



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

SUMMER 2022

Kristine Howard

167TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

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Dear Neighbor,

As a result of the 2020 Census, new legislative districts will take effect this December. If you are a resident of East Caln, East Goshen, West Vincent, East Whiteland, West Whiteland, West Pikeland, or Charlestown, your residence will be in the 167th Legislative District.

No matter where you live, as a state representative, I believe it's my responsibility to work in Harrisburg and here at home on behalf of all residents of our communities. This session, I have introduced two dozen bills (and counting), covering issues ranging from punishing polluters and protecting endangered species to ensuring adequate staffing for mental health

treatment facilities to numerous consumer and employee rights measures.

Additionally, my district office staff and I are eager and able to help all area residents. You can reach out to me for information and assistance at (610) 251-1070 or at RepHoward@pahouse.net. Once at my website, you can sign up for regular emails on information and issues important to the 167th District.

Kristine C. Howard

REAL ID Update

Beginning **May 3, 2023**, 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 that requires ID.

While REAL ID is optional for Pennsylvania residents, you will need an alternate form of federally acceptable identification (valid passport, military ID, etc.) to board domestic commercial flights and enter certain federal facilities after May 3, 2023.

My district office does not issue REAL ID cards, but we are happy to answer any questions you may have regarding the process.



Report Potholes

Potholes and other roadway concerns on state roads can be reported by calling 1-800-FIX-ROAD or visiting www.penndot.gov and clicking on "Submit a Roadway Concern."

The 167th District includes East Caln, East Goshen, West Vincent, East Whiteland, West Whiteland, West Pikeland, and Charlestown.

NEW LEGISLATION

COMBATING TEACHER AND SOCIAL WORKER SHORTAGES

Aspiring teachers and social workers must complete field placements, such as internships or student teaching. These positions are rarely paid, causing many to postpone or abandon their ambitions.

Teachers and social workers are vital to society, being responsible for the education, safety, and well-being of our children and our future, which is why I introduced a resolution directing the Joint State Government Committee to study the feasibility of paying individuals for their field placements, internships, and student teaching. This study should provide insight into the challenges prospective teachers and social workers face without paid training, as well as examine what forms of payment might be most appropriate, from wages to tuition reimbursement.

We can no longer ignore staffing shortages in such important professions.

STREAMLINING UNCONTESTED DIVORCES

Divorce in Pennsylvania is a lengthy and costly process. PA law requires a 90-day waiting period after filing, even for uncontested divorces, and year-plus waiting periods often result due to the overburdening of the courts. Furthermore, exorbitant fees make Pennsylvania one of the most expensive states for a divorce.

For this reason, I am introducing legislation to remove the 90-day waiting period and permit Magisterial District Courts or Philadelphia Municipal Court to hear uncontested divorces. Removing the waiting period and transferring uncontested divorces to a court system with approximately 80 additional judges will expedite uncontested divorces. Additionally, a faster divorce process reduces the uncertainty and financial strain on those involved.

There is no good reason to burden the parties with mandatory or de facto waiting periods for a matter that is uncontested in the first place. Pennsylvanians deserve a faster and more affordable uncontested divorce process.

RECENTLY SIGNED INTO LAW

Over the past few months, the General Assembly has worked with the Governor to pass a number of important pieces of legislation, including:

House Bill 245 reduces the clinical residency requirement from three years to two for applicants who have graduated from international medical schools and expands the actions a temporary licensee is allowed to perform.

Senate Bill 1020 authorizes the conveyance of 4.191 acres of vacant land which is currently a portion of Swatara State Park in Union Township, Lebanon County, to Kyle and Tamara Boltz. As consideration for the conveyance, the Boltzes will convey 11.908 acres of vacant land to the Commonwealth to be added to the Swatara State Park. In addition, the bill authorizes the conveyance of 8.7190 acres of vacant land in Whitemarsh and Springfield townships, Montgomery County, to Erdenheim Farm. As consideration for the conveyance, Erdenheim Farm

will convey a tract of land containing 10.568 acres of vacant land to the Commonwealth to be added to the Marsh Creek State Park.

