



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

FALL 2024

# Kristine Howard

167TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

 [RepKHoward.com](http://RepKHoward.com)

Greentree Office Plaza • 40 Lloyd Ave., Suite 309 • Malvern, PA 19355 • (610) 251-1070

107 East Wing • P.O. Box 202167 • Harrisburg, PA 17120-2167 • (717) 783-4088

 [RepHoward@pahouse.net](mailto:RepHoward@pahouse.net)   [@RepKHoward](https://twitter.com/RepKHoward)

## Dear Neighbor,

I look forward to continuing to represent you in Harrisburg as your state representative. We passed several important bills this past legislative session, and I was able to bring several million dollars back to the 167th Legislative District. It has been my privilege and honor to serve you these past six years, and I look forward to representing you again in the coming session.

I know we're all gearing up for the holiday season, but I wanted to ensure everyone is aware of the resources available from my district office.

Looking forward, I have no intention of resting. I am already hard at work crafting solutions to several challenges facing us. I plan on

introducing or reintroducing legislation to address workforce shortages in key industries like social work, protect families from medical bankruptcy, expand credit access, void predatory contract language, modernize PA's divorce laws, rehabilitate Pennsylvania's native bat population, and protect endangered species from habitat destruction.

The work of a legislator is gratifying and humbling, and I am deeply grateful for all of the trust you have put in me.

Best wishes,

*Kristine C. Howard*

## SATELLITE OFFICE HOURS

Members of my staff will be on site at locations across the district on the following days:

- **Chester Springs Library** – 1st Tuesday of each month, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- **Henrietta Hankin Library** – 2nd Tuesday of each month, 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
- **East Caln Township Building** – 3rd Tuesday of each month, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- **Chester County Library** – 4th Tuesday of each month, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

# CONSERVATION CORNER

## PENNSYLVANIA'S NATIVE BATS

As many of you know, my staff and I share a deep fondness for bats. Sadly, four species have seen population declines of an estimated 99%: the eastern small-footed bat, northern long-eared bat, tri-colored bat and, most notably, the little brown bat, which was once the most common bat in southeast Pennsylvania but is now among the rarest.

Much of this decline is attributable to White-Nose Syndrome, a cruel disease caused by a fungus imported to the U.S. at the turn of the century.

This should be a concern not only because of a desire to protect the well-being of animals in our state, but also because bats are among the best helpers that agriculture has. Not only do they pollinate crops, but their appetite for insects ensures farmers need far less pesticide, which saves farmers money and, notably, reduces the likelihood of environmental and health effects related to pesticide use.

While researchers have uncovered evidence that more bats are finally developing some resistance to the disease, the picture is still grim.



Previously, I introduced H.R. 65 and H.B. 840 to draw attention to this issue and to preserve wildlife habitats. I continue working with biologists, conservationists, and ecologists at the Pennsylvania Game Commission, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and Penn State University to address this terrible issue.

## WINTER SAFETY

*Yes, the weather is still mild, but winter is right around the corner.*

### SNOW REMOVAL

The National Safety Council recommends the following tips for safe snow removal:

#### **For anybody shoveling...**

- Do not shovel after eating or while smoking.
- Take it slow and stretch out before you begin.
- Try to shovel when the snow is still fresh and powdery, as it's lighter. Push the snow rather than lifting it.
- If you do lift it, use a small shovel or only partially fill the shovel.
- Lift with your legs, not your back.
- Do not work to the point of exhaustion.
- Know the signs of a heart attack and if you're experiencing any of them, stop immediately and call 911; every minute counts.

#### **For those using a snow blower...**

- If the blower jams, turn it off.
- Keep your hands away from the moving parts.
- Be aware of the carbon monoxide risk of running a snow blower in an enclosed space.
- Add fuel outdoors before starting and never add fuel when it is running.
- Never leave it unattended while it is running.



# WINTER SAFETY

## WINTER DRIVING

Remember, if severe winter weather is forecast, eliminate all unnecessary travel. This will keep you and your family safe and allow PennDOT to perform its winter duties. If you must travel, however, PennDOT offers the following tips for safe driving this winter season:

- Listen to weather and travel advisories, but if you don't have to travel in bad weather, don't.
- Keep your gas tank at least half full, as a lower tank can increase the risk of condensation build-up and cause corrosion and potentially prevent starting.
- Slow down and increase following distance. Remember that the speed limit is a maximum, not a requirement.
- Avoid sudden stops and starts.
- Beware of roads that may look wet, but are actually frozen, often referred to as "black ice."

- Use extra caution on bridges and ramps, where ice can often form before other sections of the road.
- Carry a cellphone.
- Do not use cruise control while driving on snow-covered roads.
- State law requires you to turn on your headlights when your wipers are on.
- Use your low beams in particularly bad weather, especially in cases of heavy or blowing snow, to improve visibility.
- Remove ice and snow from windows, mirrors, hood, roof, and all vehicle lights before you drive and as often as needed. Clearing the hood and roof will prevent it from sliding onto your windows or flying off your car, and state law allows for penalties if snow or ice from your vehicle strikes a vehicle or person and causes death or injury.
- Remove snow that may obscure your license plate.
- Do not park your vehicle on snow emergency routes.

- Do not pass or get between trucks plowing in a plow line (several trucks plowing side by side).
- Make sure someone else knows where you are going and when you expect to arrive. In case you run into an emergency and need help, someone will know where to look for you.
- If you do become stranded, it's better to stay with your vehicle until help arrives. Run the engine every hour or so, but make sure the tailpipe is clear and keep the downwind window cracked open.
- Do not drink and drive, and always wear your seat belt.



