



Comitta's Corner

State Representative Carolyn Comitta

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, public assistance)
- Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding local accomplishments and family milestones
- 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
- Problems or questions about the state lottery
- Local government officials' problems with state agencies

Any problem with state government!!

Dear Neighbor,

It is an honor to continue to serve as your state representative. I want to share some important legislative updates about my work in Harrisburg and our events in the 156th Legislative District. As always, I encourage you to contact my office for any state-related questions or concerns.

Carolyn



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In September, I rose in support of Governor Wolf's plan to reduce methane pollution.



Working Toward a Clean Environment

Now more than ever we need to work together to combat climate change and protect future generations from its harmful effects. This year, I was elected to serve as the Vice Chair of the Joint Legislative Conservation Committee (JLCC).

JLCC celebrated its 50th anniversary last year. This committee examines environmental and conservation issues throughout the commonwealth. I also serve as Vice Chair of the bicameral and bipartisan Climate Caucus. I am eager to work in this new capacity and ensure that we continue to be environmental stewards for our communities and fight to guarantee basic rights such as clean air and water for Pennsylvania.

I have introduced the following environmental legislation this session period:

- **HB 1195:** Modernizing Pennsylvania's Renewable Energy Standards (30% by 2030)
- **HR 519:** Resolution Designating October 2, 2019, as "Energy Efficiency Day"
- **HR 520:** Resolution Designating October 19, 2019, as "Chester County Clean Energy Day"

In July, I held a House Democratic Policy Committee Hearing on "Green PA: Working Toward a Sustainable Future." At the hearing, we discussed how Pennsylvania can best harness renewable energy and achieve 100% clean energy by 2050. Testifiers and lawmakers looked at different types of renewable energy, their long-term benefits, best practices, and solutions to harnessing the power of these sustainable resources.

We heard testimony from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Pennsylvania Department of

Conservation and Natural Resources, PennFuture, Sierra Club PA Chapter, Chester County Solid Waste Authority, and the Mid-Atlantic Renewable Energy Coalition.

Recently, Governor Tom Wolf announced that Pennsylvania will join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. RGGI is a cooperative effort among nine states to cap and reduce greenhouse gas emissions through regulation or legislation. I applaud Governor Wolf for his leadership on the issue. We must take

strong action to stop climate change and shape a healthy future for our children. Joining RGGI positions Pennsylvania to protect our children's future while strengthening our economy. Read more about RGGI on Governor Wolf's website, www.governor.pa.gov, under the "News" tab.



I had the opportunity to learn about an alternative fuel vehicle at the Capitol in October. The innovative technology propelling the clean energy boom is a substantial investment for Pennsylvania's environmental health and economy.

West Chester University Legislative Fellow

I am honored to serve as a Legislative Fellow for the 2019-2020 academic year at West Chester University. As a former educator and West Chester University alum, I have been delighted to share my experiences and insights about the legislative process in Pennsylvania with students. The goal of the Legislative Fellow Program is to foster communication and understanding by working directly with a state legislator on both classroom and extracurricular projects.

Throughout the semester, I discussed with students top issues facing the legislature, such as voting reform, property tax reform, liquor privatization, recreational marijuana, and much more.



I was honored to welcome West Chester University students to the Capitol so they could see legislative processes firsthand.



I was delighted to welcome Dr. John Kennedy, political science professor at West Chester University, and his students to the House Chamber on Oct. 30.

Student visits to the Capitol

I was pleased to welcome several classes of students to the Capitol this year. Students from elementary school to college are welcome to visit the Capitol. Please contact my office if you're interested in arranging a field trip!



Westtown-Thornbury Elementary School students enjoyed a fun and informative day at our commonwealth's Capitol.



In March, Rep. Sappey and I welcomed students from Fern Hill Elementary School to the Capitol.

What You Need to Know About Real ID

Beginning October 1, 2020, Pennsylvanians will need a REAL ID-compliant driver's license, photo ID card, or another form of federally-acceptable identification (such as a valid passport or military ID) to board a domestic commercial flight or enter a federal building or military installation.

You will still need a valid passport to travel internationally. A passport can serve as a valid ID for boarding domestic and international flights. REAL ID is valid only for domestic flights.

