



Dear Friends,

Since the very beginning of this pandemic, my efforts have been focused solely on helping the citizens of Pennsylvania's 44th District navigate the difficult times ahead of us. My office has been open to serve constituents by appointment only.

I want to thank everyone in our communities for rising to the occasion and supporting one another in this historic time of need. Our medical providers, hospital staff, doctors and nurses, home care workers and all involved in providing health care deserve an incredible amount of respect and gratitude.

At the end of the day, we are all after the same thing—we want transparency in our government, and we want our citizens to be able to work and earn a living without having to risk their health. I have been fighting for you in Harrisburg, working to ensure openness, transparency and logic in the process of getting our state back on its feet.

I pledge to continue to work with Gov. Tom Wolf and to be a champion for transparency in our government. This pandemic isn't going to disappear. So, we must collaborate to find solutions. We must find a balanced path to recovery.

Sincerely,

Valerie Gaydos

REP. GAYDOS LEADS THE WAY FOR HEALTH REFORM IN PA

GAYDOS-SPONSORED PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICING BILL IS NOW LAW

Legislation that Rep. Gaydos sponsored to increase transparency and consumer choice in the prescription drug marketplace was recently signed into law as **Act 67 of 2020**.

There are many inexpensive, generic medicines for which an insurance co-pay can often be more expensive than if the patient simply pays out-of-pocket, bypassing their insurance company altogether. However, pharmacists were previously prohibited from informing their customers of lower-cost alternatives by a "gag clause" imposed by pharmacy benefit managers.

Gaydos' legislation removes this gag clause and will empower pharmacists to tell their customers everything they need to know in order to make an informed purchasing decision. The passage of this legislation is a huge win for the consumers of Pennsylvania, and the millions of senior citizens—many of whom are on fixed incomes—who rely on prescription medications for their health.

GAYDOS LEGISLATION FOR MEDICAL PAYMENT REFORM PASSES HOUSE

Rep. Gaydos' legislation to curb improper payments by Pennsylvania's Medicaid system passed the House and now heads to the Senate for consideration.

Her bill, **House Bill 2353**, would mirror a federal law to combat fraud and guarantee every Pennsylvanian in need gets the help they are entitled to without interruption or complication. The current pandemic amplifies what we all know to be true; when our state's citizens need help, we must act quickly to provide it.

Gaydos feels strongly that Pennsylvania operates the fastest-growing Medicaid system in the entire United States, and we owe it to our citizens to ensure the taxpayer money that funds this system is properly safeguarded and distributed to those who need assistance.

GAYDOS INTRODUCES LEGISLATION TO ASSIST SMALL BUSINESSES IN PROVIDING EMPLOYEE HEALTH CARE

Rep. Gaydos has introduced legislation designed to assist small businesses in providing health care benefits to their employees.

House Bill 2200 would provide a mechanism for employers to join together to offer quality health insurance as a benefit for their employees, some for the first time. When small businesses group together, they are able to spread out the risk across the group and negotiate for discounted health insurance coverage the same way businesses and puts the employer in a competitive position to maintain and attract a talented workforce.

The legislation is with the House Insurance Committee for consideration.

SIGN UP TO CONTINUE RECEIVING WEEKLY EMAIL UPDATES

Each week, Rep. Gaydos sends email updates about important legislation, events in the district, traffic updates and other information you will find helpful. It's simple to receive these updates directly. Just visit www.RepGaydos.com to subscribe to the email list.



IMPORTANT NUMBERS YOU CAN USE

Allegheny County Council: www.alleghenycounty.us/county-council, Phone: (412) 350-6490

Allegheny County Health Department: <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/healthdepartment/index.aspx>, Phone: 412-687-ACHD (2243)

Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging DHS Senior Line:

www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/About/Contact/SeniorLine.aspx, Phone: 800-344-4319

Dept of Labor and Industry Unemployment Questions: <https://www.dli.pa.gov/>, Phone: 888-313-7284

Department of Health COVID-19 Hotline: <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/>, Phone: 877-PA-HEALTH (3258)

Department of Humans Services Emotional Support Hotline: <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/>, Phone: 855-284-2494

State Rep. Valerie Gaydos: www.RepGaydos.com, Phone: 412-262-3780

REQUESTING TRANSPARENCY FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Rep. Gaydos has sought transparency and openness from the Wolf administration in identifying how decisions were made in response to COVID-19. Among the information she has fought to make public were the identities of the administration's unnamed "consultants," the process for reporting positive cases and the number of individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 but have since recovered.

The people of Pennsylvania deserve to know. Rep. Gaydos wrote a letter below to the governor asking for answers.



HELPING OUR HOSPITALS FIGHT COVID-19

Rep. Gaydos supported **House Bill 1232** to help Pennsylvania's frontline health care facilities by securing the necessary funding to purchase medical equipment and supplies for hospitals, nursing facilities, and emergency medical services to meet patient and staff needs to respond to COVID-19. This legislation was signed into law as **Act 10 of 2020**.

EXPANDING ANTIBODY TESTING

With Rep. Gaydos' support, the House passed **House Bill 2455** to provide for increased availability of COVID-19 antibody testing at local health facilities. Thanks to this legislation, more than 1 million Pennsylvanians have been tested for antibodies to the virus. This legislation was signed into law as **Act 70 of 2020**.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR OLDER ADULTS

The Pennsylvania Department of Aging has launched an online COVID-19 resource guide for older adults, their family members and caregivers. The guide includes information on meals, prescriptions, protective services, scams, and how to stay active and connected. Visit www.aging.pa.gov to access this helpful guide.

SECURITY, SANITATION GRANTS TO KEEP OUR SCHOOLS SAFE, CLEAN

School districts across the state have been invited to apply for grants from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency to help address COVID-19-related health and safety needs for the 2020-21 school year.

