



STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 190TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

Vanessa Lowery Brown

Philadelphia County Delegation • Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus • Children & Youth • Health • Tourism & Recreational Development • Urban Affairs

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Groundbreaking: New Market West will transform Haddington-Cobbs Creek

In February, I joined neighbors from Haddington and Cobbs Creek, government officials and other stakeholders for the official groundbreaking ceremony of the future home of New Market West, a transformative project that will serve as a community hub for West Philadelphia.

This project includes the construction of a four story, 135,700 square foot hub for retail and community services on a 1.5 acre vacant site near 60th and Market St. Partners will provide high quality early childhood education, workforce

development, educational and emergency support services, behavioral health services and community-serving retail; all vital to West Philadelphia communities.

I am proud to be part of this achievement. What used to be a vacant lot will now be a center with much needed services for our neighbors. I look forward to working with the stakeholders to improve the quality of life of all our residents.



New Market West is expected to create 120 temporary full-time construction jobs. Construction is expected to be complete by fall 2019.

MLK Events Recap



It was an honor and privilege to participate in a series of events in celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his great legacy. His teachings and beliefs go beyond the basic freedoms he championed for African Americans. We must carry on his dream so that one day, we truly live in a nation where men, women and children of all races can live together in peace, tolerance and equality.



Congratulations E-A-G-L-E-S

What an amazing victory for our city! Thank you Eagles for making history. We are all proud of the team's hard work and dedication during its big game, and I appreciate the advocacy for criminal justice reform by some of the players. My colleagues and I gathered for a picture on the House floor to save this moment for posterity. **E-A-G-L-E-S! EAGLES!**



Apprenticeship grants available for businesses

The Department of Community and Economic Development is offering grant opportunities through the Pre-Apprentice and Apprenticeship Grant Program. The goal of the program is to increase workforce training opportunities for Pennsylvania employers.

Businesses may receive grants of up to \$3,000 a year for three years and may be used to cover expenses related to on-the-job training.

It's key that we provide people with the skills they need to become successful in the workforce while creating good paying jobs. This grant opportunity is a way for Pennsylvania employers to provide those skills while obtaining qualified employees. It is a win-win for both businesses and people seeking employment.

More information, including eligibility and how to apply, can be found on the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's website <https://dced.pa.gov/programs>.



Need an overview of how to apply for a passport? Start here!

- 1) **Form** – The form you will use depends on whether you are applying for the first time, applying or renewing for a child (DS-11); renewing an adult's passport (DS-82); changing a name or correcting an error (DS-5504).
- 2) **Supporting documents** – You will need evidence of citizenship, identification and proof of relationship if applying for children under 16. Other specific documents depend on what form you are using.
- 3) **Photos** – You need one 2" by 2" color passport photo taken in the last six months.
- 4) **Fees** – Costs for the available services are set by the State Department. Application fees and execution fees are paid separately and must be paid with checks or money orders. Credit and debit cards cannot be accepted.

Product	Application Fee	Execution Fee
Adult Passport Book (16+)	\$110	\$25
Child Passport Book (Under 16)	\$80	\$25

NOTE: If you need your passport quickly, you can expedite your application. Expedited service is an additional **\$60**.

Where you apply depends on when you need your passport. For more information and to find a location near you visit travel.state.gov.

I would like to remind you that my office can assist you in applying for new birth certificates. If you have a pre-2001 birth certificate, it may no longer be valid when applying for a passport. My office has the forms and can help you fill them out, and transfer them to the appropriate state agency.

Opioid and heroin disaster declared

In January, Gov. Tom Wolf issued a statewide emergency declaration calling the opioid and heroin crisis a disaster. By doing so, he acknowledged that the epidemic is a public health emergency affecting every corner of our state.

Sadly, more Pennsylvanians die from opioid overdoses than fatal vehicle accidents, according to the state's Department of Health. Statistics provided by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency said overdose deaths grew by more than 30 percent in 2016. At least 14 Pennsylvanians die every day from an overdose. In 2016 alone, we registered more than 4,600 deaths.

Gov. Wolf's declaration is intended to:

- **Make sure that barriers are removed for first responders, health care providers, and government agencies.**
- **Speed up and expand access to treatment.**
- **Enhance coordination and data collection to improve state and local response.**

In Philadelphia and across the commonwealth, too many families have watched their loved ones die due to opioid overdoses. I applaud and support Gov. Wolf's actions and I remain committed to leading Pennsylvania from addiction to recovery.

