



State Representative

VALERIE GAYDOS

44th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

Gaydos Urges Voters to be Informed Prior to May 18 Primary!

Your voice in government should be represented at all times, including during states of emergency. Our system of checks and balances that were initially designed in the Pennsylvania Constitution must be preserved. In the upcoming May 18 primary election, voters will be asked to vote on four ballot questions, including three proposed amendments to the state Constitution and one referendum regarding funding for first responders.

- **Questions #1 and #2:** The first two questions propose constitutional amendments to address the state's handling of future declarations. The first proposes allowing the General Assembly to vote to end emergency declarations and restrictions on citizens. The second proposes limiting emergency declarations by a governor to a maximum of 21 days unless there is legislative approval representing your voice to terminate or extend a disaster emergency.
- **Question #3:** This question addresses the Declaration of Rights section in the state Constitution and asks voters if it should be amended to prohibit the denial or limitation of a person's rights based on race or ethnicity. This proposed amendment would signify that freedom from discrimination based on race or ethnicity is an essential principle of liberty and free government. It would apply to all state, county and local governmental entities in the Commonwealth, and would guarantee equality of rights under the law.
- **Question #4:** The fourth question is a referendum seeking approval to provide loans to paid municipal fire departments and emergency medical services companies to improve those operations.

Can you vote on a referendum question regardless of party registration?

The answer is YES! The referendum allows citizens from any political affiliation to vote on referendum questions which directly ask the electorate for approval or rejection.

Rep. Gaydos encourages all to voice your opinion on May 18.

You may learn more about these ballot questions at www.pahousegop.com/voiceofthepeople.

***State COVID-19 Relief Package
SIGNED INTO LAW***

The first order of business in 2021 – and the first bill to become law – was a COVID-19 relief package that recognizes the extreme challenges faced by small businesses, educational institutions and Pennsylvania families as a result of the ongoing pandemic. Rep. Gaydos was a strong supporter of this legislation.

Act 1 of 2021 allocates \$145 million in grants for the hard-hit restaurant and hospitality industry; \$570 million for rental and utility assistance; and \$197 million in funding for educational institutions, such as nonpublic schools, career and technical schools, charter schools for the deaf and blind, approved private schools, community colleges and the PA State System of Higher Education. Act 1 also clarifies that funding received by businesses from the federal Paycheck Protection Program is not subject to state income taxes.

Business owners should contact Pittsburgh's certified economic development organizations at 412-315-6442 to learn more about this funding and other programs. Rental and utility assistance was allocated to counties for distribution as well.

Dear Friends,

What a year it has been! Throughout the current COVID-19 pandemic, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives has worked hard to help the Commonwealth and its residents under some challenging circumstances. Some of the measures taken which helped the Commonwealth operate safely by providing immediate assistance to hospitals and frontline workers, ensuring that our schools are still teaching and our kids have educational opportunities, accelerating property tax and rent rebates, creating the COVID-19 Vaccine Joint Task Force to distribute vaccines to our residents more efficiently, and voting to allow businesses to safely reopen. We recognize that much more needs to be done and we are pledging to continue pushing forward on these and all fronts.

As of this writing, more than 500,000 Pennsylvanians have permanently lost their jobs, and many businesses have shutdown. People still can get COVID-19. Nonetheless, it continues to be my mission to not only help boost Pennsylvania's economy and ensure that our citizens can live safely, but also work to guard against drastic and inconsistent shutdowns in future emergencies.

Another important focus of the Legislature this session is the election process. Many of you have reached out to me to express your concerns about the integrity of elections and to ask for investigations to be done to preserve our democracy. The House State Government Committee is currently conducting hearings to make recommendations on legislation to address inconsistencies and other concerns related to last fall's election. The integrity of our elections is and will continue to be a priority.

Having been re-elected to my second full term as your state representative, I am honored to represent the 44th District to the best of my abilities. There is a lot of work to do, and I am up for the challenge.

Please continue to stay safe and be well!

Sincerely,

Valerie Gaydos

Valerie Gaydos

***For more information
visit me online!***



RepGaydos.com



Twitter.com/RepGaydos



Facebook.com/RepGaydos



Instagram.com/RepGaydos

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Gaydos Introduces Legislation to Study COVID-19 Impact on Education

When COVID-19 made its impact on the Commonwealth, our teachers stepped up to the plate to offer alternative methods of teaching for their communities. As a result, we saw many different approaches to teaching and learning which included going to full remote learning, doing a hybrid of remote and some classroom teaching, or a combination of the two.

