



State Representative Maria P. Donatucci



2901 S. 19th St. • Philadelphia, PA 19145 • (215) 468-1515

713 Sharon Ave., Office 1B • Sharon Hill, PA 19079 • (610) 522-2290

Mercy Wellness Center, 2nd Floor • 2821 Island Ave. • Philadelphia, PA 19153 • (215) 492-5811

101 Irvis Office Building • P.O. Box 202185 • Harrisburg, PA 17120-2185 • (717) 783-8634

Fighting to end sexual harassment in Pa.

Sexual harassment became a daily headline in the media in 2017 and it's not going away anytime soon. Many brave women and men have come forward to tell their stories and call out their alleged assailants.

Pennsylvania government is not immune to sexual harassment and assault. As a result of cases across the country and here in our commonwealth, I am joining my colleagues from the House and the Senate to say enough is enough.

In December, I stood with some of my female colleagues to support a package of bills to better protect victims of harassment and abuse. Among the proposed legislation:

- **The #METOO PA General Assembly Bill** (Member and Employee Training and Oversight on PA General Assembly): Would ban non-disclosure agreements that mask the names of the General Assembly members who harass, prohibit General Assembly members from using taxpayer funds to pay settlement costs, and provide for other reforms.
- **H.B. 1971**: Would legally protect all employees in Pennsylvania from unwanted sexual harassment by extending the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act to any entity that has more than one employee.
- **H.B. 1633**: Would set up a Task Force on Campus Sexual Assault.



I stood with my female colleagues in support of legislation to put an end to sexual assault and sexual harassment in Pennsylvania.

I also support S.B. 999, which would prohibit non-disclosure agreements within contracts or secret settlements related to sexual harassment or misconduct.

A quiet culture of acceptance has built up around sexual harassment, sexual assault and gender discrimination, both in the state Capitol and across the commonwealth. The time to end it is now.

Urging Amazon to set up HQ2 in Pa.

As of the writing of this newsletter, we are still waiting to hear from Amazon if it will build its second headquarters in Pennsylvania. Philadelphia and Allegheny County are the two in-state locations vying to become the future home.

I joined some of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in co-sponsoring H.R. 571, which encourages Amazon to choose a location in the commonwealth to set up shop.

The HQ2 campus is estimated to be up to 8 million square feet and would be an economic boon for the entire commonwealth. It would create construction jobs and employ 50,000 full-time workers once it's in operation.

Hopefully Amazon will agree Pennsylvania is a good fit for the HQ2 campus, despite yet another credit downgrade given to the commonwealth last year because of Republican-driven budget delays and issues.

Cracking down on 'stop-and-gos'

The new year will bring changes on how the state will handle so-called stop-and-go nuisance establishments. This victory was made possible by the hard work of the Philadelphia Delegation.

I was there when Gov. Tom Wolf signed a bill into law that will crack down on these businesses. Act 44 of 2017 will give the Liquor Control Board the power to immediately shut down a "stop and go" if it does not meet the Liquor Code's seating, square footage, food or health requirements. It also allows local government entities, such as Philadelphia License and Inspections, to make recommendations to the Liquor Control Board on which establishments are believed to be violating these requirements. This bill enforces a common set of business standards and lets the community identify which establishments are bad.

"Stop-and-gos" have been a danger for far too long, specifically putting our children at risk. These businesses will finally be held accountable for their actions. This is a huge victory in the ongoing fight to keep our neighborhoods safe.



A big day in Philadelphia as Gov. Wolf signed legislation into law to crackdown on so-called stop-and-go nuisance establishments.

Pa. law expands disability coverage to more first responders

There is a law that I supported as a bill when it was in the General Assembly that will provide disability coverage to additional first responders.

In addition to firefighters in municipalities across Pennsylvania, the law now includes firefighters at airports; firefighters employed by the commonwealth, which include members of the Pennsylvania National Guard; EMS personnel who are employed by a city fire department; and state fire marshalls.

These brave men and women risk their lives just like those firefighters in our counties, cities, boroughs and townships, so I'm glad to see they will now receive the same benefits.



I was thrilled to have my niece, Maddie Donatucci, serve as my legislative shadow in May in Harrisburg. Thanks to Gov. Tom Wolf for taking time out of his busy day to join us for a photo.



Plan For PA puts people first

In December, the House Democratic Caucus launched our Plan For PA. I support this comprehensive strategy that puts people first, supports good jobs, fights for quality schools and promotes a fairer tax structure.

The House Democratic Plan for PA focuses on four components:

1. A People First Plan for PA that would protect the safety, health, financial security, and dignity and opportunity that every Pennsylvanian deserves, not just those at the top.
2. A Jobs Plan for PA that would attract good jobs that support families, move the economy forward, expand opportunities for working people, and protect the financial security of the middle class.
3. A Quality Schools Plan for PA that would give every child access to a safe school and a quality education, and allow adults to gain the skills and training they need to do the jobs businesses are looking to fill.
4. A Fair Taxes Plan for PA that would ease the tax burden on working people and homeowners, and prevent corporations and the wealthy from exploiting the middle class.

