



# State Representative Maria P. Donatucci



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## Honored to serve as Pa. House Philadelphia County Delegation chairwoman

I am humbled to report that members of the Philadelphia County Delegation to the House of Representatives have elected me to serve as chairwoman for the remainder of the 2015-16 legislative session. It is my hope that the delegation can be a useful body focusing on regional issues and developing solutions to improve quality of life for Philadelphia County residents.

As a lifelong resident of south Philadelphia, I am truly honored to serve my constituents in this way. I have long been a staunch advocate for empowering hardworking Philadelphians by sponsoring both equal pay and paid sick leave legislation, and I have also fought for better school funding for Philadelphia's public schools and improved resources for fighting crime throughout the region. As delegation chairwoman, I will continue to make these issues my top priorities as we strive to make the county a better place to live, work and play.

For more information on the delegation and its members, please visit [www.pahouse.com/PCD](http://www.pahouse.com/PCD).



I enjoyed showing two participants of the GirlGov program, Kaylee Gross and Kelly Howard, around on the House floor as they shadowed me for a day in June. The program, created by teen women for teen women, is designed to provide young women the opportunity to learn firsthand about civics, government, philanthropy, community involvement, women's history and leadership.



I was honored to present a citation to Melissa Wallace, canine enforcement officer with the federal Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection, and her K9 service dog, Auburn, at the Stoney Creek Veterinary Hospital's annual K9 Veterans Day celebration in Morton in March. The team has been working together since 2009. Auburn is specifically trained to sniff out passenger baggage at airports and alert officers of any prohibited agricultural items like fruit, vegetables, meat and fresh plants.

## My south Philadelphia office has moved

I wanted to make you aware that my south Philadelphia constituent service office has relocated to 2901 S. 19th St., Philadelphia.

The office was previously located at 2115 Oregon Ave., Philadelphia.

The 19th Street office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, and can be reached at (215) 468-1515.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions about state-related programs and issues. My staff and I are happy to serve you!

# STATE BUDGET UPDATE

As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, I wanted to let you know that the 2016-17 state budget was finalized earlier this year. Though the plan is far from perfect, it makes strong investments in our schools and human service programs, and avoids another costly budget impasse.

Under the plan, Pennsylvania schools receive a \$250 million increase – including \$200 million for basic education, \$30 million for pre-K and Head Start, and \$20 million for special education. This funding leads to more than a \$47 million increase in basic education funding for the School District of Philadelphia and more than \$3 million in special education increases for the district.

Southeast Delco School District will receive over \$718,000 in basic education funding increases and over \$82,000 in special education funding increases, while William Penn School District will see an increase of more than \$891,000 in basic

education funding and an increase of more than \$100,000 for special education.

The state has also committed to combating the opioid and heroin addiction epidemic by pledging another \$15 million to the cause. Part of this funding will be used to establish Centers of Excellence throughout Pennsylvania, which will integrate behavioral and primary care to help comprehensively treat people suffering from addiction. I am pleased to report that three centers in Philadelphia County and one in Delaware County are slated to open by the end of the fall.

Though the budget leaves much to be desired – including a long-term, responsible plan to make up the state's massive structural deficit – it's a step in the right direction to help our students, vulnerable citizens, and seniors. I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues on solutions to improve the state's finances.

## Fighting the opioid epidemic



**In addition to co-hosting a meeting on the opioid and heroin crisis facing Pennsylvania, I was also proud to attend a news conference in August at Thomas Jefferson University with Gov. Tom Wolf and state Reps. Lynwood Savage, Stephen Kinsey, and Michael Driscoll, all D-Phila., on the subject.**

I recently co-hosted a joint House Democratic and Republican Policy Committee meeting on the opioid epidemic at Temple University's Lewis Katz School of Medicine in Philadelphia.

My colleagues and I heard from health experts and those affected by addiction, who made it clear that drastic action needs to be taken to curb this epidemic. Part of this action will include a special legislative session this fall to study subjects such as the over-prescription of opioids, education and prevention, treatment options and access to treatment.

This crisis affects communities across the state, and people of all socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds. We must work together if we are serious about eradicating this epidemic.

## My 911 privacy legislation is now law

I am proud to report that Gov. Tom Wolf has signed into law my H.B. 1310, designed to better protect the identity of victims, witnesses and other people placing 911 calls.

The legislation, now Act 30 of 2016, aims to give peace of mind to people who are hesitant to call 911 for fear of retribution, such as domestic violence victims. If a domestic violence victim flees to a friend's house to call 911, this law will prevent the abuser from finding out where the victim called from and further abusing them.

Under the new law, a public safety access point is prohibited from releasing the name, telephone number and home address of victims, witnesses or people calling 911 in response to a request under the state's Right-to-Know Law. The only case in which this information would be made available is if the 911 center or court determines it's in the public's interest to have such information.

The location of the incident would still be public information, unless the location is the home address of the caller, victim or witness, or the disclosure of the location would compromise the identity of the caller, victim or witness. The street block identifier, cross street or mile marker nearest the incident location would also still be made public.