We owe it to our students to find out what has worked the best. Rep. Gaydos has introduced two bills that would study the impact the coronavirus pandemic is having on student learning and the education system.

House Bill 228 would direct the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study and issue three reports on the academic impact of the virus on the state's students. The legislation would include the methods of instruction which are most successful.

An initial report would be submitted 30 days after the passage of this legislation, followed by an interim report submitted six months later and a final report submitted at the end of the year.

House Bill 229 would direct the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study and issue a report on the fiscal impact on schools, including but not limited to the loss of revenue and increased school taxes as a result of COVID-19. The report will be submitted to the majority and the minority chairs of the House and Senate Education committees within six months of the effective date of the bill.

As we navigate through this unprecedented time, it will be very important to know the effects, both positive and negative, that the federal, state and local responses, mitigation efforts and guidance have had on our students and education system.

Gaydos Introduces Legislation to Create Transparency Related to Patient Cost, Coverage, Benefits

Rep. Gaydos has introduced legislation that would enable health care providers to find and share lower-cost or clinically appropriate prescription alternatives and payment options with enrollees right in the doctor's office.

House Bill 882 would create transparency in benefits, eligibility and costs for prescription drugs by requiring health plans and pharmacy benefit managers (PBM) to share certain information with enrollees and health care providers upon request.

Prescription drug abandonment is a growing concern in the medical community and is a leading cause of drug nonadherence. Sharing this information directly during a visit to the doctor will help ensure that patients can make informed decisions about their medication

purchases. The information available must be current and include cost-sharing information such as what the plan enrollee will pay, utilization management requirements such as prior authorization, and information on appropriate alternatives.

While many factors may contribute to a patient not picking up a prescribed medication, a primary reason for prescription abandonment and nonadherence is believed to be the out-of-pocket cost of medications and not knowing the cost before arriving at the pharmacy to pick it up and pay for it.

House Bill 882 has been referred to the House Insurance Committee for consideration.

Gaydos' Legislation to Prevent Improper Payments Within State Programs Passes House

Legislation sponsored by Rep. Gaydos that would impart greater accountability in government by requiring state agencies to review all of their programs and expenditures to assess their susceptibility to improper payment – which is defined as an overpayment, an underpayment, a payment for an ineligible service or a payment to someone who was ineligible to receive it –overwhelmingly passed the House.

House Bill 104 is all about using our tax dollars wisely. This

legislation would specifically require the inspector general to review at least one state agency per year starting in 2022.

Under the bill, if an agency has failed to reduce the improper payment rate five fiscal years after the inspector general's review, the governor will move funds from the agency into budgetary reserve until the agency meets the efficiency standards put in place.

The bill is in the Senate for consideration.

TIME TO REDUCE THE SIZE OF STATE LEGISLATURE!

Pennsylvania has the second-largest legislature in the United States. It is also a full-time legislature. Reducing its size will streamline the legislative process, make it easier for lawmakers to reach consensus and save taxpayers' money. In addition, it will promote public confidence in the state House,

Rep. Gaydos has introduced legislation to reduce the size of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives from 203 to 151 members.

With the constant improvement and evolution of technology, legislators can respond to constituents more quickly and efficiently than ever. Using existing technology would make it possible to reduce the size of the Legislature without sacrificing efficiency, communication with constituents or increasing expenses.

At a salary of \$90,335 for each rank-and-file House member, the savings on salary alone would come to \$4.7 million. Add in benefits and per diems, and the total savings could top \$15 million annually.

Because such a change would necessitate an amendment to the Pennsylvania Constitution, identical versions of the bill would need to pass through the General Assembly in back-to-back sessions. At that point, the public would vote on the amendment in a statewide referendum.

House Bill 482 is now with the House State Government Committee for consideration.

Calling All Residents Living in Planned Communities

If you live in a Planned Community and fall under the rule of a Homeowners Association (HOA), the House could use your input!

Recently, Rep. Gaydos introduced **House Resolution 69** that would direct the Joint State Government Commission to study common interest owned communities (CIOC). The study would focus on the impact the communities have on local governments and Pennsylvania, the challenges facing the residents and governing bodies of these CIOCs, and the opportunities for the Commonwealth to assist local governments and CIOCs to deliver adequate services to their residents at an affordable cost.

In 2009, the House passed House Resolution 350 directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a similar study. Released in 2011, it provided a more robust picture of the planned communities, cooperatives and condominiums, or CIOCs, that are located in Pennsylvania.

