



# The Daley News

from Representative Mary Jo Daley



Winter 2016

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Dear Friend,

As of this writing, Pennsylvania remains without a fully funded, responsible budget for the 2015-2016 fiscal year. Gov. Tom Wolf presented his 2016-17 budget proposal Feb. 9, and budget hearings will run Feb. 22 through March 10.

In December, the governor line-item vetoed a spending plan and signed it into law in order to get overdue funding to our schools and human service providers. However, this plan does not provide funding for an entire year. It is a Band-Aid compared to what the commonwealth desperately needs: a fiscally sound budget that begins to restore the education funding cuts left by the previous administration and increase funding for human service organizations.

Days before Gov. Wolf used the power of the line-item veto, the House of Representatives was set to vote on a budget framework that was agreed to by the governor, Senate Democrats and Republicans, and House Democrats. However, on Dec. 23, House Speaker Mike Turzai adjourned the House without calling for the vote. The Senate then concurred on the 11-month budget bill that House Republicans had drafted. This budget did not offer any additional funding for schools or human services.

The budget process has been frustrating and exhausting, with ideology hijacking the budget negotiations. The governor made multiple efforts to work with House Republican leadership, but like Lucy, Charlie Brown and the football, the football kept moving. One of the budget priorities that Gov. Wolf took off the table during negotiations was a tax on natural gas drilling, something that I support, as do many of you. The governor has included that in his budget proposal for 2016-17.

As a Democratic member of the House Appropriations Committee, I will continue to support the governor's budget priorities and hope that I, along with my Democratic colleagues, will have a meaningful seat at the table to get what Pennsylvania needs for a better future.

*Mary Jo*



Rep. Daley, along with her House Democratic colleagues, discuss on Dec. 23 the need for a budget after the Speaker of the House adjourned session.

## Daley calls for redistricting reform

Far too many times, the word “gerrymandering” comes to mind in the world of politics and elections in Pennsylvania. Gerrymandering is the dividing of boundaries of an electoral constituency to favor one party or class. According to a January article in the *Washington Post*, since the 2010 U.S. Census, Pennsylvania’s congressional map has been widely cited as one of the country’s most heavily gerrymandered.

In fact, the 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, which includes a small section of the 148<sup>th</sup> Legislative District, covers five counties. The analysis by *The Washington Post* found that the 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional District is one of the nation’s top 10 most-gerrymandered congressional districts. In fact, gerrymandering has distorted Pennsylvania’s entire congressional landscape, as Republican voters only account for 37 percent of the population, but their party holds 72 percent of the state’s congressional seats. If the seats were redistributed based on party affiliation rather than district boundaries, Pennsylvania would have nine Democratic congressmen rather than the current five, and seven Republican congressmen rather than the current 13.

Looking to make changes to the commonwealth’s congressional and legislative district maps, I have joined a bipartisan and bicameral redistricting reform group that includes a coalition of organizations that support redistricting reform. We are actively seeking support from local officials to join us in the push to support an amendment to the Pennsylvania Constitution related to redistricting after the biennial census. I also am crafting legislation that would create more openness and fairness in the redistricting process. My legislation would require a commission to consider plans drawn by Pennsylvania residents, hold public hearings on the plans, and establish a website to share the data.

I would love to hear what you have to say about the current state of the districts and what your thoughts are in regard to changing them. I invite you to visit or call my office, or email me at [repmaryjodaley@pahouse.net](mailto:repmaryjodaley@pahouse.net).

# Daley welcomes online voter registration in Pa.

Thanks to Gov. Tom Wolf and Secretary of State Pedro Cortes, voter registration is finally online!

In August, I joined the governor and Secretary Cortes to announce the launch of online voter registration at [www.register.votespa.com](http://www.register.votespa.com). This update brings Pennsylvania up to speed by making the process to register to vote and change registration easier, especially for young people who do most things electronically. Individuals can still mail in their voter registration forms. Online voter registration is more efficient and should save a significant amount of tax dollars for Pennsylvania's 67 counties.

I am currently the prime sponsor of House Bill 692, which would help make online voter registration even more efficient. I have worked closely with the administration on this legislation, which has features that would further streamline the registration process, such as signature capture at the polling place.



*Rep. Daley with Gov. Tom Wolf, Secretary of State Pedro Cortes and elected officials announcing online voter registration in Pennsylvania.*

## Children's Health Insurance Program extended

I voted in favor of legislation to extend the state's health insurance program for children, known as CHIP, through the end of 2017. Gov. Tom Wolf signed the bill into law in December.

CHIP covers immunizations, wellness checkups, prescriptions, dental, vision and hearing services, diagnostic testing, emergency care, mental health care and hospitalization, as well as substance abuse rehabilitation and other services.

CHIP coverage is available to any child under 19 in Pennsylvania whose family earns too much to qualify for Medicaid, but can't afford to purchase private insurance or isn't covered by a work-related plan.

For an average four-person family, CHIP is free if household income is between \$32,253 and \$50,440, low cost if household income is between \$50,440 and \$76,145, or full cost if household income exceeds \$76,145. Premiums vary, depending on the carrier.

If your child doesn't have health insurance, or if you know of a child who isn't covered, you can find out more about CHIP – including providers in your area and how to enroll – at [www.chipcoverspakids.com](http://www.chipcoverspakids.com) or by calling my office at 610-832-1679.



*Rep. Daley hosting a bus trip to the state Capitol for veterans from her district. The trip included a stop at Fort Indiantown Gap.*

## Daley pushes for workplace accommodations for nursing mothers

It's a challenge in today's world for working mothers to juggle all their responsibilities. It can be even more difficult for working mothers who want to nurse their newborn children.