Pennsylvania has become a national leader in the fight against the opioid epidemic, joining Maryland, Massachusetts, Alaska, Arizona, Virginia and Florida in declaring some form of public health emergency.

The declaration is aligned with House Democrats' Plan for PA, which emphasizes putting people first by protecting their safety, health, financial security, dignity and opportunity.

Successful Town Hall Meeting



I teamed up with state Reps. Joanna McClinton and Morgan Cephas to host a West Philadelphia Town Hall Meeting in January. We discussed legislative developments that have been taking place in Harrisburg, as well as the work we have been doing to improve the quality of life for residents in West Philly.

Property Tax/Rent Rebate forms now available

Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program applications for the 2017 tax year are now available at my office – **and my staff is ready to help you file yours for free!**

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. Half of Social Security income is excluded and the maximum standard rebate is \$650.

Claimants must reapply for rebates every year because they are based on annual income and property taxes or rent paid each year. Spouses, personal representatives or estates may file rebate claims on behalf of deceased claimants who lived at least one day in 2017 and meet all other eligibility criteria.

The deadline to apply for a rebate on property taxes or rent paid in 2017 is June 30, 2018, and the rebates normally are distributed beginning July 1. So, the sooner you file, the sooner you should receive your money!

Pa. receives extension for Real ID enforcement

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) granted Pennsylvania an extension through Oct. 10, 2018, on Real ID enforcement. This means Pennsylvania residents will be able to enter federal facilities and board commercial aircraft using current Pennsylvania driver's licenses and non-driver's ID cards, neither of which are Real ID-compliant yet, through that date.

PennDOT anticipates that Real ID-compliant licenses will be available in Pennsylvania in the spring of 2019. Until then, PennDOT will continue to request extensions from DHS until Real ID-compliant licenses and ID cards are available for purchase. No Pennsylvania resident is required to get a Real ID-compliant driver's license or ID card — you don't need a Real ID-compliant license to drive, for instance. But if you choose to get one, you will be able to use it to board a plane and enter federal buildings when DHS ultimately enforces the Real ID Act requirements.

PennDOT will implement a one-time \$30 fee in addition to the current standard driver's license/photo ID fee for a Real ID Act-compliant license or ID card. Renewing a Real ID Act-compliant ID, however, won't cost anything extra.

NOTE: If your driver's license expires before Real ID-compliant licenses are available in Pennsylvania, you will have to pay to renew your license and, if you choose to, pay again to get a Real ID-compliant license when it's available.



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Upcoming events

- Women’s History Month – March 10 – African American Museum**
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate Workshop – March 14 – Mt. Olivet Village**
- Business Leaders Roundtable – March 17 – Overbrook Beacon Community Center**
- Senior SEPTA ID Pictures – March 21 – West Mill Creek Playground**
- Veteran Services Seminar – March 22 – Brith Sholom House**
- Veterans Roundtable – April 2 – George T. Cornish American Legion Post**
- The Business of Business with Congressman Dwight Evans – April 4 – LA21/CEC**
- Job Fair – April 14 – Alain Locke Community School**

Please call our office to RSVP, (215) 879-6615.

Stay updated!

For more information on those events, and to stay connected to what’s happening in Harrisburg and in the community, just sign up for my email updates. Go to www.pahouse.com/Brown to sign up. You can also follow me on social media!

/RepLoweryBrown • @RepVanessaBrown • RepBrown@pahouse.net

My office can help you with:

- Car registrations, special tags, disability placards, titles and driver’s license applications
- Information on financial aid for higher education
- Assistance in obtaining and completing state forms
- Voter registration and absentee ballot applications
- Unemployment compensation, disability and workers’ compensation
- Birth and death certificates
- Problems with the Department of Human Services (food stamps, medical and income assistance)
- Getting answers to your Pennsylvania income tax questions or problems
- Requests for literature – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information
- Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding accomplishments and family milestones
- Complaints or questions about utilities and the Public Utility Commission
- Complaints and problems with insurance companies
- Renewal of state-issued licenses or certifications
- Consumer complaints
- PACE/PACENET prescription-drug cards for senior citizens
- Liquor Control Board concerns or questions
- Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups
- Information about federal, state and local government agencies

