



STATE REPRESENTATIVE Donna Bullock

195th Legislative District

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Representing the people of the 195th Legislative District

Dear Neighbor,

In August, I was sworn in to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives to represent the people of North and West Philadelphia. My family and friends were present for this special day and stood witness as I took the oath of office in the House chamber on Aug. 25, following a special election over the summer.

A lawyer and Temple alumna (2004), I previously served as special assistant to Philadelphia City Council President Darrell L. Clarke and as the City Council research fellowship director. I joined Clarke's office in January 2011 as his community and economic development coordinator. Before my work for the city, I worked at a private law firm and for Philadelphia Community Legal Services, where I formed and advised nonprofit organizations, small businesses and community groups.

I have volunteered and served on several boards, task forces and coalitions across Philadelphia, including the Smith Memorial Playground, Columbia North YMCA Advisory Board, West Philadelphia Child Care Network and Mayor's Office of Community Service Advisory Board. My husband, Otis Bullock, a lawyer and Temple alumnus as well, and I live a life of service in Strawberry Mansion, a community we are proud to call home.

I took office with Harrisburg locked in a budget impasse, and as of this writing, unfortunately, not much has changed. However, I want to let you know that I have been working with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to ensure passage of a responsible spending plan that properly invests in our students, addresses the growing property-tax issue gripping our state, and resolves the structural deficit once and for all.

While a compromise could come at any time, I wanted to assure you that my staff and I will be available to you throughout the impasse.

Please feel free to stop by my office, located at 2839 W. Girard Ave., Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Whether you have a question about how the budget impasse will affect a particular program or you have a



question about accessing a state service, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

You can also stay up to date with what is happening in both Philadelphia and Harrisburg by signing up for periodic email updates on my website at www.pahouse.com/Bullock, or by following me on Facebook or Twitter.

In the meantime, I look forward to seeing many of you around the district!

Sincerely,

Rep. Donna Bullock
Representative, 195th Legislative District

A look at the state



As of this writing, over four months have passed since the 2015/16 state budget was due, and school districts, day care providers, human service agencies and crisis centers are operating in severely diminished capacities – all because partisan politics have given way to gridlock in Harrisburg.

Disabled and at-risk Pennsylvanians across the commonwealth are going without critical lifelines such as transportation services, health care and counseling. Seniors in high schools are losing out on their final year to prepare for college. Working parents are losing time at work over reduced and non-existent day care, and unless negotiators in Harrisburg come to a compromise soon, the situation will only become worse.

Meanwhile, I hear from my constituents that they want to see compromise, cooperation, new ideas and, ultimately, answers for the mess Pennsylvania is in. Last month, Democrats put forth such a plan in an attempt to bring seniors tax relief, to put money into our schools and to restore funding to human service agencies – all things Pennsylvanians have been asking for.

Our plan would raise the Personal Income Tax for those who can afford it, providing enough revenue to balance the budget and close the deficit while leaving the rate below that of every other state around us. It would offer a fair severance tax on natural-gas drillers while preserving the impact fee that our communities depend on for important local programs and services.

With this modest severance tax, Pennsylvania finally would allow all of its residents to benefit from this valuable natural resource in the same way that residents in every other natural gas-producing state already do.

We also finally would take a huge step in undoing the massive education cuts of the past and restoring the investments our school districts need to provide every child in Pennsylvania the opportunity for a quality education.

The plan also would offer tax relief for those who need it the most. For too long, our tax relief efforts have been aimed at those who are least in need of a break.

Nonetheless, the plan was voted down largely along party lines, but the halls of the General Assembly have been buzzing with other proposals. When all is said and done, I sincerely hope that the compromise born out of this struggle is a win for the vulnerable, working and good people of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania.

The only alternative is a budget balanced on the backs of the poor, but I will continue to fight against that prospect.



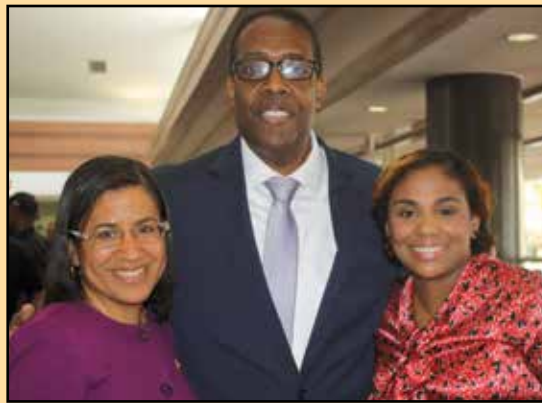
Property Tax/Rent Rebate deadline extended to Dec. 31

The deadline to apply for Pennsylvania's Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program has been extended until Dec. 31.

