



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Gerald Mullery

Winter 2015

119th Legislative District

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GETTING TOUGH ON WELFARE ABUSE AND FRAUD

I have co-sponsored several bills aimed at preventing waste, fraud and abuse in our welfare system.

I support a bill permitting drug testing of welfare recipients suspected of using illegal or illicit drugs. Pursuant to this legislation, the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services would provide “reasonable suspicion standard” training to county assistance office employees to assist in identifying drug users.

A second bill would require random drug testing for all welfare program participants.

A third bill would require a welfare benefit background check of lottery winners with prizes exceeding \$2,500. If that

person is collecting public assistance benefits, the amount of the lottery winnings would be provided to the Department of Human Services and be considered in determining whether the person continued to be eligible for benefits.

A final bill would require a welfare recipient’s photo to be placed on their benefits card, ensuring proper distribution of welfare funds.

These proposals follow changes made by the legislature to help prevent welfare fraud, such as drug testing for people with previous felony drug convictions, disallowing people from applying for benefits in a county outside of where they live and additional income eligibility verifications.

PA. GAME COMMISSION SHOULD DISTRIBUTE ANTLERLESS DEER HUNTING LICENSES

I have reintroduced a bill to give the Pennsylvania Game Commission responsibility for distributing antlerless deer hunting licenses.

Currently, the Game Commission determines the number of antlerless licenses to be allocated, but county treasurers distribute the permits.

It’s a system that is outdated, inconvenient and, in some instances, ineffective.

The current system led to Luzerne County hunters being shut out of doe licenses last year when the treasurer’s office, citing staff cuts, failed to process applications on time.

Hunting and fishing licenses are available online, and Pennsylvanians should be able to obtain an antlerless license the same way. It’s time to modernize this antiquated system.



I recently met with Gov. Tom Wolf and we discussed issues of importance to my constituents.

FREELAND OFFICE NOW OPEN

I have opened a satellite office in Freeland to better serve my constituents in southern Luzerne County.

The office is located at 532 Centre St. It is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday. The phone number is 570-636-3500.

The new office gives my constituents in the southern portion of the 119th Legislative District convenient access to assistance with a variety of state programs and services.

I also operate an office at 156 S. Market St. in Nanticoke. The hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday. The phone number is 570-740-7031.



It was my pleasure to participate in the ribbon cutting at West Hazleton's Smith Floral in February. Jennifer Barnasevich, a 22-year employee, is the proud new owner.

FREE SHREDDING EVENT APRIL 25 IN NANTICOKE

I will host a free shredding event to help you destroy unwanted documents that contain personal information and could be used by identity thieves.

The event will be held from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, April 25 at Greater Nanticoke Area High School's parking lot off of Kosciusko Street

What to bring: Paper documents that contain personal information, such as Social Security, credit card and bank account numbers.

What not to bring: Business documents, cassettes, binders, plastics, magazines, newspapers or books.

For a complete list of items or for further information, please contact my Nanticoke office at 570-740-7031.

Protect yourself from
IDENTITY THEFT!

PROPERTY TAX/RENT REBATE PROGRAM

Applications are now available to apply for the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program.

Pennsylvanians 65 or older, widows and widowers 50 or older, and people with permanent disabilities 18 or older may qualify for the program. The annual income limit for homeowners is \$35,000 and \$15,000 for renters. When calculating your annual income, you only need to count half of your Social Security income.

The maximum standard rebate is \$650.

Thanks to enactment of Act 156, which I voted for last year, Social Security cost-of-living adjustments no longer disqualify those applying for a rebate.



HONORING A FALLEN PUBLIC SERVANT

A bill I introduced would designate the bridge on S.R. 3005 over the outlet of Lily Lake in Conyngham Township as the Senior Officer Eric J. Williams Memorial Bridge.

A corrections officer at the U.S. Penitentiary, Canaan, Williams was attacked and killed by an inmate in February 2013. He was 34 years old.

Officer Williams was dedicated to serving his community, his commonwealth and his country. His courageous service will never be forgotten and this legislation is just one small way we can remember him.

Officer Williams loved the outdoors and owned a cottage at Lily Lake, so it is entirely fitting to name the nearby bridge in his memory.

REMEMBERING TWO LOCAL PUBLIC SERVANTS

As an elected official, it is my honor to get to know many dedicated public servants who have a deep love of their community.

Sadly, two of these local officials passed away in recently months.

