



STATE REPRESENTATIVE | 119TH DISTRICT

Gerald Mullery

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Denouncing Governor's Decision to Shutter SCI-Retreat

It is very difficult to express my frustration with Governor Wolf's decision to displace hundreds of hard-working and dedicated employees by closing the State Correctional Institution at Retreat. We have fought hard from day one to prevent this closure and I remain committed to the employees who work tirelessly to keep our community safe.

For two years, I have been part of a united front of bipartisan state and local elected officials and community activists who banded together to fight this closure. Together, we showed how vital SCI-Retreat is to the community, and I am sorry to say our words fell on deaf ears. The impact of this closure will be felt well beyond the prison walls.

I continue to stand with these corrections officers and employees who are going through this difficult and stressful process. The only positive I can take from this announcement is knowing those who walk the toughest blocks in our commonwealth can now focus on the next stage of their employment.

“I remain committed to preventing these closures.”

Sign the Petition to save White Haven Center



Fighting for White Haven Residents

The House is considering a bill that would put a moratorium on Governor Wolf's plan to close the White Haven and Polk state centers as he announced his intentions to do so back in August. On behalf of the residents, their families and the hundreds of caregivers at these facilities, I remain strongly opposed to the closures.

During December's legislative session, the House Health Committee approved S.B. 906 by a 13-12 vote with 13 of the 15 Republican members voting in favor and all 10 Democrats against. Under S.B. 906, a moratorium would be enacted on the closing of both White Haven and Polk state centers until Pennsylvania is better prepared to respond to the impending fallout.

While I am pleased House Health Committee Chair Kathy Rapp recognized the urgency of this bill and moved it through the committee quickly, I am very disappointed with my Democratic colleagues. This has been a difficult fight against the governor and to see members of my own side of the aisle choosing party over peoples' lives and jobs is very disheartening.

The governor's decision is cold and heartless and will leave a devastating impact on some of our most vulnerable constituents, their families and caregivers. White Haven is the only home many of these residents have ever known, and while some argue community care is more cost-effective, it certainly won't be the same.

I remain committed to preventing these closures and am asking my colleagues in the House for their support of S.B. 906 in 2020. Please stay tuned for updates.

1,684 people have signed my petition to save White Haven. Find the petition at www.pahouse.com/mullery/petition/?id=1213.

Over \$3.8 million in state grants awarded to Luzerne County

In 2019, more than \$3.8 million in state grants were awarded to fund several projects in the 119th Legislative District in Luzerne County.

I would like to thank Sens. Lisa Baker and John Yudichak for their help with funding these crucial projects in our community.

Lehigh Valley Health Network Inc. will use its \$1 million grant toward a \$5.8 million project for site work and renovations of two existing buildings in Hazleton. At 1000 Alliance St., work will include the creation of a surgical specialty medical office that will include the following services: general, colorectal, breast, vascular, bariatric and urology.

The 50 Moisey St. location will include renovations to the existing building to create a breast health services center, which will add mammography imaging, waiting and reception areas. The Heart Institute renovations will create 14 exam rooms, an IV infusion room, minor procedure rooms and support/provider office space.

Luzerne County will also receive a \$1 million grant for the

CALO White Haven Development near White Haven in Foster Township. The \$6 million project includes rehabilitation, reconstruction and construction of four vacant buildings and at least two new buildings to establish at least a 50-bed residential treatment facility to treat the effects of early childhood trauma.

The grants were awarded through the state's Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program.



Additional Commonwealth Financing Authority and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Community Conservation Partnerships Program grants include:

Newport and Hanover townships: \$850,000 toward the acquisition of 1,400 acres of land to expand Pinchot State Forest.

Newport Township: \$160,000 toward the repair of a 1,200-foot stretch of sidewalk along Railroad Street that is seriously deteriorated.

White Haven: \$182,600 for the borough's Rail Yard Park development project. Work will include the construction of plaza areas, pedestrian walkways with ADA access, stormwater management measures, fencing, lighting and utilities, and other related improvements.

