



STATE REPRESENTATIVE ELIZABETH FIEDLER

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SUMMER 2022

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I'm working hard to serve our neighbors and to bring back state dollars for our community. But that won't fix the big, structural problems. That's why I'm also fighting for fully funded libraries, recreation centers, schools, and public transit. Those are the building blocks of the better world we imagine for ourselves, for our neighbors, for our children, and our children's children.

THE BETTER WORLD THAT WE WANT TO SEE IS POSSIBLE.



INSIDE:

- State Budget Passed
- Grants for Our Community
- Fighting for Reproductive Rights
- Community Events

STATE BUDGET PASSED

In early July, the PA legislature approved the 2022-2023 state budget. Overall, I had mixed feelings about the budget deal. On the positive side, the budget includes a historic \$850 million dollar increase for K-12 education funding. Because most of this new money will move through the state's fair-funding formula, \$193 million will go to the School District of Philadelphia!

The budget also includes big investments for early childhood education. An estimated 2,500 more children will be able to enroll in quality pre-K programs. There is also bonus money to help hire and retain early childhood educators, and parents will be able to take advantage of the state's first-ever childcare tax credit. This program will provide a tax credit of up to \$315 for one child and \$630 for two or more children.

I'm also excited that the budget includes a one-time \$100 million dollar investment in parks and recreation centers and an 11% increase to the public library subsidy. I know that city libraries and rec centers are underfunded and frequently short of staff. I've been fighting in Harrisburg for more state funding because I know how important libraries, parks, and recreation centers are, and I believe that our libraries and recreation centers should be open seven days a week, including evenings and weekends.

I'm also glad that there is \$105 million for violence intervention and prevention grants. These programs employ community members who are trained in intervention techniques. These folks identify and engage those with a high-risk of violence and de-escalate situations before they spiral out of control. These programs are crucial to saving lives and reducing gun violence in Philadelphia and across the commonwealth.

Another program I've advocated for will help seniors and people with disabilities. There will be a one-time 70% bonus to the 2022 Property Tax/Rental Rebate. I know that increasing property taxes and rent have made it hard for people on fixed incomes to stay in their homes, which is why I fought and helped win this money for our older residents and people with disabilities.

I'm also excited to see that there is \$125 million dollars allocated in the budget for the bipartisan Whole Home Repairs program. This new program will make it possible for Pennsylvania homeowners and small landlords to apply for grants to make critical repairs. It also will help preserve Pennsylvania's aging housing stock, create jobs, lower energy costs, and keep people healthy because they will be able to repair homes before conditions become unsafe.

2022-23 PA BUDGET

Wins + Missed Opportunities

HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Record increase in **K-12 public education spending** including \$193 million for Philadelphia
- ✓ \$100 million for **State Parks and Community Recreation Centers**
- ✓ \$105 million for **community violence intervention** programs
- ✓ \$125 million to kickstart the **Whole Home Repairs program**

LOWLIGHTS

- ✗ An enormous, unnecessary **reduction to the corporate tax rate**
- ✗ A large increase in PA's **school voucher program**
- ✗ No dedicated funding for **school facility repairs**



On the downside, the legislature passed an enormous, unneeded tax cut for corporations that will reduce revenue for years to come. I find it outrageous that the legislature would prioritize corporate tax cuts when families are struggling with the cost of housing, food, energy, child care, and gas. It's especially outrageous when 73% of corporations active in the state, including most highly profitable multinational corporations, pay NO corporate taxes to our state at all. Simple changes to the tax code would close loopholes and force big corporations to pay their fair share, but those changes were not included in this budget.

I'm also troubled that the legislature expanded the state's school voucher program by 41%. This program diverts taxpayer money to private schools that can refuse any student for any reason and have no performance or financial accountability standards.

Finally, I remain dismayed that the legislature did not include dedicated funding for school facility repairs. Frankly, it's tragic that if you are born in the wrong zip code, you may go to a school that's dangerous because it is full of lead, asbestos and rodents or is lacking heat in the winter or air conditioning in the summer. The legislature should have used some of the billions of dollars we have to fix school buildings!

Grants for our Community!

This spring I've secured over **\$500,000** in grants for local projects in South Philadelphia!

- ✦ **Edward O'Malley Athletic Association** will receive **\$212,000** for roof repair and air conditioning at their 2nd and Moore recreation center.
- ✦ **F. S. Key School** at 8th and Wolf will receive **\$125,000** to create a new playground space.
- ✦ **South Philadelphia Older Adult Center** at Passyunk and Dickinson will receive **\$25,000** to make upgrades to their kitchen.
- ✦ **A S. Jenks School** at 13th and Porter will receive **\$150,000** to create a new playground space.
- ✦ **Whitman Library** at 2nd and Snyder will receive **\$20,000** to help with programming costs.
- ✦ **Fumo Family Library** at Broad and Ritner was awarded **\$15,000** for library programming.



ONGOING GUN VIOLENCE

Like most Philadelphians, I'm horrified, frustrated, and exhausted by the ongoing gun violence in our city and country. People have the right to enjoy public outdoor events and moments of joy, including large gatherings to celebrate and socialize with neighbors. The right to own deadly weapons should NOT override the fundamental right that seniors, children, and people of all ages have to live freely, to enjoy the city, and to gather with friends. In order to save lives and build stronger communities, we need to reduce the accessibility and number of weapons and invest in people and neighborhoods.

