



State Representative Harry A.

READSHAW

36TH DISTRICT report



Summer 2019

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Around the Town with Buster

Harry just had to meet actress and animal advocate, Lesley Nicol of Downton Abbey fame, who visited Harrisburg to lobby for humane legislation, including Victoria's Law.

Through the support of Finding Shelter Animal Rescue and the Humane Society of the United States-Pennsylvania Chapter, Harry met Lesley, who plays the no-nonsense cook, Mrs. Patmore on the hugely successful period drama.

As you may know, Downton Abbey, which ran for six seasons on ITV and PBS, is now being made into a movie that is slated for release in September.

In addition to her success as an actress and three-time SAG Award winner, Lesley is a passionate advocate for the humane treatment of animals and pets. While in Harrisburg, Lesley spent time visiting with many people and was most supportive of aiding Harry in advancing Victoria's Law, which is slated to be on the legislative agenda this fall.

Victoria's Law is named for a German

Shepherd who was mercilessly overbred for 10 years at a puppy mill and passed along an incurable, genetic disease to more than 150 puppies. Terminally ill and unable to walk, Victoria was rescued by Finding Shelter Animal Rescue when the puppy mill had no further use for her. Sadly, Victoria has passed away. However, her legacy will live on once this legislation is passed.

Designed with Victoria in mind, the goal of the legislation is to move the Pennsylvania pet market away from inhumane operations that treat animals like breeding machines and commercial commodities, while simultaneously protecting the consumer.

Now that I did my part for the newsletter and Harry did his part to protect animals, I'll see where he hides my biscuits.

Remember to protect your animals from the heat and give them plenty of fresh water.



Animal Cruelty Fact: The PA SPCA has conducted approximately 31,448 investigations that seized 5,222 animals in 23 PA counties from 2004 to 2017. In that same time period, there were 207 convictions (94% conviction rate) of cruelty toward animals.



On June 24, I was able to meet actress and animal advocate Lesley Nicol.

Take the 'No Plastic Pledge'

As part of the 2019-2020 state budget, Gov. Tom Wolf signed a measure that prevents municipalities across the commonwealth from taxing or banning the sale or distribution of plastic bags and other containers, bags and other wrappings. This law is only effective for one year, to allow legislative agencies to study the environmental and economic impact.

While municipalities may be prevented from taking measures to reduce the amount of environmental impact plastic consumption has caused in the short-term due to failing recycling efforts, you and your families can step in and take the "no plastic pledge."

I PLEDGE to eliminate single-use plastic wherever possible for the purpose of reducing the suffering of all. When at a retail store, I will request "no plastic please" on the following targeted items: straws, bags, cups, take-out boxes, plastic bottles, all Styrofoam, stirrers and cutlery.

Here are 10 actions you can take to eliminate single-use plastic:

- Before ordering, say "no plastic please."
- Bring your own shopping bag.
- Carry a reusable water bottle.
- Bring your own coffee cup.
- Pack your own lunches/leftovers in reusable containers.
- Say NO to disposable straws and cutlery.
- Give up beverages in plastic bottles.
- Pay attention to plastic packaging.
- Skip the plastic produce bags.

Share these tips with your friends.



VETERANS' UPDATE



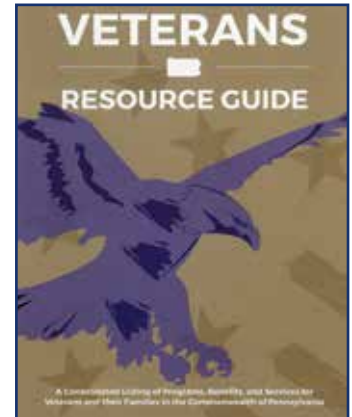
Spread the Word: Help Prevent Veteran Suicides

The Department of Veterans Affairs and the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System work every day with at-risk veterans to prevent suicides but recognize the importance of public awareness.

Did you know that 14 of the 20 veterans who die of suicide each day are not in VA care? In order to help reach veterans who may not be aware they are eligible for care, or don't know how to ask for help, you can help by doing the following:

- Remind veterans, their families and friends they can call the toll-free Veterans Crisis Line anytime at **1-800-273-8255**, press 1; text **838255**; or chat online at **www.veteranscrisisline.net** for confidential support and guidance.
- Direct veterans to visit **www.va.gov** to check their eligibility for VA health care or to call **412-360-6515** to check enrollment status.
- Contact the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare suicide prevention team at **412-360-6515**, weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to arrange outreach events.
- Educate veterans, families and friends in recognizing the signs of crisis.