The rebate program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians 65 or older, widows and widowers 50 or older and people with disabilities 18 or older. The income limit is \$35,000 a year for homeowners and \$15,000 annually for renters, and half of Social Security income is excluded.

The maximum standard rebate is \$650, but supplemental rebates for qualifying homeowners can boost rebates to \$975. About 600,000 households are expected to benefit from the program.

For help with applying to the program, or for assistance with any state-related program or issue, please call my office or stop by.



Senior Fair

It was an honor and pleasure to celebrate our area seniors during the Golden Life Senior Fair at The Liacouras Center on Oct. 29, 2015 with Philadelphia City Council President Darrell L. Clarke and state Rep. Leslie Acosta, D-Phila.



Diaper Drive

Thanks to everyone who supported the "Diaper Awareness Week" Diaper Drive. The 195th Legislative District delivered more than 1,000 diapers and 2,000 wipes to the Youth Services Crisis Nursery at 34th and Baring streets. The Crisis Nursery offers parents and caregivers emergency short-term care for young children while dealing with family and medical emergencies, drug treatment, housing issues or other emergencies.



Open House

My District Office Open House and Legislative Update on Oct. 22, 2015 welcomed residents young and old from across the 195th Legislative District. We discussed the state budget impasse, proposed legislation and constituent services.

Fine Wine

Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board Chairman Tim Holden and I joined community members, store employees, and ISSU and UFCW Local 1776 union representatives at the Grand Opening of the Fine Wines and Good Spirits Store on Oct. 8, 2015 at the Shops at Brewerytown, 3101 W. Girard Ave. This new location will have a premium selection of wines and spirits, and much more to improve customer service. Our state liquor stores are a well-managed asset for the commonwealth. Each year, the network of stores successfully generates nearly \$550 million for the General Fund, which supports services and programs that help Pennsylvanians.



Eye Exams

Thank you to the team at Wills Eye Hospital for coming out to Blaine Elementary school to conduct eye exams for our little scholars on Oct. 22, 2015.



Clean Up

Our Ridge Ave. Clean Up on Oct. 17, 2015 was a great success. A big thank you to all of our volunteers and community partners: Men and Women of Human Excellence, PHA, the Brewerytown Sharswood NAC, and the Ridge Avenue businesses.



National Family Literacy Day honored in Pennsylvania

My House Resolution 542 was unanimously adopted in the House, marking Nov. 1, 2015 as “National Family Literacy Day” in Pennsylvania. In conjunction with this resolution, my office collected hundreds of adult and children’s books for families in our community.

National Family Literacy Day highlights the benefits of encouraging family time for parents and children to read together. It sounds simple enough, but it’s worth noting that family reading time helps to promote creativity and writing, and enhances reading and language skills among children and adults alike. The benefits are simply incredible.

A genuine and well-developed interest in reading helps position our children for future academic success because reading encourages them to think critically and to be analytical and imaginative. Numerous studies show that children raised in homes where family literacy is promoted are positioned for greater academic performance later in life.

Literacy is also an economic driver. Low literacy levels cost an estimated \$225 billion in workforce non-productivity and cost us some \$230 billion in annual health care costs.

When you think about it, it’s incredible that such a simple promise – to read with one another – can help improve so much nationally, and more importantly, open doors for girls and boys and mothers and fathers.

The Philadelphia Adult Literacy Alliance brings together over 200 active members from the adult education community who provide, coordinate, fund and support adult literacy and workforce development services. For more information about the Alliance, please visit www.philaliteracy.org.



Working to end youth homelessness

I had the opportunity to advocate this session for two issues near and dear to my heart: homelessness and education. Homelessness and housing insecurity affect an estimated 3.5 million Americans per year, many of whom are families with children.

For children experiencing homelessness, access to a consistent, quality education can be uniquely challenging. Things as simple as a missing birth certificate can delay school enrollment. We need to work with families and schools to eliminate these barriers, because it is education that will help these children break the cycle of poverty.

This is why I supported House Resolution 544, which brings awareness to the growing problem of youth homelessness in the commonwealth. H.R. 544 named Nov. 2 through Nov. 6 as “Pennsylvania Education for Youth Experiencing Homelessness Awareness Week” and Nov. 6, 2015 as “Red Shirt Day” in Pennsylvania.

I also joined my colleague state Rep. Harry Readshaw in adopting another resolution, H.R. 562, which designates Nov. 14 to 22, 2015 as “Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week” in Pennsylvania.

As your state representative, I look forward to helping increase access to affordable housing, jobs and support systems, because homelessness affects adults, seniors and children 365 days a year.

If you or someone you know is struggling with finding shelter or housing, please contact my office or stop by. My staff and I will work with you to identify public programs that can be of assistance.