Gaydos believes that new rules for private communities are needed as they have evolved over the years. Many residents have voiced their complaints about association fees and limited services, including a lack of full police coverage, road repairs and trash pickup.

Participate in a survey to strengthen the crafting of the resolution regarding CIOCs and HOA fees. Here is the link to take part: <http://www.repgaydos.com/Form/rtscic21>.

GAYDOS IS FOCUSED ON BOLSTERING PENNSYLVANIA’S ECONOMY

During the month of February, the governor addressed the General Assembly highlighting what he feels are the key elements that our state budget should include – some, according to Rep. Gaydos, would devastate our already-hurting economy and small businesses.

One of the elements he shared in his budget address was his proposal to enact new taxes in the Commonwealth. First, he wants to increase the Personal Income Tax (PIT) by almost 50% - raising that rate from 3.07% to 4.49%! Knowing that so many Pennsylvanians are struggling during the coronavirus pandemic, we should be talking about reducing financial burdens, not additional taxes.

The governor continued the theme of additional taxes, as he revealed that he wants to triple the tax already paid by the natural gas industry. This proposal adds to the Commonwealth’s debt by borrowing \$3.5 billion and uses the new tax revenue to pay back that loan. Borrowing, taxing and additional spending is a prime example of irresponsible government. Furthermore, we continue to drive away business investment.

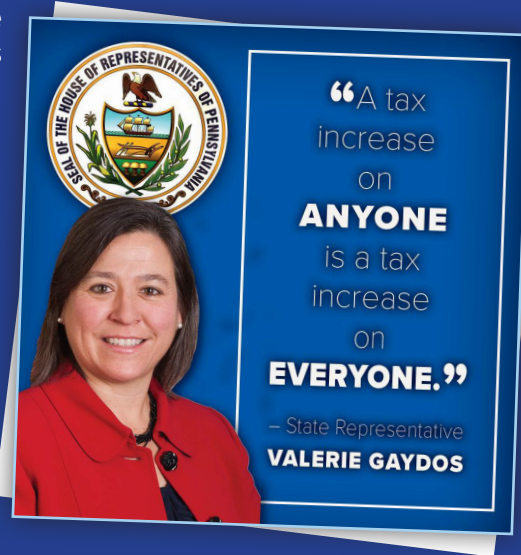
Rather than thinking of ways to further tax businesses, which will undoubtedly pass those higher fees on to the consumers, Gaydos feels the governor should be thinking about the

best way to protect the health of Pennsylvanians and strengthening our economy.

Gaydos has been working with members of the House Appropriations Committee in crafting the 2021-22 spending plan. The committee has held hearings with state agencies to prioritize budget requests. Time was spent in each hearing to question administration officials about their expenditures, policies and accountability.

Members on the Appropriations Committee are responsible for developing a budget to support our economic recovery and to ensure we do not ignore the hardships being felt across the Commonwealth.

As always, Gaydos and her colleagues continue to call upon the governor to focus on what matters most and that is the lives and livelihoods of ALL Pennsylvanians.



Out and About



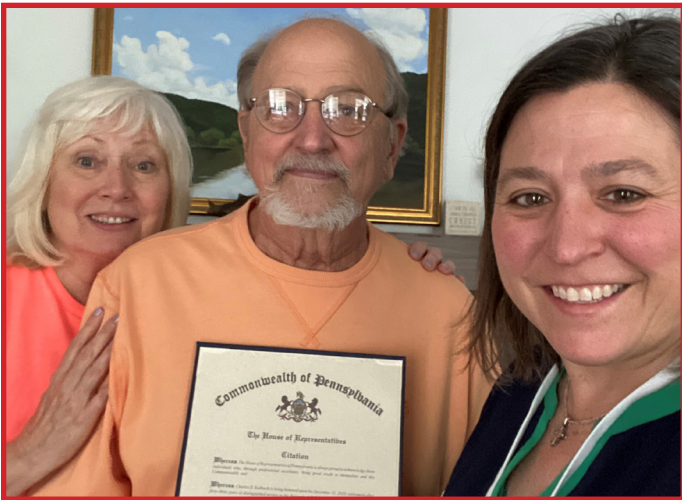
In January, at the Forum Auditorium in Harrisburg, Rep. Gaydos attended the swearing in ceremony for Stacy Garrity, who took the oath of office as Pennsylvania’s 78th state treasurer.