State Rep. David Parker of Monroe County has joined me in sponsoring legislation that would require workplace accommodations for nursing women.

House Bill 1100 would address two main loopholes in federal law. First, it would apply to all employees, including those who are exempt from federal overtime provisions, such as salaried or management employees. Second, this bill would require employers to provide a private, sanitary space for mothers to pump milk beyond one year after their child's birth.

H.B. 1100 mirrors federal law by exempting small employers from these requirements if they would present an undue hardship to the employer.

It's important to note that one economic benefit that would result from this legislation is that breastfeeding mothers miss fewer days of work because their infants are sick less often.

## Help available for Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program

My office has received Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program application forms for 2015 from the state Department of Revenue, and my staff is ready to assist you!

The program provides a state rebate of up to \$650 on 2015 property taxes or rent to income-eligible residents who are 65 or older; widows and widowers 50 or older; and people with disabilities 18 or older.

To be eligible, your **household income** must be \$35,000 or less if you are a homeowner, or \$15,000 or less if you are a renter. When applying, you only have to count **half** your Social Security or federal railroad Tier I retirement benefits toward your total **income**.

You can obtain information about the program, an application and help applying through my office.

For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/1Bb2OgN>. You may also call 1-888-222-9190.

## Daley's House resolution commemorates local fire company's 100th anniversary

In October, the Barren Hill Volunteer Fire Co. celebrated its 100th anniversary, and I was delighted to present its members with a citation in honor of this anniversary and their tireless dedication to the Whitemarsh community.

The fire company, located in Whitemarsh Township, was organized in October 1915 after a fire destroyed a barn and killed several animals on the property of the Whitemarsh Inn.

The Barren Hill Volunteer Fire Co. responds to approximately 500 service calls annually, and its volunteers put in more than 8,000 hours each year.

The volunteers continue to show tremendous dedication and excellence, and they remain a valued asset to our community. It was a great pleasure to honor them for their work.



*Deputy Chief Renard Rose and Assistant Chief Tim Tygh, members of the Barren Hill Volunteer Fire Co., with Rep. Daley after adoption of her resolution commemorating the 100th anniversary of the fire company.*

## Around the 148th Legislative District



*Rep. Daley attending the Eagle Court of Honor ceremony for Theodore (Teddy) Kotler and Jake Cicalese in November in Gladwyne.*



*Rep. Daley meeting with children at the Ambler Boys and Girls Club. She also gave away several backpacks containing school supplies.*

*Rep. Daley speaking to a constituent during Narberth's "NarbEarth Day" celebration.*



## Sculptors represent Daley's district at PA Farm Show



*Jim Victor and Marie Pelton of Conshohocken talk about their butter sculpture with Agriculture Department Secretary Russell Redding at the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg.*

If you have ever attended the Pennsylvania Farm Show in Harrisburg, you have probably seen the always popular, awe-inspiring butter sculpture.

Jim Victor and Marie Pelton, who live in the 148th Legislative District, began working on the butter sculpture in mid-December and finished it in time for this year's farm show. The sculpture paid tribute to the 100th year of the event and the state's agriculture industry. Jim's first time sculpting for the Farm Show was 1995, and he and his wife Marie have created a total of 14 butter sculptures together. Pelton and Victor also have created sculptures made of cheese, chocolate and even fruit.

After the Farm Show, the butter sculpture was donated to a Juniata County dairy farm, which has a digester capable of turning the butter into biofuel. The sculpture created enough electricity to power the entire farm for three days.



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## Daley showcases young artists' work

I opened my constituent service office in November to showcase the talent and creativity of students from the Colonial School District. The art exhibition was open to the public through Jan. 4 and gave constituents the opportunity to stop by my office, enjoy the art and talk with me about legislative issues.



*Some of the artwork created by Colonial School District students on display in Rep. Daley's constituent service office.*

I believe it is important to show support for public schools' commitment to the arts, as well as to recognize student performance. I look forward to hosting artwork again this year!

### Upcoming events in 2016:

I have some great events coming up this year. Here are some of them:

#### **March 17 – Breast Cancer Screenings**

(rescheduled from January)

9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. • District Office

Appointments are required: please call my office at (610) 832-1679 for more information on how you can sign up

#### **March 24 – Town Hall Meeting**

7 p.m. – 9 p.m. • Ambler Borough Hall

#### **March 31 – Town Hall Meeting**

7 p.m. – 9 p.m. • Conshohocken Borough Hall

#### **April 16 – Shredding Event**

9 a.m. – 11 a.m. • 925 Montgomery Ave.

Next door to Staples

#### **June 17 – Senior Fair**

10 a.m. to 1 p.m. • Colonial Elementary School

### Sign up for email updates

In order to keep you informed about my upcoming events and the legislative topics that are important to you, I invite you to sign up to receive my email alerts.

From Feb. 26 to April 26, and Sept. 8 to Nov. 8, House rules stipulate that I cannot contact you unless you have agreed to let me do so. You can opt in to continue to receive my emails.

Opting in will allow you to continue to receive notices about important issues that matter to you, including:

- Updates on legislation;
- News and events in the district; and
- Other relevant government-related information.

You can sign up to receive my email alerts – and opt in to continue to receive them before elections – by visiting my website at [www.pahouse.com/MDaley](http://www.pahouse.com/MDaley), clicking “Contact” at the top of the main page, then “Sign Up for Emails” before filling out the form and leaving the box checked.