



STATE REPRESENTATIVE Donna Bullock

195th Legislative District

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STANDING UP FOR WOMEN: March is Women's History Month

THE WOMEN'S HEALTH CAUCUS SUPPORTS THE PA AGENDA FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH

We are advancing:

✓ TANF Reform

✓ Equal Pay Measures

✓ Minimum Wage

I look forward to talking about these issues throughout the district this spring.



On the topic of pay equality

I had the opportunity to write a guest column for Women's Law Project on the seventh anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which was observed this year. President Barack Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act on January 29, 2009, restoring the protection against pay discrimination that was stripped away by the Supreme Court's decision in Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.

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Calling attention to women's health

I sponsored a House Resolution designating the week of Jan. 17-23, 2016 as "Healthy Weight Week" in Pennsylvania. The resolution, which was adopted unanimously, also recognized Jan. 22, 2016 as "Women's Healthy Weight Day" in Pennsylvania.

The 21st annual Healthy Weight Week celebrates healthy diet free living habits that last a lifetime and prevent eating and weight related problems. During Healthy Weight Week, people are encouraged to improve their eating and exercise habits over the long term by learning how to eat healthy without dieting.

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POP UP mobile office services begin Feb. 25

My office staff will bring our constituent services to different locations throughout the legislative district this spring. We can help you with any state issue that you might have, including with property tax and rent rebates, birth and death certificates, LIHEAP, PACE cards for seniors, or issues with PennDOT, and many more state services.

I encourage you to mark your calendar for the most convenient location or date for you:

Feb. 25	Spring Garden CDC	601 N. 17th St. 19130	4 p.m. - 6 p.m.
March 2	Caring People Alliance	3512 Haverford Ave. 19104	4 p.m. - 6 p.m.
March 8	Widener Library	2808 W. Lehigh Ave. 19132	4 p.m. - 6 p.m.
March 9	8 Diamonds Townhomes	2028 W. Norris St. 19121	11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
April 7	Sharswood Apartments	1450 N. 21st St. 19121	11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
April 8	Collegeview Apartments	27th and Thompson streets 19121	11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
April 21	Nellie Reynolds	2653 Glenwood Ave. 19121	11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
April 22	Johnson Homes	2500 W. Norris St. 19121	10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
May 12	Cozen PAL Center	17th and Brown Streets 19121	11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
May 26	Project HOME	1515 Fairmount Ave. 19130	12 p.m. - 2 p.m.
June 10	Jackie Gardens	1836 N. 20th St. 19121	10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
June 9	Athletic Rec Center	1400 N. 26th St. 19121	10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
June 23	Clara Baldwin Manor	2600 W. Susquehanna Ave. 19121	10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Funds for Universal Pre-K

Governor Tom Wolf and Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney visited the West Philadelphia Community Center in the Mantua neighborhood of the 195th District on Feb. 4 to discuss proposing a \$60 million increase to fund pre-K programs. I, along with state Sens. Vincent Hughes and Art Haywood, and City Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell, joined them in their commitment to fund quality universal pre-K education.

According to a study released last month by the Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children and the Pre-K for Pa. campaign, only one in six of the state's 3- and 4-year-olds – nearly 300,000 – were enrolled in high-quality preschool programs, and 70 percent of about 175,000 preschoolers who are at risk of school failure lacked access to these programs. We must work to change that.



Working to achieve equal pay in Pa.



Whether we are talking about waiting tables or running a company, men, on average, make more money than women for the same work. Many women don't even know if they have been paid fairly, thanks to employer pay-secrecy policies.

The problem is worse for women of color. On average, women who work full time, year round in the United States are typically paid only 79 cents for every dollar paid to their male counterparts. However, African American women typically make only 60 cents, and Hispanic women only 55 cents, for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men.

The gender and racial pay gap is more than a moral outrage for my constituents: Pay discrimination undermines their very ability to survive and support their families. Closing the wage gap for women, and particularly women of color, is crucial not only for these families, but for our economy. Many women are the sole or primary breadwinner for their families, and their salary can mean the difference between poverty and economic security.

If we do nothing, American women will not achieve equal pay for equal work until 2059, according to the Institute for Women's Policy Research. In Pennsylvania, women are not on track to receive equal pay until 2072.

It is simply disgraceful that more than 50 years after President John F. Kennedy signed the federal Equal Pay Act into law, and seven years after President Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, it could take another 56 years to achieve equal pay. Pennsylvania's Equal Pay Act, as currently written, doesn't even cover most Pennsylvanians.

I am proud to sign on as a co-sponsor to House Bill 1160, sponsored by my colleagues Representatives Brian Sims and Tina Davis.

Pennsylvania's updated Equal Pay Act (H.B. 1160) would prohibit wage secrecy. It would also close loopholes so that employers cannot get away with paying men more by, among other things, blaming "market forces" or workers' previous salaries. Last year, Pennsylvania held the first public hearings on equal pay in 50 years, and we intend to build on that momentum. (Companion bill Senate Bill 303, sponsored by Sen. Rob Teplitz and Sen. Anthony Williams, was introduced last year.)

But we can do more than simply pass the Equal Pay Act. We can raise the minimum wage, which in Pennsylvania, is the lowest allowed by federal law. We can eliminate other forms of discrimination against working women, such as ensuring employers provide temporary, minor accommodations for pregnant workers, and ensuring nursing mothers have access to private, sanitary space to pump milk at work.

I joined the bipartisan Women's Health Caucus of the Pennsylvania General Assembly to work on these critical issues, and will work with my colleagues to win these major victories for the women of Pennsylvania.