One veteran suicide is too many, but working together, we can make a difference.



Be sure to drop by my district office to pick up your free copy of the Veterans Resource Guide, filled with more than 80 pages of important information regarding programs, benefits, and services for veterans and their families in our commonwealth.



SUPPORTING PA MILITARY MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

PA GI BILL





Extends college benefits to spouses and children



For up to 5 years or 10 semesters

For PA National Guard members who re-enlist for 6 years.

The Military Family Education Program, which was signed into law, will enable Pennsylvania National Guardsmen to earn educational benefits for their spouse and/or children by committing to a second obligation of six years with the Pennsylvania National Guard. I'm pleased that this important piece of legislation is now going to help retain current National Guard members and attract transitioning military service members to Pennsylvania.

DID YOU KNOW?

The VA has indicated that there are approximately 819,185 veterans in PA, making up 8.6% of the population. Of that number, 7.3% were women and 55.4% were older than 65.



American Flag Collection

My office continues to collect American flags ready for proper retirement by a local service organization. Please bring any flags you might have to my office at any time of the year. If you have any questions, please call my office at 412-881-4208.



I was pleased to take a moment during the Memorial Day Service at American Legion Post 935 and pose for a photo with Commander James Cotter.



Pictured above is the South Side Monument, part of the Honor All Our Veterans Monument.

OUTDOOR & EDUCATIONAL UPDATE

The Spotted Lanternfly

The Spotted Lanternfly (SLF), *Lycorma delicatula* (White), is an invasive planthopper native to China, India, and Vietnam. It was first discovered in Pennsylvania in Berks County and has spread to other counties in the southeast portion of the commonwealth.

This insect has the potential to greatly impact agricultural crops such as grapes, hops, and hardwoods. It is also reducing the quality of life for people living in heavily infested areas.

Please join in the effort to control and prevent them from further spreading across the commonwealth. The spotted lanternfly can be controlled with a combination of physical disposal of life stages and removal of host trees. To properly dispose of egg masses, nymphs, and adults, scrape them off the tree or surface using a plastic card. Place eggs in alcohol, double bag, and throw away, smash, or burn.



Game Commission Relaxes Orange Requirements

Beginning with the start of the 2019-2020 license year (July 1), orange will no longer be required while archery hunting for deer, bear or elk, or during fall turkey hunting.

Please note that the wearing of orange, and the amount remain in place for all other hunting seasons, which is 250 square inches of daylight fluorescent orange material on the head, chest and back combined, visible from all angles. This is required for deer, bear and elk firearms seasons, small game season, and hunting coyotes during the day within the open deer, bear or elk firearms seasons. Groundhog hunters must always continue to wear a solid orange fluorescent hat, and orange material must still be posted nearby when hunting deer, bear or elk from an enclosed blind.

According to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, these changes were made to simplify the complexity of existing fluorescent orange requirements, which result in a significant number of violations each year.

Summer Boating

There's still plenty of time to enjoy the summer boating season. Here are some useful tips from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission:

1. Wear a life jacket.
2. Never boat under the influence.
3. File a float plan.
4. Take a basic boating safety course.
5. Have proper registrations and launch permits.

For more information about boating basics, or where you and your family can head to enjoy all of Pennsylvania's great boating opportunities during the 2019 summer season, visit www.fishandboat.com.

PennDOT Launches Program to Fight Human Trafficking

Pennsylvania is not immune to the issue of human trafficking. Unfortunately, in 2018, there were approximately 199 human trafficking cases reported to the National Human Trafficking Hotline (**1-888-373-7888**).

Human trafficking is defined as the exploitation of people using force, fraud, or coercion for the purposes of commercial sex, forced labor, or domestic servitude. It's an illegal global industry, generating \$150 billion annually, and impacting some 21 million victims.

PennDOT is leading the charge, as one of the first state government agencies nationwide to educate 564 driver license and welcome center employees and 15,000 transit agency employees in how to recognize the signs of a human trafficking incident. The agency also has resources

online under "Human Trafficking" at www.penndot.gov/about-us/media/ that it encourages the public to utilize so they may aid in the battle against this problem.

While it is challenging to identify a trafficking situation, potential warning signs include:

- Lack of knowledge of a person's whereabouts.
- Controlled communication where a person can't speak for themselves.
- People not in control of identification documents.
- Signs of branding or tattooing of a trafficker's name (typically on the neck).

Concerned citizens are urged to report potential human trafficking to the national hotline.

Educational Points of Interest

Student Satisfaction

The 2017 PAYS survey found that only 41.3% of students in PA reportedly enjoyed being in school, with rates as low as 34.8% for 10th-graders and 34% for 12th-graders.