Unfair taxes in Pennsylvania mean that working families pay more while big businesses can pay less. We must pass a severance tax that finally makes drilling companies pay their fair share. But because these big businesses write lots of checks to bankroll political campaigns, most legislators in the Republican majorities at the Capitol are not willing to hold them accountable. It's time for that to change.

For more information and to stay up to date on the Plan4PA, please visit planforpa.pahouse.com.

Heating aid via LIHEAP now available

The 2017-18 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program – LIHEAP – is open and accepting applications for heating assistance grants.

LIHEAP offers cash grants of \$200 to \$1,000 that are sent directly to the utility company to defray heating costs for eligible households, and crisis benefits of \$25 to \$500 for households in immediate danger of being without heat, from such emergency situations as broken heating equipment or leaking lines, lack of fuel or utility service termination.

We have LIHEAP applications available at my office and we can help you file it.

Besides my office, LIHEAP information is available by calling the statewide LIHEAP Client Helpline at 1-866-857-7095. You also may apply online at www.compass.state.pa.us.

The state Department of Human Services, which administers the federally funded program, mailed applications or information to people who received LIHEAP last season.

This season's income guidelines for both LIHEAP cash and crisis grants are \$18,090 for an individual and \$24,360 for couples, and these guidelines increase for each additional person in the household.

Pa. reauthorizes state Children's Health Insurance Program; it's time for Congress to join us

Governor Tom Wolf signed into law a bill I supported that reauthorizes Pennsylvania's Children's Health Insurance Program for another two years. If the legislature hadn't acted, our program would have died at the end of 2017.

CHIP, as it is commonly known, provides health insurance coverage to children of working families who earn too much to qualify for Medical Assistance, but cannot afford to buy private insurance.

This program got its start in Pennsylvania 25 years ago. In fact, the federal government used our program as the model for CHIP at the federal level. I'm even more proud that the commonwealth continues to value children's health, even if the current federal government doesn't.

But the fight is not yet over. Congress has failed to reauthorize funding for the federal program, which expired several months ago. The program is vital to 9 million children and expecting mothers nationwide, including more than 180,000 Pennsylvania children. More than 24,000 of them are here in Philadelphia.

Without federal action, Pennsylvania will run out of money for this program by spring. I urge you to contact your federal lawmakers and tell them they should care about our children's health.

Legislative updates

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

Paid sick leave: My H.B. 701 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. We need to ensure Pennsylvania families get the time and resources they need to stay healthy, and we need to prevent workers from bringing sickness into their workplace. If enacted, my 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. 931 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. 562 would increase eligibility for breast and cervical cancer screenings through the state Department of Health’s HealthyWoman Program by allowing women between 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 of 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 the 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 remain an advocate for equal pay for women in Pennsylvania. Thanks to my colleagues who stood with me during a rally for equal pay in Harrisburg.



Don't pay for help in applying for veterans' benefits

I want to remind you that veterans, active military and their dependents should never pay for help to apply for veterans' benefits.

There is plenty of free assistance through the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, county veterans affairs offices, American Legion, VFW and Disabled American Veterans, just to name a few.



Accredited veteran service officers provide veterans and their dependents free assistance to identify, determine eligibility for and apply for a wide range of benefits on the local, state and federal levels including:

- payment of burial allowances,
- ensuring grave markers and headstones are properly requested and placed,
- the Disabled Veterans Real Estate Tax Exemption Program,
- veterans emergency assistance,
- blind and paralyzed veterans pensions,
- the Education Gratuity Program,
- service-connected disability and non-service-connected disability pensions,
- federal health care benefits, and
- survivor benefits.

To locate an organization near you for assistance, visit www.dmva.pa.gov.

Real ID Update

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security 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.

To learn more about the Real ID Act and its requirements, visit www.dmv.pa.gov or simply call my office at (215) 468-1515. My staff will be happy to answer questions about this or any other state government-related matter.



Monroe Energy receives \$500,000 grant to comply with federal standards

In December, the state Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program awarded Monroe Energy a \$500,000 grant to be used for a major refinery improvement project at the company's Trainer facility.

The project includes the installation of an ultra-low sulfur gasoline unit to produce gasoline in compliance with the Environmental Protection Agency's mandate for Tier 3 Sulfur Standards for Gasoline.

I'm pleased to see the governor and legislative leaders are investing in Monroe Energy to help with this important project. The upgrades funded by this grant will help the company comply with the necessary federal standards.



I was privileged to participate in the dedication of a POW-MIA chair at the Philadelphia International Airport. Joining me was Mayor Jim Kenney, Jesse Kyle, who sang our National Anthem, Airport CEO Rochelle "Chellie" Cameron, and Rep. Martina White.





State Representative

Maria P. Donatucci

185th Legislative District

P.O. Box 202185

Harrisburg, PA 17120-2185

INSIDE:

- Fighting to end sexual harrassment
- Plan to put people first
- Working for you information

lpo.kl.0118

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!