Rep. Gaydos had the pleasure of presenting a House of Representatives citation to Findlay Township Police Chief Jesse Lesko who is retiring after 35 years as a police offer, 34 years with Findlay Township.



Rep. Gaydos was the special guest of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) virtual student’s forum. Students from the Quaker Valley and Avonworth school districts participated. Gaydos acknowledged the efforts of Lena Hannah, PSBA advocacy ambassador, who coordinated the event, as well as the participating students.



It was Rep. Gaydos’ honor to present a House of Representatives citation to Charlie Kulbacki who is retiring after 43 years of service to Bell Acres Borough in Sewickley. Charlie and his wife, Janine, recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.



PENNSYLVANIA STATE REPRESENTATIVE
VALERIE GAYDOS

SPRING 2021

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
HARRISBURG, PA
PERMIT NO. 432

NEW LOCATION!

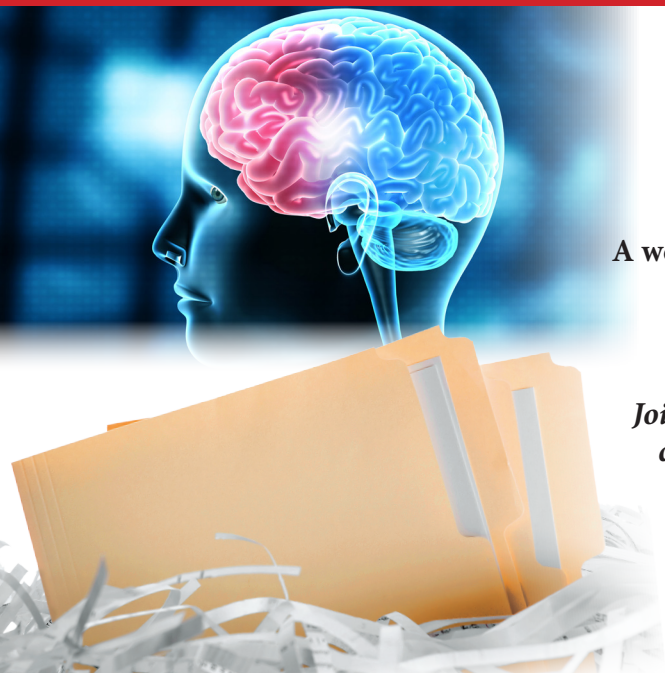
Moon Township:

1005 Beaver Grade Road,
Suite 106
Moon Township, PA 15108
412-262-3780
FAX: 412-262-3783

Capitol:

Room 428, Irvis Office Building
PO Box 202044
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2044
717-787-6651
FAX: 717-782-2889

Upcoming Events *in the 44th Legislative District*



HEALTHY LIVING FOR YOUR BRAIN AND BODY

“Tips from the Latest Research”

Thursday, June 3, from Noon — 1 p.m.

A webinar sponsored by Rep. Gaydos, YMCA and Alzheimer’s Association

SHREDDING EVENT

Join Rep. Gaydos as she hosts a **FREE** shredding event to give residents a chance to safeguard themselves against identity theft by having their personal documents securely destroyed.

The event will take place on

Saturday, June 12, from 9 a.m. — 11 a.m.

at the Moon Middle School Parking Lot, Tiger Trail, Moon Township

Sponsored by Rep. Gaydos and Moon Township

SENIOR CITIZENS EXPO *Coming in the Fall!*

Rep. Gaydos will be hosting a Senior Citizens Expo during the fall season. The date and time is still to be determined. This is a very informative event. There will be dozens of vendors offering information on services and programs tailored to the senior community.



In March, Rep. Gaydos and colleagues Sen. Devlin Robinson and Rep. Anita Kulik visited the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden in Oakdale to tour the new Welcome Center. Pittsburgh Botanic Garden inspires people to value plants, garden design and the natural world by cultivating plant collections of the Allegheny Plateau and temperate regions, creating display gardens, conducting educational programs and conserving the environment.

We Have Moved!

With many questions and concerns regarding Pennsylvania’s small businesses, COVID-19 vaccine accessibility, unemployment compensation, and other state-related issues, please know that Rep. Gaydos and her staff are here to be of assistance during these difficult times.

Please contact Gaydos’ new district office, located at **1005 Beaver Grade Road, Suite 106, in Moon Township**, at **412-262-3780**. If her office is unable to help, the staff will direct you to someone who can.

Remember, Rep. Gaydos is available to serve constituents from the 44th Legislative District!