Appropriations Committee appointment is an honor

I'm proud to announce that I was appointed to the House Appropriations Committee this month.

In addition to my work on the Aging & Older Adult Services, Liquor Control, State Government and Policy committees, it is a tremendous honor and privilege to be named to the Appropriations Committee, and I look forward to working with new colleagues to help get Pennsylvania out of this budget deadlock.

I will be in a much greater position to assess the inner workings of the budget, make informed votes and evaluate state agencies' requests and requirements. We are at a critical crossroads in Pennsylvania, and I will look for every opportunity to lead us down the right path. That path starts with putting people over politics.

The Appropriations Committee meets regularly while the House is in session to consider fiscal-related matters and conducts budget hearings each spring to review and evaluate the governor's executive budget proposal. In accordance with House rules, the committee also evaluates legislative proposals for fiscal implications before voting a bill out to the full House.

It also has jurisdiction over the state budget process, the offices of Auditor General and State Treasurer and the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority.

Women in prison: a troubling trend

Did you know that between 2000 and 2011, there was a 57.5 percent increase in the number of women incarcerated in Pennsylvania? It's also worth pointing out that 90 percent of all incarcerated women will be released back into the community.¹

Women are also less likely than men to be visited while in prison. That is why it is vital to shed light on prisoner visitation programs.

Upon release the potential obstacles women face will be:

- Lack of living-wage employment
- Childcare challenge
- Lack of access to medical, behavioral and substance abuse treatment
- Difficulty obtaining adequate housing, ID and counseling
- Finding adequate job training or education

The quality of women's contact with the outside world while incarcerated helps determine whether they will commit crimes again and return to prison.²

To learn more about what you can do to help, please visit www.prisonervisitation.org and www.prisonsociety.org.

¹ SOURCE: "Incarcerated Women: The Whole Truth" – The Pennsylvania Prison Society

² SOURCE: Prisoner Visitation & Support – prisonervisitation.org



I visited with the women and their families at Riverside Correctional Facility in December. As the number of women in prisons continues to skyrocket, family reunification efforts like the ones spearheaded here become very important. Thank you to prison staff and volunteers from Ardella's House, who put together the visit.

Remember to spay and neuter your pets

Feral animals are a large problem in Philadelphia, and far too many unwanted pets end up in shelters, where they are often killed. In the 195th District, volunteers and organizations, such as Green Street Rescue, work daily to address the problem by rescuing, neutering and fostering stray animals for their new forever homes.

Deciding to spay or neuter your pet can be the best decision you make for its welfare, and for the community.

Having your pet spayed or neutered can:

- Reduce the number of feral pets euthanized
- Be good for your pet's health
- Rein in bad behavior
- Save you money on pet health care
- Reduce the number of stray and shelter animals

According to the U.S. Humane Society, across the nation, there are an estimated 6-8 million homeless animals entering animal shelters every year. Barely half of these animals are adopted. Tragically, the rest are euthanized. These are healthy, sweet pets who would have made great companions.

You can help reverse this saddening course by doing the responsible thing, and deciding to spay or neuter your pet. There are resources across the city to help

you find veterinarians who perform reduced-cost operations. There are two types of reduced-cost programs: ones that offer certificates, which are taken to vets who participate in the program, and clinics, which offer the lower-cost operations. To find one that works for you, please visit www.acctphilly.org/ to learn more.



Women's health (cont.)

Obesity is second only to smoking among the top preventable causes of death in our nation. Acting in concert with other medical conditions, including heart disease and diabetes, obesity is set to become the No. 1 preventable cause of death in our nation. Nearly two out of three Americans are overweight or obese. These figures amount to a 50 percent increase from just over a decade ago.

If you are an agency focused on physical health, please contact my office to find out how you can help spread the word and act with other groups looking to improve women's health.



STATE REP. DONNA BULLOCK

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My office is moving!

In March, my constituent service office will move a few doors down to 2835 West Girard Ave.

The office staff and phone numbers will remain the same, but please be sure to visit our new office location, which will be better suited to serve your needs!

My staff and I also operate a West Philadelphia office at 3221 Spring Garden St. Please call 215-684-3738 to schedule an appointment, as there are no regular office hours at this location. All services are by appointment only.



I joined the firefighters from Ladder 14 (26th and York) as they shared soup with neighbors and talked about fire prevention.

Thank you to everyone who helped with and made it out to my first Health Fair on Feb. 3. The event was a success, and I look forward to holding this



event again. If you are a vendor interested in showcasing your service in the future, please contact my office.

Home heating assistance available

Keeping your home properly heated is essential for good health and in making sure your pipes do not freeze. But many families, particularly senior citizens on fixed incomes, will struggle to pay the cost of heating their homes over the next several months.

If you need help paying your home heating bills this season, assistance is available through the federally funded Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. LIHEAP offers cash grants to help purchase home heating fuel and crisis grants for unexpected fuel shortages and necessary furnace purchases or repairs. The federally funded program is expected to continue until April 1, 2016, so apply now!

Grants are based on family size, income, type of heating fuel and heating regions.

If you received LIHEAP assistance last year, you should have received a renewal application. If not, you may want to check into the program.

You can apply online at www.compass.state.pa.us, or call my office at 215-684-3738 for more information or for help applying.

Household Size	Income Limit
1	\$17,655
2	\$23,895
3	\$30,135
4	\$36,375
5	\$42,615
6	\$48,855
7	\$55,095
8	\$61,335
Additional Person	\$6,240