Student Well-Being

During the 2016-2017 school year, the PA Department of Education found that the ratio of school nurses to students was 809 to 1; for school counselors, 387 to 1; school psychologists, 1,164 to 1; and school social workers, 2,285 to 1. These ratios were above national recommendations of 750, 250, 1,000, and 400 respectively.

Trillions in Debt

ASA has found that over 44 million Americans have over \$1.52 trillion

in combined student debt. Debt.org calculates that 70% of those graduating from college in 2017 left with an average debt of \$39,400. Personal education loans are the largest source of debt for millennials.

Bullying

According to a PAYS survey, 28.2% of PA students were bullied in 2016, up from 16.9% in 2015 with 6.9% of students being bullied at least several times per month. About 16.5% of students experienced bullying through texts or social media.

Public Education

The 2018 School Safety Task Force Report noted that PA's public education system serves more than 1.7 million students in grades pre-K through 12 in 500 school districts

ranging in size from 200 students to over 140,000 students. These students are supported by more than 147,000 teachers, principals, superintendents, and other school leaders, as well as about 72,000 paraprofessionals and other support staff.

Education and Wages

According to the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, Pennsylvanians without a high school diploma comprise a plurality of minimum wage earners (35.1%), surpassing the national rate of 19.5%. Although those with a bachelor's degree or higher comprise 12.9% of PA minimum wage earners, those with an associate's degree account for the smallest percentage of minimum wage earners at 8.2%.

PA Offers College Savings Program

Every child deserves a bright future. That's why the Pennsylvania Treasurer's office is investing \$100 for every baby born or adopted in 2019 via a program called Keystone Scholars.

According to a Washington University study, a baby with higher education savings at birth is three times more likely to enroll in education or training after high school and four times more likely to graduate.

Under the Keystone Scholars program, new and expecting parents can begin saving for their child's future higher educational needs. The \$100 will be invested by the Pennsylvania Treasurer's office and will grow through the years right alongside each registered child. The Keystone Scholars account can be used for qualified expenses when the child pursues higher education. These expenses include tuition, fees, books, and more at vocational or technical school, community college, two-year or four-year college.

In order to participate, new and expectant families must open an online PA529 account, with as little as \$15.

Visit www.pa529.com for more information.

Flex Days

After having a successful trial run in a few districts, new legislation that allows schools to declare a "flexible instruction" day for bad weather, building issues, or even a security incident, has now become law.

These optional days, limited to five per instructional year, would enable students to continue with instruction remotely while out of school via online or offline instruction, or a combination of the two, as a type of cyber-snow day.

Tips to finance college

- Download the myStudentAid app and complete the FAFSA on your smart phone or tablet.
- PHEAA.org is a great resource.
- PHEAA's Targeted Industry Program is designed to help pay for courses in fields such as energy, advanced materials, diversified manufacturing, agriculture and food production.

SIGN UP FOR MY EMAILS

My office sends weekly emails containing legislative updates, highlighting local events and providing you with valuable information. To conserve paper and reduce cost, we will be limiting the amount of paper newsletters that we send.

Please sign up to receive emails on my website:

www.pahouse.com/readshaw

+ HEALTH UPDATES +

Time to Talk about Alzheimer's

Did you know that more than 400,000 people older than 65 are living with Alzheimer's disease in Pennsylvania, and that number is expected to increase by more than 14% by 2025?

Alzheimer's, although one of the most serious, is just one of several brain health issues that can affect people. Various types of dementia involve memory loss and a decline in intellectual functioning that is so severe that it interferes with someone's ability to perform routine tasks.

Close family members are typically the first to notice memory issues or cognitive problems, but they're often hesitant to say something, even when they know something is wrong. That's why it's important we know all we can about this fatal and incurable disease.

Did You Know?

- Alzheimer's kills more than breast and prostate cancer combined.
- Alzheimer's is not normal aging. It's a progressive, incurable brain disease.
- Alzheimer's is more than memory loss. It appears through a variety of signs and symptoms.

To help Pennsylvanians with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders, the state has implemented the Pennsylvania Alzheimer's State Plan Task Force. For more information, visit www.aging.pa.gov/publications/alzheimers-related-disorders.

Those with questions or looking for support can contact their local Area Agency on Aging.

Health Points of Interest

Sleep Health: A recent study found that those who slept fewer than 6 hours per night were 27% more likely to have artery clogs throughout the body than those who slept 7-8 hours a night. Participants with broken sleep were 34% more likely to have plaque buildup than those who slept well. According to the National Sleep Foundation, as little as 10 minutes a day of walking, biking or other aerobic exercise can "drastically improve nighttime sleep quality."