West Hazleton: \$30,000 for the borough's Fifth Street Playground development project. Plans include installing new play equipment with required safety surfacing, ADA access, landscaping and related improvements.

Wright Township: \$25,000 for its Municipal Park development. Work includes renovation of a pavilion, basketball and tennis courts, new play equipment with safety surfacing, ADA access and other related improvements.

City of Nanticoke: \$250,000 to replace several deteriorated sidewalks and install curbing and ADA-compliant ramps on Main Street from Lawrence and Dewey to Kosciuszko Street near the Hanover 9 logistics park.

Plymouth Borough: \$150,000 to make pedestrian safety and streetscape improvements along Main Street, including crosswalks and a bus shelter, after the borough repairs and replaces manholes and storm drains along the street.

Rice Township: \$243,945 toward the construction of a 71,000-square-foot multipurpose/soccer field at its 21-acre park.



This month, I was pleased to present the White Haven Area Community Library with a check for \$182,600 from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to create a new Rail Yard Park on the campus! Pictured: Council President John Klem, WHACL Board Member Charlotte Carter, Borough Manager Linda Szoke, and me.



I am always happy to help support police departments in Luzerne County! The White Haven Police Dept. acquired a new police pickup truck, thanks to Local Share Account funding, which comes from state gaming revenues to support the community and mitigate the impact of gaming. Pictured: Myself, Chief Tom Szoke, Council President John Klem, Borough Manager Linda Szoke.

Luzerne County Senior Expo



Our annual Senior Expo was a huge success. It was great to see so many people turn out for this fun and informational event. The Senior Expo is a great opportunity for our seniors to get valuable information and for me to learn what their concerns are as residents living in Luzerne County.

I'd like to thank all of our vendors and participants this year and the co-sponsors for the expo: state Sens. Lisa Baker and John Yudichak and state Rep. Aaron Kaufer.

My staff is already planning this year's Senior Expo. More information will be coming soon!



Governor signs career/tech education bill

This past fall, Governor Wolf signed legislation which will expand career and technical education in Pennsylvania. Successful career and technical education programs train students for the jobs that will be available in the future.

Act 76 of 2019 combined elements of several bipartisan CTE-focused bills, including my own. It will provide vocational, technical and agricultural educational programming and support. It also will create the PAsmart online career resource center, a workforce development program clearinghouse, and establish the Schools-to-Work Program.



REAL ID REMINDER

This year, you will need a Real ID-compliant driver's license or ID card to board a domestic flight or enter secure federal facilities. Real ID is necessary if you don't have a U.S. Passport or active Military ID. You'll need a Real ID for this purpose by Oct. 1, 2020.

To obtain one, take all of the following to a Driver's License Center:

- ★ Original birth certificate with a raised seal or a valid U.S. Passport
- ★ Social Security card
- ★ Proof of all legal name changes (marriage license or court order)
- ★ Two proofs of current physical address.



Call my office if you need assistance obtaining documents or with questions!

LIHEAP

Home Heating Assistance

The state's Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program is now accepting applications. LIHEAP helps low-income families pay their heating bills and deal with heating emergencies such as a broken furnace, fuel shortage or utility service shutoff. Renters and homeowners who qualify can have a cash grant – which does not need to be repaid – sent

directly to their utility company or fuel provider. Grants range from \$200 to \$1,000, based on household size, income and fuel type. Crisis grants are also available. Paper applications are available through local county assistance offices or my district office, and my staff can help you apply.



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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My office can help you with:

- ✓ Car registrations, special tags, handicap placards, titles and driver's license applications
- ✓ Information on financial assistance 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)
- ✓ Pennsylvania income tax questions or problems
- ✓ Requests for literature of all kinds – 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
- ✓ Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions
- ✓ Problems or questions about the state lottery
- ✓ PACE 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

If you need help with any state government-related services, please feel free to contact my office at 570-740-7031 for assistance.