



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

PETER G. SCHWEYER

22ND LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

325 Irvis Office Bldg. • P.O. Box 202022 • Harrisburg, PA 17120-2022 • (717) 787-2909 • Fax: (717) 787-2176

1501 Lehigh St., Suite 206 • Allentown, PA 18103 • (610) 791-6270 • Fax: (610) 791-6274 • *Se habla Español*

RepSchweyer@pahouse.net • www.RepSchweyer.com

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DEAR NEIGHBOR,

There is no question 2020 has been one of the most challenging years in recent history for all of us due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This deadly virus caused us to make extremely vital and difficult sacrifices to curb the spread and protect our more vulnerable loved ones and neighbors.

Throughout the pandemic, my colleagues and I in the House of Representatives have been hard at work passing legislation that protects essential workers and first responders, and helps small business owners and families who are enduring financial hardships.

As we continue the reopening process across Pennsylvania, please continue doing your part to keep your loved ones, friends and neighbors safe. Wear your mask, practice social distancing, and wash your hands thoroughly and frequently.

This newsletter will provide you updates on my work in 2020, important information regarding COVID-19 and state programs, and the work ahead of us as we move toward the year's end. I also invite you to get updates on my legislative Facebook page and through my e-news, which you can sign up for by contacting my district office or visiting my website.

My office is always committed to serving you. We are here to help navigate state programs, locate resources, make referrals and share information. Please don't hesitate to reach out for help by phone at 610-791-6270, or email RepSchweyer@pahouse.net with any questions and concerns.

In service,

Peter G. Schweyer
State Representative

SWEEPING POLICE REFORM LEGISLATION



PA Police Reforms Signed into Law

MANDATORY sharing of employment records for law enforcement so municipalities can make fully-informed hiring decisions

MANDATORY training for police in:

- Recognizing + reporting child abuse
- Interacting with people of diverse racial, ethnic + economic backgrounds
- Use of force
- De-escalation and harm reduction techniques
- Instruction in community + cultural awareness
- Implicit bias
- Procedural justice + reconciliation techniques
- Trauma-informed care + recognizing PTSD

MANDATORY evaluation of police for PTSD within 30 days of use of lethal force or if recommended by supervisor or chief

I proudly joined the House and Senate in unanimously passing a sweeping package of bills, which were signed into law by Gov. Tom Wolf. They are aimed at reducing police brutality, while helping police departments ensure accountability and transparency from within and strengthening relationships with the community they are protecting and serving.

Act 57 requires sharing of employment records so municipalities can make fully informed hiring decisions for law enforcement positions and requires a law enforcement agency which hires an officer with prior disciplinary/criminal issues to explain the reasoning for the hire.

Act 59 requires updated municipal police training in several areas reflecting current needs, post-traumatic stress disorder evaluations of municipal police under certain circumstances and additional law enforcement training on identifying and reporting child abuse.

In addition, I was pleased to host a joint policy hearing with the Legislative Black Caucus and the Democratic Policy Committee where we heard from community members regarding further police reform.





BUDGET UPDATE

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the legislature passed a temporary budget, which was signed by Gov. Tom Wolf. This stopgap budget fully funds education at last year's levels so our school districts know their state funding allocation and can prioritize their budgets and make important plans to educate our children during this pandemic. The stopgap budget also keeps all other state programs and services funded for five months. The budget needed to be done this way because the pandemic restricted the necessary revenue to put a budget plan together for the full 2020-21 fiscal year. Once we have a better understanding of the financial impact the pandemic has had on our revenue, we will revise the spending plan for the remaining seven months.

The budget also utilizes federal CARES Act funds to offset the financial hardships COVID-19 is having on Pennsylvanians. Here is a breakdown of CARES Act money:

- \$870M for business and local services relief
- \$632M for vulnerable Pennsylvanians and long-term care centers and nursing homes, which have been impacted the most by COVID-19
- \$347M for schools
- \$225M for food and shelter resources
- \$150M for worker protections
- \$30M for health care initiatives

Through additional legislation, \$500 million will help Pennsylvania's long-term care providers and \$50 million will provide direct financial relief to fire and EMS companies.