I am thankful to my colleagues for their bipartisan support of this important legislation, and am glad that we were able to stand up for crime victims and witnesses in such a significant way.



**I was honored to watch Gov. Wolf sign my 911 privacy legislation, H.B. 1310, into law in May.**

# New rules for child car seats

Gov. Tom Wolf has signed into law a measure I supported to better protect our young children.

Under current law, all children under age 2 must be in a car seat when riding in a vehicle. That requirement doesn't change, but a new provision has been added under S.B. 1152, now Act 43 of 2016, to require that all children under age 2 must be in a rear-facing car seat. (A child under 2 will not be required to be rear-facing if the child has outgrown the maximum height and weight requirements of the car seat manufacturer.)

The law is now in effect. A violation during the first year the law is in effect will result in a warning. After that, violations will result in a \$125 fine.

My office also helps provide car seats for eligible families. To find out if your family is eligible, please call (215) 468-1515.



# Get the facts on medical marijuana

Earlier this year, Gov. Tom Wolf signed S.B. 3 into law as Act 16 of 2016, legalizing medical marijuana in Pennsylvania. I was proud to support this legislation, which is long overdue and will help a number of suffering Pennsylvanians, including children.

The qualifying conditions to obtain medical marijuana include: cancer, HIV/AIDS, glaucoma, sickle-cell anemia, autism, post-traumatic stress disorder, ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease), Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease, multiple sclerosis, spinal cord damage resulting in intractable spasms, epilepsy or intractable seizures, inflammatory bowel disease or Crohn's disease, and types of neuropathies.

Regulations are still being developed to help bring relief to adults and children who need it, but you can find updated information on the program at [www.health.pa.gov](http://www.health.pa.gov) and by clicking on "Pa. Medical Marijuana" under "Hot Topics." If you have further questions, you can also contact my office.

## Legislative updates

I have introduced the following pieces of legislation, designed to improve the lives of hardworking Pennsylvanians and families across the state:

**Paid sick leave:** My H.B. 624 would allow workers statewide to accrue paid sick leave. Under the "Healthy Families, Healthy Workplaces" Act, public- and private-sector workers would accrue paid sick leave to care for themselves or an ill family member based on the number of hours worked.

By enacting paid sick leave statewide, we can ensure Pennsylvania families get the time and resources they need to stay healthy, and we can prevent workers from bringing illness into the workplace. I believe this bill would ultimately make for more satisfied employees and healthier work environments. This bill has been referred to the state House Labor and Industry Committee, of which I am a member.

**Equal pay:** My H.B. 1250 would update the state's Equal Pay Law by increasing fines for employers that knowingly violate state law, falsify records or interfere with investigations under the act. It would also allow employees to file a legal action up to three years after the violation. Women still only make about 77 cents for every dollar a man brings home.

At the same time, an increasing number of women are becoming sole breadwinners for their families, and are taking on more senior leadership positions in the workplace. It's only right that women's wages accurately reflect the dedication they give to their work. This legislation has also been referred to the House Labor and Industry Committee.

**Cancer screenings:** My H.B. 1309 would increase eligibility for breast and cervical cancer screenings through the state Department of Health's HealthyWoman Program by allowing women between the ages of 30 and 65 to qualify for the program if they meet other eligibility guidelines.

The program, designed to serve low-income, underinsured and uninsured women who make up to 250 percent below the federal poverty level, is currently open to eligible women 40 to 64, women under 40, if they are symptomatic, and women 65 or older if screenings are not covered by Medicare Part B.

We know that risk for these cancers increases as a woman ages, but unfortunately, many young women are faced with cancer diagnoses as well. By screening for cancer today, I hope we can prevent the spread of these devastating diseases and save thousands of dollars in treatment costs. The bill has been referred to the House Health Committee.



I was excited to meet Villanova University men's basketball team assistant coach Baker Dunleavy on the House floor earlier this year. The team won the 2016 NCAA Men's National Championship, and Coach Dunleavy was kind enough to bring the championship trophy along to Harrisburg!



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185th Legislative District

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**INSIDE:**

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## 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 of all kinds
- 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 of all kinds – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information
- Renewal of state-issued licenses or certifications
- 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
- PACE/PACENET prescription-drug cards for senior citizens
- Consumer complaints
- Liquor Control Board concerns or questions
- Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups
- Information about federal, state and local government agencies

***Any problem with state government!***



In April, my colleagues and I had the pleasure of welcoming members of the Consular Corps Association of Philadelphia (CCAP) to the House floor. CCAP is the oldest association of foreign consuls in the United States.



In March, I spoke at a Capitol news conference in support of state Rep. Tony DeLuca's H.R. 695, designating 2016 as "The Year to Cure Cancer" in Pennsylvania. Many families across the state have been personally affected by cancer, including mine, and I will continue to fight alongside my colleagues to find a cure for this devastating disease.