Clifton E. Madrack, 69, died in December. "Clif," as he was known to his friends, was Plymouth Borough Council president. Before retiring, he worked as a director at Moon Lake Park and had been Plymouth Borough's administrator.

Clif also was a U.S. Army veteran, serving during the Vietnam War.

In February, Sugar Notch Police Chief Christopher Pelchar died suddenly. He served as chief of the borough for 12 years. Pelchar, known by many as "Curly," was just 38.

I'm sure the memory of both men will live on for many years because they touched the lives of so many people in the communities they served.

LOCAL FIRE, AMBULANCE COMPANIES RECEIVE STATE GRANTS

Congratulations are in order for the 29 fire and ambulance companies in my legislative district that received more than \$353,000 in state grants.

I'm thrilled that these organizations received state help from the Fire Company and Volunteer Ambulance Service Grant Program to continue their critical work.

Money from the program is used to build or repair a fire or ambulance company headquarters; purchase or repair firefighting, ambulance or rescue equipment; train and certify members; and pay down debt that resulted from building or repairing a facility or purchasing or repairing equipment.

Organizations in my district that received the grants are:

- A K Mowery Hose Co. No. 3, Nanticoke – \$12,899.64
- Askam Fire Co. No. 6, Warrior Run – \$12,899.64
- Dennison Township Volunteer Fire Co. No. 1 – \$11,791.59
- Fearnots Volunteer Fire Co., Freeland – \$14,284.70
- Freeland Fire Department – \$12,345.61
- Freeland Northside Ambulance Association – \$3,724.80
- Glen Lyon-Alden Volunteer Hose Co. – \$23,291.59
- Goodwill Hose Co. No. 2, Plymouth – \$12,345.61
- Hanover Fire Co. No. 4 – \$14,284.70
- Hazle Township Volunteer Fire & Rescue – \$14,284.70
- Honey Pot Volunteer Active Fire Co., Nanticoke – \$11,791.59
- Lape Hose Co. No. 2, Nanticoke – \$14,007.69
- Larksville Co. Ambulance – \$6,700.80
- Nanticoke City Fire Department – \$14,561.71
- Nanticoke Fire Department & Community Ambulance – \$7,444.80
- Newport Township Consolidated Fire Co. – \$11,791.59
- Pioneer Hook & Ladder Volunteer Fire Co., Nanticoke – \$14,838.72
- Plymouth Boro Ambulance Association – \$7,444.80
- Plymouth Fire Co. No. 1 – \$12,068.60
- Plymouth Township Fire & Rescue, Tilbury Station – \$11,514.58
- Slocum Township Volunteer Fire Co. No. 1 – \$12,068.60
- Stickney Fire Company No.1, Nanticoke – \$12,899.64



Congratulations to the White Haven Police Department for receiving the Wives Behind the Badge's Community Hero Award. With me are Officer Tori Harrison, Chief Tom Szoke, Officer Brittany Stasik and Officer Steve Demko.



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Inside:

- Getting tough on welfare fraud and abuse
- Freeland office now open
- Free shredding event April 25 in Nanticoke

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FISH AND BOAT MEETING MARCH 24 AT LCCC

In advance of the opening of trout season, I will host a meeting to discuss local fishing and boating from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Tuesday, March 24 at the Luzerne County Community College Educational Conference Center, 1333 S. Prospect St., Nanticoke.

Nick Lylo from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources will speak about state forests in Luzerne

County and the recreation opportunities they offer.

Representatives of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission will be on hand.

The meeting is free and open to the public.

Trout fishing in Luzerne County begins 8 a.m. April 18. If you can't wait that long, the regional opening day for trout season is 8 a.m. Saturday, April 4 for 18 counties in southeastern Pennsylvania.

MY COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE 2015-16 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

I will serve on five House committees for the 2015-16 legislative session: Education, Game and Fisheries, Health, Judiciary and Local Government.

These appointments give me a seat at the table as we consider a wide variety of legislation that would impact the day-to-day lives of people from Luzerne County and across the commonwealth. It is a privilege to serve on these committees.

The committee system allows legislators to assess and amend legislation, and evaluate important issues, before sending bills to the full House for a vote.

In addition, I will serve as Democratic vice chairman of the House Game and Fisheries Committee for the 2015-16 legislative session. This is an exciting appointment because I am an avid fisherman and hunter who cares deeply about Penn's Woods.