## PREPARE FOR RISING WINTER ENERGY COSTS

Energy usage is a key factor in the size of winter energy bills, and there are many ways that consumers can control that usage. Energy saving tips include:

- **Pay attention to the thermostat** – Every degree you raise or lower the temperature could impact energy costs by up to 3%. Also, consider a programmable thermostat to automatically lower temperatures while you are away from home.
- **Have your furnace serviced** – Regular furnace maintenance along with clean air filters help ensure efficient operation of your heating system.
- **Insulate and seal leaks around**

**your home** – Adding insulation, installing storm windows and doors, and sealing cracks and air leaks can help you stay warmer and use less energy.

- **Install or repair ceiling fans in high-trafficked rooms** – Many ceiling fans can be reversed to clockwise to produce an updraft and move warmer air near the ceiling downward, keeping you and the room warmer.
- **Consider resetting your water heater thermostat** – Water heaters are the second-highest source of energy usage in the home, and many people have the thermostat on their water heater set high. Setting

the temperature on your water heater a few degrees cooler can help save money on your energy bills.

The PUC's electric shopping website [PAPowerSwitch.com](http://PAPowerSwitch.com) and natural gas shopping website [PAGasSwitch.com](http://PAGasSwitch.com) have interactive sections with more easy consumer tips for saving energy and, more importantly, the ability to save substantially by choosing a new power supplier.





# WHERE'S MY PLOW?

All of PennDOT's roughly 2,200 PennDOT-owned and rented plow trucks are equipped with Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) systems, which use in-truck technology to log and share data in real-time for that truck. The routes of these interstate and expressway trucks can be viewed in real-time at [www.511PA.com](http://www.511PA.com).



## REPORT POTHOLES!

Potholes and other roadway concerns on state roads can be reported by calling 1-800-FIX-ROAD or visiting [www.penndot.gov](http://www.penndot.gov) and clicking on "Submit Roadway Feedback."

# CONSTITUENT SERVICES

## UNCLAIMED PROPERTY AT PA TREASURY

Did you know that the Pennsylvania Treasury is currently holding \$3.5 billion in unclaimed property?

Did you know that one in 10 Pennsylvanians is owed unclaimed property?

Did you know the average claim is worth about \$2,000?

My office is hard at work notifying constituents of their unclaimed property, but you don't have to wait for us to reach out - you can search Treasury's online database at any time to see if you or friends and family have property waiting to be claimed. You need not pay anyone a fee to search for or claim property from the state. Learn more at [www.patreasury.gov/unclaimed-property](http://www.patreasury.gov/unclaimed-property).



# CONSTITUENT SERVICES

## PROPERTY TAX/RENT REBATE PROGRAM

The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians aged 65 and older, widows and widowers 50 and older, and people with disabilities 18 and older.

Gov. Josh Shapiro signed a new law, Act 7 of 2023, to expand the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program. With expanded income requirements, nearly 175,000 more Pennsylvanians were eligible to receive the Property Tax/Rent Rebate in 2024. The

majority of the 430,000 past claimants may see increased rebates, as well.

The income limit is \$45,000 a year, with half of Social Security income excluded. Spouses, personal representatives, or estates may also file rebate claims on behalf of deceased claimants who meet all other eligibility criteria. Visit [www.revenue.pa.gov](http://www.revenue.pa.gov) for more information.

Applications are due by **Dec. 31, 2024.**



## PENNIE OPEN ENROLLMENT

Pennie's Open Enrollment Period (OEP) for the 2025 coverage year runs until Jan. 15, 2025.

During this period, individuals and families can enroll in health insurance plans, make changes to their existing coverage, or renew their current plans. This is a critical time to ensure everyone has the necessary health coverage for the upcoming year.

Pennie Customer Line – (844) 844-8040

Pennie Broker/Assistance Line – (844) 844-4440

Representatives are available from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday.



## BIRTH CERTIFICATES AND DEATH CERTIFICATES

My office can help you obtain copies of birth and death certificates. Certificates cost \$20 each, paid via check or money order made payable to "VITAL RECORDS."

Visit [pahouse.com/Howard](http://pahouse.com/Howard) and sign up for my email newsletter to stay up to date!







**Rep. Kristine Howard**

P.O. Box 202167  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2167

lpo.aa.1124

STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
**Kristine Howard**



**CONSTITUENT SERVICES**

**STATE GOVERNMENT CONCERNS?  
CALL MY OFFICE**

My office is here to help you with any state-related issue. If you're having an issue, please call, and my staff will do all we can to serve as guides or champions, as needed, as you navigate your concerns through our government.

While most issues can be resolved by phone, many matters may require an in-person meeting. To minimize wait times while allowing us to research your issue and provide the best service possible without the need to rush our visitors, appointments are encouraged. To schedule an appointment, call my office at (610) 251-1070 or email [RepHoward@pahouse.net](mailto:RepHoward@pahouse.net).

Greentree Office Plaza • 40 Lloyd Ave., Suite 309 • Malvern, PA 19355 • (610) 251-1070

107 East Wing • P.O. Box 202167 • Harrisburg, PA 17120-2167 • (717) 783-4088

 [RepKHoward.com](http://RepKHoward.com)  [RepHoward@pahouse.net](mailto:RepHoward@pahouse.net)   [@RepKHoward](https://twitter.com/RepKHoward)