REPEALING PA FIREWORKS LAW



Since Act 43 of 2017 became law, Pennsylvanians have been able to purchase and set off fireworks. The motivation for passing Act 43 was to allow residents to enjoy using more powerful fireworks than sparklers and spinners, while generating revenue for the commonwealth.

For those of us living in Allentown, we have seen a terrible increase in the use of "illegal" fireworks in our neighborhoods. Like many of you who have reached out to me, I have also been awakened at all hours of the night to the loud barrage of fireworks coming from near my house. This isn't just affecting people's sleep; it is also driving pets crazy and is even triggering PTSD in some folks. And this goes way beyond Allentown. I have heard from my colleagues from Philadelphia and Erie, Pittsburgh and Easton, Harrisburg and Reading and all points in between about the same fireworks problem in their communities.

I have introduced legislation that would repeal the most recent changes made to the fireworks law and reinstate the provisions as they existed before Act 43. Nothing in my bill would prohibit Pennsylvanians from using novelty fireworks or enjoying fireworks shows in their community to celebrate the 4th of July or other holidays and special events; rather, it would provide all municipalities more power to enforce the law and help restore quality of life back to city residents.



Small Business Relief for those impacted by COVID-19



\$100 million for small (25 or fewer employees, less than \$1 million in revenue), main street businesses that were hurt because of COVID-19



\$100 million for historically disadvantaged businesses

- For PA businesses with 25 or fewer employees and which is owned, managed, and operated by those in socially & economically disadvantaged groups.

A SECOND APPLICATION WINDOW IS EXPECTED TO OPEN IN AUGUST

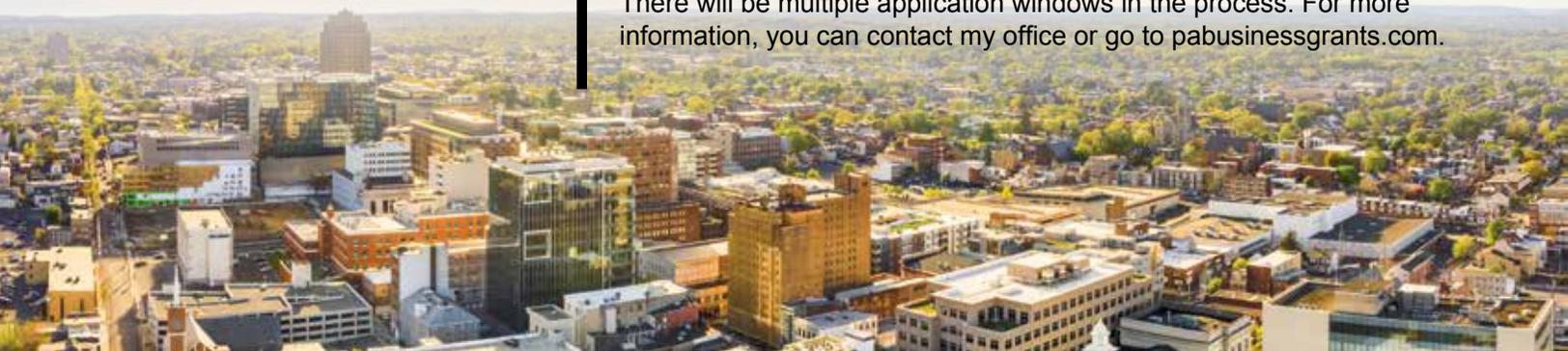
- Customer-facing businesses (barbers, salons, retailers, restaurants, day care, gym, food + hospitality, and others) are especially encouraged to apply.

Get more info  [PAbusinessgrants.com](https://pabusinessgrants.com)

Small businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic should apply for this relief funding.