REAL ID is optional for Pennsylvania residents. You do not need a REAL ID to drive, vote, access hospitals, visit the post office, access federal courts, or apply for or receive federal benefits, such as social security or veterans' benefits.

A REAL ID can be obtained at a local DMV. More information can be found on PennDOT's website, under the REAL ID section: www.dmv.pa.gov/REALID. You also can contact my district office at 610-696-4990 if you have any questions or concerns.



2019 Senior Expo

This year, my staff and I hosted our third annual senior expo at West Chester East High School! We had over 300 seniors join us and learn valuable information about programs and services in our area. A big thank you to all our vendors, volunteers and residents for helping make this a successful and informative event.

I hope you will join us again next year! We have something for everyone at our event, and you don't have to be a senior citizen to attend. If you have any questions about senior programs in our area, or vendors at our event, please contact my office at 610-696-4990.

It was a pleasure meeting everyone who came out for my annual senior expo in September.



My third annual senior expo featured over 50 vendors, door prizes and complimentary blood pressure screenings.

SEPTA Senior Key Cards

Since 2017, my office has helped over a thousand seniors apply for the SEPTA Senior Key Card!

If you are 65 or older and would like to take advantage of the discounts offered by SEPTA, you will need to obtain the SEPTA Senior Key Card. These discounts include free rides on all SEPTA services, such as the bus, trolley, trackless trolley, and Market Frankford, Broad Street, and Norristown High-Speed Lines. All cards are valid for 4 years. **Please be sure to check the expiration date that can be found on the front on your card. If your card is set to expire in 2020, please contact my office for assistance with the renewal process.**

Please call my district office at 610-696-4990 to schedule an appointment or for any questions you may have.



My office can help eligible constituents apply for a SEPTA Senior Key Card.

Do You Have Unclaimed Property?

Have you searched through the Pennsylvania Treasury's Unclaimed Property database? You may have received a letter from my office this summer letting you know that you may have unclaimed property. Unclaimed property can include a closed bank account, uncashed checks, certificates of deposit, or lost stocks and bonds.

My office can help you search the database for property that the state is holding and help you begin the process to claim it. You can contact my office at 610-696-4990 or search online at www.patreasury.gov.



Mariner East Pipeline:

This year, legislators representing 10 House districts and three Senatorial districts across Chester and Delaware counties and I signed a letter to Governor Tom Wolf asking him to impose a moratorium on the transmission of natural gas liquids products through the Mariner East pipeline system until the mandated protocols are in place for local responders to properly manage a pipeline emergency.

In August, the House Veteran Affairs & Emergency Preparedness Committee held a public hearing on my bill, HB 1568: Pipeline Safety Communication Board. I requested the hearing to show how the General Assembly can help Pennsylvanians affected by the Mariner East pipeline in Chester County, as well as other pipelines throughout Pennsylvania. This session period, I also introduced HB 1567, which would provide oversight of the eminent domain process used by public utility corporations and add legal protections for Pennsylvania residents.

My top priority continues to be the public health and safety of residents. Article 1, Section 27 of Pennsylvania's Constitution, known as the Environmental Rights Amendment, states that we have the right to clean air and pure water. I will continue to do all I can to ensure that our community and environment are protected throughout this process.



Working Against Gun Violence

As a member of the PA SAFE Caucus, a caucus dedicated to increasing public safety by promoting gun safety, I continue to be a strong advocate for gun violence prevention. In June, I held a press conference with my friend, Michelle Roberson, on the two-year anniversary of the hateful act of road rage that took her daughter, Bianca Roberson. I was proud to help Michelle share her story and honor the memory of Bianca. Senator Vincent Hughes and I took a stand together and vowed to make our community safer through gun safety education and activism.

Over the summer, Governor Wolf signed an executive order making changes to executive branch agencies and programs to better target the public health crisis of gun violence in Pennsylvania. The executive order approaches gun violence from both a public health and safety perspective that includes boosting prevention programs, increasing data sharing and developing new training, and appointing a Special Council on Gun Violence tasked with developing a plan to reduce gun violence.



My dear friend Michelle Roberson lost her 18-year-old daughter Bianca to a violent act of road rage in 2017. We honored her memory in the Capitol Rotunda, and we continue to advocate against gun violence.