House Bill 221 removes language that limits local governments from maintaining open space unless it was acquired under the January 19, 1968, act entitled "An act authorizing the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the local government units thereof of preserve, acquire or hold land for open space uses."

Senate Bill 739 appropriates \$25 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding to support Pennsylvania's emergency medical services (EMS) companies.

Budget Update

As we move into budget season, I continue working tirelessly to ensure we get everything we need and deserve, both in the 167th District and across the Commonwealth, including our remaining American Rescue Plan Act funds, which must be allocated by the end of 2024.

Conservation Corner

The Eastern whip-poor-will (*Antrostomus vociferus*) is one of the several species of nightjar birds traditionally found in Pennsylvania. The whip-poor-will, a camouflaged and nocturnal bird, is generally heard and not seen. The whip-poor-will's distinctive call is the source of its unusual name, and has entered the popular imagination, from the stories of Washington Irving to Elton John's "Philadelphia Freedom."

Unfortunately, its song is heard less and less. The whip-poor-will – and nightjars generally – are in decline. The reasons are debated, though some of the more common theories include excessive insecticide use, predation by cats and dogs, and the gradual loss of habitat. The whip-poor-will nests in forests while it hunts in more open areas, and fewer places have this combination readily available, underscoring the need to protect both our open spaces and forests. If you want to learn more about how you can help, visit the Pennsylvania Game Commission's website at www.pgc.pa.gov.



Property Tax/Rent Rebate

The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians aged 65 and older; widows and widowers aged 50 and older; and people with disabilities aged 18 and older. The income limit is \$35,000 a year for homeowners and \$15,000 annually for renters, and half of Social Security income is excluded. Spouses, personal representatives or estates may also file rebate claims on behalf of claimants who lived at least one day in 2021 and meet all other eligibility criteria. Visit www.revenue.pa.gov for more information.



Unclaimed Property at PA Treasury

Did you know that the Pennsylvania Treasury is currently holding onto \$3.5 billion in unclaimed property?

Did you know that one in 10 Pennsylvanians is owed unclaimed property?

Did you know the average claim is worth about \$2,000?

My office is hard at work trying to notify constituents of their unclaimed property, but you don't have to wait for us to reach out: you can search the Treasury's online database at any time to see if you or friends and family have property waiting to be claimed. You need not pay anyone a fee to search for or claim property from the state. Learn more at www.patreasury.gov/unclaimed-property.

Birth Certificates & Death Certificates

My office can help you obtain copies of birth and death certificates. Certificates cost \$20 each and must be paid via check or money order made payable to "VITAL RECORDS."

Visit www.RepKHoward.com and sign up for my email newsletter to stay up to date!

My office can help you with:

- Car registrations, special tags, titles and license applications
- Information on financial assistance for higher education
- Unemployment compensation problems
- Disability plates and placards
- PACE cards for senior citizens
- Complaints and problems with insurance companies
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions
- Problems or questions about the state lottery
- Pennsylvania income tax problems
- Local government officials' problems with state agencies
- **Any problem with state government!**



Rep. Kristine Howard

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Constituent Services

State Government Concerns? Call My Office

My office is here to help you with any state-related issue. If you're having an issue, please call, and my staff will do all they can to serve as guides or champions, as needed, as you navigate your concerns through our government.

While most issues can be resolved by phone, many matters may require an in-person meeting. To minimize wait times while allowing us to research your issue and provide the best service possible without the need to rush our visitors, appointments are encouraged. To schedule an appointment, call my office at (610) 251-1070 or email RepHoward@pahouse.net.

Upcoming Events

September 8

Mental Health Fair
time and location TBD

October 6

Senior Fair
time and location TBD



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