Physician Shortage: The Senior List has predicted that there will be a physician shortage of over 120,000 in the United States in 2030. PA has 311.8 physicians per 100,000 people with 32.2% of doctors nearing retirement age, but it is the 8th least likely state to experience a physician shortage.

PA's Disabilities Population: The ACS has reported that 1.73 million Pennsylvanians (13.7%) have at least one disability. PA is ranked 16th in the nation for highest rate of population with disabilities but has the 5th largest population overall. The national rate of population for people with disabilities is 12.6%.

Ageing Demographics: The U.S. Census has projected that the population past retirement age will outnumber the population younger than 18 by 2035 for the first time in history. Americans older than 65 are now the fastest-growing age group in the U.S. and will roughly triple by 2050, while the number of Americans in their 20s will decline.

Report Finds Childhood Obesity Rates Steady

The Center for Rural Pennsylvania conducted a study tracking childhood obesity rates in rural and urban public schools across the commonwealth over the 10-year period of 2005-2016, using data from the Pennsylvania Departments of Health and Education, and the U.S. Census Bureau.

Overall, the percent of overweight students and those at-risk of being overweight remained steady at 32.6% during the study period. The results also state that lower educational attainment levels, lower employment rates, lack of health insurance, and poverty status among adults are key economic variables that are associated with youth overweight status.

Lead Hazards Lurking

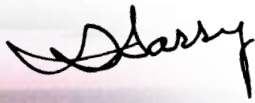
If your home was built before 1987, there's a good probability of lead lurking — windows, windowsills, doors and porches are among the most hazardous sites.

While the Allegheny County Health Department, through mandated blood screening, is learning more about children being exposed to lead, many people are still unaware of precautions that should be taken in their homes before beginning any type of renovation. For example, peeling paint and dust are dangerous. However, old paint that isn't peeling can be sealed and made safe.

Qualifying homeowners and renters in Allegheny County may seek assistance with **FREE** lead-paint testing throughout their homes, and repair to any lead hazards found up to \$12,000 via the Allegheny Lead Safe Homes Program. Examples of work include repair and repainting of chipping and peeling lead-painted surfaces, window and door replacement, and enclosing exterior trim and components.

For more information about this program, call 412-227-5700.

Have a safe and happy
summer in all of your
activities: boating, camping,
swimming, biking, etc.



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Free Notary Services

Most official documents can be notarized for free at my district office. Please call ahead to make sure a notary is available, and your document can be accommodated. The person whose signature is to be notarized must sign the document in person, in the presence of the notary and provide proof of identity such as a valid driver's license, photo ID card or passport. Call 412-881-4208 for more information.

Protecting yourself from ticks

Pennsylvania has had the highest number of Lyme disease cases in the United States since 2000.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes a 3.5-fold increase in vector-borne diseases in the United States from 2004-2016, with more than 76% of cases caused by tick-borne pathogens. Most of those cases are Lyme disease.

It's important to take measures to ensure you and your family are doing all you can to remain tick free while enjoying the outdoors. Please consult the following images for some important tips to protect yourself and to aid in correctly identifying the type of tick you may have encountered.

If you've been bitten by a tick, the Pennsylvania Tick Research Lab offers FREE basic testing to all Pennsylvania residents. The lab can analyze your tick, test for tick-borne diseases such as Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, and Rocky Mountain spotted fever. Order your test online and learn whether you're at risk before symptoms appear.

Visit www.ticklab.org for more information on ticks, including tick identification, tick borne diseases and prevention!



Dare to Tickle
A PA Lyme Prevention Program

Watch Out for these Common PA Ticks

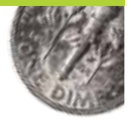
Photo credit: URI TickEncounter Resource Center, TickEncounter.org



Female (enlarged)

Deer/Blacklegged tick *Ixodes scapularis*

Associated with Lyme disease, Anaplasmosis, Babesiosis, Bartonellosis, Borrelia miyamotoi and Powassan virus*



Male Nymph



Female (enlarged)

American Dog tick *Dermacentor variabilis*

Associated with Ehrlichiosis, Rocky Mountain Spotted fever and Tularemia*



Male



Female (enlarged)

Lone Star tick *Amblyomma americanum*

Associated with Ehrlichiosis, Rocky Mountain Spotted fever and STARI; may trigger red meat allergies*



Male Nymph

*a tick bite can give you more than one infection

This project was funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Health's Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant.