TANF bill would help women, families

In an effort to progress women's health and welfare initiatives, I am sponsoring legislation that would raise the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families exemption from 50 percent to 75 percent to encourage people to work, acknowledging that low-income working families' expenses use up a large percentage of their take-home pay.

As the name implies, TANF was designed as temporary financial assistance to help needy families achieve self-sufficiency – many of which are headed by single mothers. States have a lot of say in allocating their TANF dollars and an earned-income disregard is one way we in Pennsylvania acknowledge the fact that working families have unique expenses that should not keep them from qualifying for help.

Pennsylvania TANF qualifiers have a current earned-income disregard of 50 percent, but many of those families find themselves still struggling after they start work because of increases in their transportation, food, clothing and child-care budgets. The bill, which would increase the disregard to 75 percent, accounts for this jump in working expenses and would help level the playing field for low-income families.

I'm proud to sponsor this bill because we are guiding families out of the cycle of poverty and onto a path of self-sufficiency. As lawmakers, we talk a lot about policy and priorities, but until we truly come together as an assembly, too many families are being denied the necessary tools to break free from the clutches of poverty.

Protecting victim's information from Right-To-Know Law

My colleague state Rep. Stephen Kinsey, D-Phila., and I are introducing legislation that would mandate that all records and information relating to a victim of a crime be the property of the Office of Victim Advocate. The bill, if passed, would make all victim information confidential and not subject to the state Right-To-Know Law.

A victim's information maintained in the database would be released to state- or local-government agencies that have a duty or necessity to maintain contact with the victim, but such information would not be disclosed to any other person without the written consent of the victim.

We go a long way in Pennsylvania to protect victims, but without this failsafe on our books, the possibility of a victim's identity falling into the wrong hands is too great. We must do everything we can to ensure that a victim isn't further jeopardized through official record-keeping duties, and I'm proud to offer this simple solution.



Please stay tuned to my emails and newsletters for more information on the bill's progress, and in the meantime, if you have anything you would like to share with me about this effort – or any other state-related matter – please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Transferring non-renewed liquor licenses

Fellow Philadelphia-area state Reps. Stephen Kinsey and Joanna McClinton are teaming up with me to introduce legislation that would provide members of the community the opportunity to have a say in the transfer of non-renewed liquor licenses.



When the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board finds that a current liquor licensee has been issued multiple violations or has been a nuisance, the PLCB may deny that licensee's renewal application and may permit or require the licensee to sell its license. However, under current law, if such a licensee chooses to transfer the license to new ownership at the same location, the PLCB may only consider the reputation of the new owner when deciding whether to approve the transfer. As you can imagine, though, often times the so-called "new owner" is not far enough removed from the original violator, and our community has seen the problems with such arranged transfers and continued problem locations.

Our legislation would force the PLCB to reconsider the transferred license's proximity to organizations such as schools, playgrounds and churches, as well as the effect of the license on the welfare, health, peace and morals of the surrounding community.

Additionally, our legislation would extend the public-notice period for the transfer of non-renewed licenses from 30 to 45 days. This would give members of the surrounding community the chance to have their say as the PLCB considers continuing to license a location that, in many cases, was the subject of previous complaints and violations.

Finally, our legislation also would require the PLCB to notify state and local elected officials when it receives an application from within their district. This would help to keep officials informed of issues that could affect their district, better ensuring public input on such decisions.



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You're invited to Rep. Donna Bullock's inaugural job fair

**Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2015
1 p.m. to 4 p.m.**

Berean Institute
1901 W. Girard Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19130

Come and talk with local employers looking to hire people for full-time and part-time positions. Bring your resume and dress professionally to impress!

Meet with representatives from local businesses, PA CareerLink, government agencies and more! Rep. Bullock and her staff will also be on hand with useful information about state programs and services.



My office can help you with:

- Car registrations, special tags, titles and license applications
- Information on financial assistance for higher education
- Unemployment compensation problems
- Birth and death certificate applications
- Problems with Pennsylvania income taxes
- Problems with Department of Human Services (food stamps, welfare)
- Requests for literature of all kinds – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information, student aid information, etc.
- Citations from Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding local accomplishment and family milestones

Any problem with state government!!

- Complaints or questions about utilities and the PUC
- Consumer complaints
- Problems or questions about PennDOT
- Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups
- Disability license plates and placards
- Assistance in getting and filling out state forms of all kinds, like PACE (Pharmaceutical assistance for qualified senior citizens), voter registration, Property Tax/Rent Rebate (for qualified seniors), PHEAA (PA Higher Education Assistance), etc.
- Problems or questions about the state Lottery
- Local government officials' problems with state agencies