In Harrisburg, House Democrats used special parliamentary procedures to bring a package of gun control bills to the floor for a debate and vote. These bills would mandate the safe storage of firearms, close loopholes that allow gun purchases with no background checks, require people to report lost or stolen guns to

law enforcement, allow courts to temporarily remove guns from people in crisis, ban the purchase of military-grade weapons, and allow cities and towns to pass their own gun restrictions. These commonsense measures are supported by most Pennsylvanians, but Republicans, unified and in the majority, voted them down.

I've also been pushing for the legislature to use our budget surplus to create the kind of communities where violence is rare. We could invest in education, after school programs, libraries, job training, housing, health care, parks, and community-based violence interruption programs. I'm proud that I was able to win some funding for these programs in budget negotiations. We still need more money, and these investments will take time to work—but they will work.



In April, I met with the South 7th Street Safety Task Force, a partnership of community groups, business owners, police, and legislators.

DO YOU NEED HELP WITH CITY SERVICES?



Do you have issues with potholes, broken street lights, abandoned vehicles, or trash?

These and more city issues can be addressed right here at our office! Join us as staff members from City Hall hold remote service hours at 9th & Ritner! Call 215-271-9190 to make an appointment.



DEFENDING REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

June's US Supreme Court decision to overturn *Roe vs. Wade* was more than just an attack on abortion rights, it was an assault on the health of women – and all people – and a blow for equality. Because Gov. Wolf has vowed to veto any new restrictions on abortion in Pennsylvania, the Court's decision will not immediately affect abortion rights here. For now, abortion remains safe and legal in Pennsylvania.

On the night of the *Dobbs* decision, I gathered with thousands of other Philadelphians at City Hall to express our outrage and send the message that when our rights are under attack, we must stand up and fight back. The next day in Harrisburg, I rallied with my Democratic colleagues and vowed to do everything I can to protect reproductive rights. The following week, I penned an editorial in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* calling out our society's failure to respect the lives, the bodies, and the work of women.

On the last day of the legislative session, Republicans

in Harrisburg voted to advance a state constitutional amendment to eliminate a right to abortion care in Pennsylvania. I voted against this amendment and gave a speech on the floor, but the measure still passed. However, this amendment is not law yet! To enact the amendment, the legislature will need to vote again in favor of the language next year, and voters would later need to vote in favor of the amendment as a ballot question. What is clear is that PA Republicans are laying the groundwork for more extreme restrictions on abortion without any exceptions for life-threatening circumstances.

I am currently working with other members of the Women's Health Caucus to introduce a package of bills that would protect abortion rights for Pennsylvanians and protect the rights of those from other states who come to Pennsylvania seeking a safe abortion. So long as I am your state representative, I will do everything I can to preserve the rights of women and all people to make decisions about their own bodies.



I spoke at an abortion rally on the Capitol steps.



I stood with colleagues to condemn the decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*.



I spoke in the House of Representatives against Republican attempts to outlaw abortion in Pennsylvania.

IN THE COMMUNITY



Our community lunch at Murphy Rec in April was a great time! We processed several senior SEPTA passes, checked for unclaimed property, and were joined by Jefferson Hospital to vaccinate and boost folks!



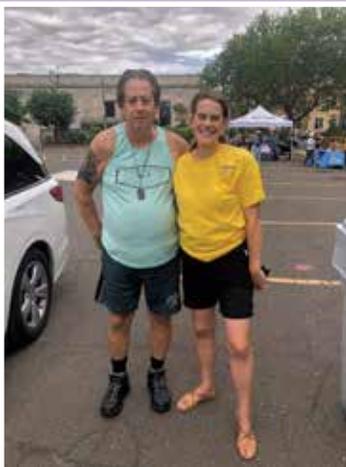
In May, at FS Key School, I organized a rally of students, educators, legislators, and union leaders to fight for more school funding.



5th and Snyder received a new street sign celebrating Mt. Enon's Baptist Church founder, Rev. Enos Mackey. This is a historical landmark in our very own community!



In April, I stopped by the South Philadelphia Older Adult Center to talk with staff and seniors. I got a chance to call bingo numbers and help folks apply for SEPTA Senior transit passes.



Shred-A-Palooza made a comeback this June! My office staff and I helped residents from across the district safely dispose of their identifying paperwork.



I joined SEAMAAC for their "Message to the Future" event, a wonderful time celebrating resiliency.



I joined the Southeast Youth Athletic Association for their baseball opening night! With the help of state funding I brought back, lights were installed to ensure a safe environment for young people to play after dark. Thank you coaches!

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 **Do you need a SEPTA Senior Fare Card?**

Our office can process applications and renewals. If you are 65+ you are eligible. There's no charge to get one, and it allows you to ride all of SEPTA for free! Just stop by our office on the corner of 9th and Ritner Streets. For questions, call us at **215-271-9190** or email us at **RepFiedler@PAHouse.net**.

 **ELIZABETH FIEDLER**
STATE REPRESENTATIVE



REP. ELIZABETH FIEDLER

184th Legislative District

**Fall Remote Office Hours:
Bringing State Services to You!**

Whitman Council

3rd and Porter St.

Sep. 15, Oct. 20, Nov. 17, Dec. 15
11am-1pm

South Philly Older Adult Center

Passyunk Ave. and Dickinson St.

Sep. 16, Oct. 21, Nov. 18, Dec. 16
11am-1pm