old bank statement or utility bill with the same name and address)

PennDOT is advising customers who want REAL ID-compliant licenses or ID cards to apply as soon as possible.

More information for REAL ID, including locations closest to you to obtain yours, can be found at [www.dmv.pa.gov/REALID/](http://www.dmv.pa.gov/REALID/).