I am a co-sponsor of numerous gun safety bills, a few below:

- **HB 673:** Background Checks for Firearms
- **HB 1288:** Reporting Lost or Stolen Firearms
- **HB 525:** Safe Storage of Firearms
- **HB 1075:** Extreme Risk Protection Orders

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

- **Election Reform Bill:** Act 77 of 2019 is the most significant improvement to Pennsylvania's elections in more than 80 years. The law creates a new option to vote by mail up to 50 days before an election and be placed on a list to permanently receive a ballot application by mail.

It also provides more time to register to vote and authorizes a \$90 million bond to help counties fund the purchase of new voting systems with a paper trail that strengthens the security of our elections. The legislation takes effect for the April 2020 primary election.

- **PA GI Bill:** Creates a program allowing spouses and children of Pennsylvania National Guard (PNG) members to attend college at no or reduced cost. This program is the first of its kind in the nation.

In addition to supporting military family members, this program would also improve PNG retention and strengthen its readiness. The PNG is the third largest National Guard in the nation with nearly 20,000 soldiers and airmen who reside in every county across the commonwealth.

Several bills have been passed this legislative session that will directly benefit many Pennsylvanians. If you have any questions or would like further information on these bills, please contact my office.

- **Tobacco 21:** Pennsylvania will become the 19th state in the nation to raise the minimum age for purchase of tobacco products from 18 to 21. Military service members and veterans would be exempt. The General Assembly recently passed this legislation and it is headed to Governor Wolf's desk to be signed into law. The bill also expands the definition of tobacco products to include e-cigarette or vaping use. The legislation would take effect on July 1, 2020.
- **Statute of Limitations:** This bill, signed into law on Nov. 26, will eliminate the statute of limitations for victims filing criminal charges against perpetrators of child sexual abuse. The measure expands the timeframe for childhood victims to file civil suits against their abusers to their 55th birthday. Before the new law, victims of child sex abuse had to pursue criminal cases by age 50 and civil suits by age 30. This law also provides funds for the counseling services of victims from the Crime Victim Compensation Fund.



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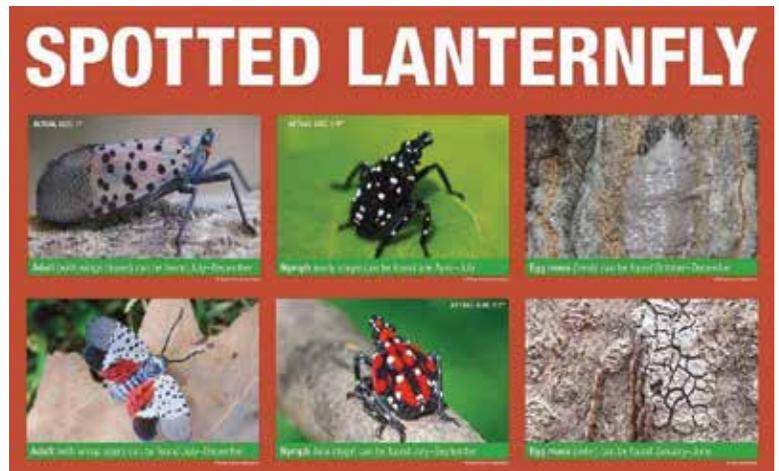
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Spotted Lanternfly Update

The Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) is an invasive planthopper native to Asia. It was first discovered in Berks County and has spread to other counties in the commonwealth. This insect has the potential to greatly impact agricultural crops. It is also reducing the quality of life for people living in heavily infested areas.

What YOU can do to help:

- Report sightings of the Spotted Lanternfly online, <https://extension.psu.edu/>, or call 1-888-4BAD-FLY (1-888-422-3359). All reports of SLF outside of the quarantine are taken seriously and will be investigated. Reports within the quarantine are registered in a database for USDA and PDA. The database is used to help determine properties for treatment. Treatment is based on location, risk, and available funds.
- Use the recommendations developed by Penn State Extension and take control measures on your own property. Any efforts you make in destroying the Spotted Lanternfly or its egg masses helps your property and community. You can contact my office for more information or to request literature on the spotted lanternfly.



The spotted lanternfly has several distinct characteristics throughout its lifespan. Be sure to report any sightings of this insect to Penn State Extension.