The program offers grants of up to \$50,000 to eligible businesses and will be distributed by Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs).

There will be multiple application windows in the process. For more information, you can contact my office or go to pabusinessgrants.com.



RENT AND MORTGAGE ASSISTANCE

FROM THE PENNSYLVANIA HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY (PHFA)
Now accepting applications from renters and homeowners:
PA Eviction and Foreclosure Protection Program

- \$175 million in housing assistance grants for renters and homeowners.
- Up to 6 months of assistance available between March 1 and December 30, 2020.
- Applications are accepted through September 30, 2020.

TO FILL OUT YOUR APPLICATION OR LEARN MORE, VISIT PHFA.ORG/PACARES

\$175 million in federal CARES Act money has been allocated to provide rent and mortgage assistance.

The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency announced that renters and homeowners financially impacted by COVID-19 are now able to access applications for rent and mortgage relief. Completed applications will be accepted through September 30.

Full details on eligibility and more are available at www.phfa.org/pacares.

MY OFFICE IS OPEN BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

OUR OFFICE IS NOW OPEN
BUT NOT CURRENTLY ACCEPTING WALK INS
PLEASE CALL TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

MONDAY - FRIDAY
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Masks are required!

610-791-6270

RepSchweyer@PAHouse.net

My Allentown office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. To practice social distancing, we are asking everyone to call ahead to make an appointment.

To make an appointment, please call the office at 610-791-6270 or email RepSchweyer@pahouse.net.

Please make sure you are wearing a mask while in the office. Also, we ask that anyone who is not feeling well or may have been recently exposed to someone with COVID-19 to contact us by telephone or email for assistance.

PROPERTY TAX/RENT REBATE PROGRAM

My office can help residents 60 or older; widows and widowers 50 or older; and people with disabilities 18 or older file for a Property Tax/Rent Rebate. Due to financial hardships brought on by the pandemic, rebates are being processed and distributed on a first-in, first-out basis. The deadline for a 2019 PTRR application submission is December 31, 2020. Please call my office to learn more and to schedule an appointment.



ASD TO START 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR VIRTUALLY



Recently, Allentown School District Superintendent Thomas Parker advised families about the district's plan to reopen schools virtually at the start of the 2020-21 school year due to the continued uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. I applaud the district's decision because the health and safety of the districts' students, faculty and staff are the highest priority.

The district is planning to launch a Virtual Campus on Tuesday, September 8. It is a state-of-the-art, innovative learning opportunity so students and staff can continue learning and teaching during the pandemic. ASD has been awarded \$9.8 million in federal CARES Act funds to assist the district in not only creating the Virtual Campus, but to ensure all students in the district have access to computers and the tools they need to succeed by remote learning.

ASD says it plans to begin face-to-face instruction at a to-be-determined date later in the fall.

COLLECTING MASKS FOR ASD STUDENTS

- My office is collecting new, unused face masks for students at the Allentown School District.
- Masks can be dropped off at my district office at: 1501 Lehigh St., Suite 206, Allentown.
- Masks should be reusable cloth, and both child and adult sizes are needed.



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22ND LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

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Join my email list to receive my
monthly digital newsletter.

www.RepSchweyer.com/EmailSignUp

FOLLOW ME ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

  **@RepSchweyer**

lpo.km.0820



SUMMER 2020

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MY OFFICE CAN HELP YOU WITH:

- Car registrations, special tags, disability placards, titles and driver's license applications
- Information on financial assistance for higher education
- Real ID
- Renewal of state-issued licenses or certifications
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate applications and problems or questions
- Problems or questions about the state lottery
- PACE prescription-drug cards for senior citizens
- Assistance in obtaining and completing state forms
- Voter registration and absentee and mail-in 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 -- 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
- 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 or government-related service, please feel free to contact my office at 610-791-6270 to schedule an appointment.