Mail-in voting a safe bet this year

This year for the first time, Pennsylvania joins many other states offering no-excuse, mail-in voting. In addition to the advantage of being able to vote from the comfort and convenience of your own home, the new option offers another obvious benefit: the opportunity to avoid long lines and crowded poll conditions in the midst of a pandemic.

Vote-by-mail is simple, secure and available to any registered voter without the need to offer any excuse.

To apply online for a mail-in ballot, visit www.votespa.com. At the top of the page, you will see a link titled "Voting in PA." From the drop-down menu, select "Mail-in and Absentee Ballot." From there, you will find complete instructions – including whether you should apply for a mail-in or an absentee ballot – and the online application.

After your ballot arrives, complete it once you receive it, and return it as soon as possible.

Making your voice heard has never been simpler or safer!

Remember these important dates:

- **Oct. 19:** This is the last day to register before the general election.
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A perfect record – inspired by you

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I hope I have made you proud, as well. During my 26 years serving you, I have never missed a single day of session in the House of Representatives. I maintained that perfect record of attendance this year, as well, traveling to Harrisburg every session day during the pandemic so I could be there to represent your interests.

I will continue showing up and being there for you for as long as I am fortunate to represent you, and I will continue doing everything in my power to make sure Lawrence County has a loud and clear voice in Harrisburg. You deserve nothing less.

Preparing for New Castle’s annual Light up the Night parade and festivities is always half of the fun!
Standing up for small business

In late May, even after Lawrence County moved to the green reopening phase, many of our small businesses – already reeling from weeks of shutdowns – were still facing restrictions that limited operations and frustrated attempts at recovery.

Although I believe business guidance in many cases has helped keep employees and patrons safe, I have also made it clear when I have not supported restrictions.

For example, in July, after an uptick in cases, the governor announced a rule ordering restaurants and bars to reduce indoor capacity to 25%. I believe this measure is arbitrary and unnecessarily restrictive and will threaten the survival of these local businesses, which are so important to our economy.

I have written to the governor, calling on him to lift this restriction. Rather than punish an entire industry for the negligence of a few bad actors, we would be better served by more vigilant enforcement of the prior 50% capacity rule.

I will continue speaking out on behalf of our small business owners, who do so much to sustain and support our local economy, as we navigate a path forward through the pandemic.

Trouble meeting housing payments?
These programs can help

If you are at least 30 days overdue on your rent or mortgage, the CARES Rent Relief and Mortgage Assistance programs can help.

Homeowners may qualify for up to $1,000 per month for a maximum of six months of assistance for payments due between March 1 and Dec. 30. Renters may qualify for up to $750 per month for a maximum of six months’ assistance for the same period.

To be eligible, you must have become unemployed or suffered a 30% or more reduction in income after March 1 due to COVID-19 and must meet certain income and other requirements. Visit www.pfpa.org to read program guidelines and apply. You can also call PHFA toll free at 1-855-U-Are-Home.

Nearly $47 million back to the district so far this year

Here is a look at funding I helped secure for Lawrence County from January 2020 through mid-August:

- Nearly $479,000 in CARES Act funding to support critical food, housing and community development programs.
- More than $260,000 to support trauma-based treatment for youth and improve law enforcement coronavirus response and preparedness, nearly $150,000 to combat opioid use disorder in county inmates and nearly $117,000 for criminal justice diversion programs.
- More than $205,000 in CARES Act funding to help Lawrence County childcare providers reopen safely.
- $150,000 to educate students about high-priority career paths; $140,000 to provide paid internship opportunities; $100,000 to help teachers tailor curriculum to meet workforce needs; and $70,000 to expand computer science learning for Lawrence County Students.
- Nearly $134,000 in grants to fire and EMS companies and $8,000 to help guard against the threat of wildfires and brushfires.
- More than $102,000 to help fund new senior housing.
- Nearly $20,000 to enhance storm water management.
- $4,000 to support the Lawrence County Historical Society and nearly $2,000 in CARES Act funding to support operations at Hoyt Art Center.
- $3.3 million in grants to fire and EMS companies.
- Nearly $7.7 million in CARES Act funding to Lawrence County to cover COVID-19 response and preparedness costs.
- More than $3.3 million in CARES Act funding and nearly $75,000 in state funding to school districts to support remote learning; nearly $33,500 to New School of Trades for COVID-19 safety funding.
- Nearly $479,000 in CARES Act funding to support critical food, housing and community development programs.
- Nearly $3.35 million in grants to fight wildfires and brushfires.
- More than $32 million (including a $19 million grant and the remainder as a low-interest loan) for major improvements to the New Castle Sanitation Authority’s water treatment plant.
- More than $84,000 in CARES Act funding to Lawrence County Career and Technical Center; and more than $75,000 to New Castle School of Trades for COVID-19 safety funding.
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- We enjoyed beautiful scenery and great company at the 2019 Moose Lodge Cascade Park picnic.
- I enjoyed great food and great company at the 2019 St. Elias Syrian Festival.
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Shared funding

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A path through the pandemic – together

In fact, our entire community has made a difference. None of our work in Harrisburg would matter without your successful efforts to flatten the curve of new cases and keep our economy open.

I am so proud to represent our strong, supportive community. Together, we will forge a path through this pandemic, and together, we will come through this.

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