Under Act 30 of 2020, each school district is eligible for \$120,000 plus an amount based on its average daily membership. Intermediate units, area career and technical schools, charter schools, regional charter schools and cyber charter schools are eligible for \$90,000. School districts in the 44th Legislative District are set to receive the following amounts:

- Avonworth School District – **\$184,811**.
- Moon Area School District – **\$266,465**.
- West Allegheny School District – **\$249,330**.
- Quaker Valley School District – **\$191,369**.

Eligible uses for the funding include the purchase of cleaning and sanitizing products; training and professional development of staff on sanitation and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases; equipment purchases; modifying existing areas to support appropriate social distancing of students and staff; providing mental health services and supports; purchasing educational technology for distance learning; and other health and safety programs, items or services necessary to address COVID-19.

GAYDOS TO HELP SMALL BUSINESSES: EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE BILL PASSES HOUSE

Legislation sponsored by Rep. Gaydos to direct the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) to administer low-to no-interest emergency loans to businesses that are being hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, unanimously passed the House in July.

House Bill 2369 is an important piece of legislation because the many changes to daily life and business practices recommended or ordered to stem the spread of the virus, many hardworking families and small businesses in the 44th District and the Commonwealth are and will be expected to be severely and adversely impacted. Many businesses operate on fine margins and the prospect of losing even a day, let alone a week, a month or more of a consistent, businesses can translate into trouble times.

While there is support from the Small Business Administration (SBA) and some of it delivered through existing state programs, we at the state level need to do our part to ensure that our State's small businesses that are being hit hard by the coronavirus crises. These loans will come in two varieties, one that targets short-term bridge financing to get through this period - including meeting payroll, overhead, and other expenses; the other is a long-term resiliency loan that helps business recover from this over the months and years to come.

House Bill 2369 is now with the Senate for consideration.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in record-high unemployment rates as millions of Pennsylvanians are out of work, including many in our community. Rep. Gaydos and her staff are ready to assist you during this difficult time. During the COVID-19 pandemic, her office has assisted more than 500 constituents with unemployment compensation questions or concerns.

If you need any help, please contact her office at 412-262-3780.

ENHANCING COMMUNITY SAFETY THROUGH POLICE DIALOGUE

Recent national events have put a spotlight on the need to maintain open lines of communication among police departments, elected officials and the public they serve.

Rep. Gaydos voted in support of two bills to ensure police offers are properly vetted before hiring and then trained to appropriately interact with individuals of diverse backgrounds.

House Bill 1841 requires disclosure of information to a law enforcement agency and would permit a court to compel the release of the information if the employer fails to comply. The bill would also require the establishment of an electronic database to collect and maintain the separation records of law enforcement officers for use by other law enforcement agencies when hiring.

House Bill 1910 requires police officers to receive training on how to interact with individuals of diverse backgrounds; de-escalation, harm reduction and reconciliation techniques; and community and cultural awareness. It also covers the appropriate use of force, provides for mental health evaluations in certain situations, and requires child abuse awareness training for officers and magisterial district judges.

The governor signed the bills into law on July 14.

In addition, Rep. Gaydos recently held a meeting of the chiefs of police from the 44th District along with her Democratic colleague, Rep. Anita Kulik, to discuss community policing policies, standards, issues of community concern, and the ways to keep our communities safe and strong.

Photographed are (standing, from left): Chief Ron Manko of Sewickley Borough Police Department; Chief Ronald Denbow of Coraopolis Borough Police Department; Rep. Kulik; Rep. Gaydos; and Chief Joe Haney of Ohio Township Police Department.

In the front row: Chief Matthew Podsiadly of Scott Township Police Department; Chief Matt Preininger of Stowe Township Police Department; Chief Greg Seamon of Moon Township Police Department; Chief Jesse Lescko of Findlay Township Police Department; and Chief Timothy Westwood of Robinson Township Police Department.



PROPERTY TAX/RENT REBATE DEADLINE EXTENDED

The deadline for older adults and Pennsylvania residents with disabilities to apply for rebates on rent and property taxes paid in 2019 has been extended from June 30 to Dec. 31, 2020. Distribution began early this year due to COVID-19. Rebates are distributed in the order that they are received and processed.

Should you need any assistance filling out the application or any subsequent paperwork, Rep. Gaydos and her office staff are ready, willing and able to help you free of charge. Call 412-262-3780 if you need assistance.

COVID-19 RENT RELIEF AVAILABLE

Landlords and renters in Allegheny County who have lost income or become unemployed as a result of COVID-19 may qualify for up to \$1,700 in monthly rental assistance funds.

For more information and to apply, visit the county website at covidrentrelief.alleghenycounty.us or call 412-248-0021.



Rep. Gaydos was honored to participate in the garland cutting for the opening of Pittsburgh Botanic Garden "Garden of the Five Senses." A decade of partnering with our state and local governments has turned this brownfield into a statewide gem for everyone to enjoy. Pictured with the representative is Beth Exton, development director, Pittsburgh Botanic Garden.



Rep. Gaydos had a meeting with Bobby Patterson, president of the Sewickley Community Center to view renovations to its facility. Last year, she spearheaded a \$75,000 Economic Development Fund (GEDF) grant to help with construction to the roof, food bank, kitchen, day care and parking area. Everything is going well. The Sewickley Community Center has been serving the area since 1935.

RECOGNIZING OUR STATE'S EMS PROVIDERS

The House recently approved a resolution Rep. Gaydos introduced to recognize and honor the heroic efforts of our state's emergency medical services (EMS) personnel. House Resolution 796 was adopted by a unanimous vote.

As a former EMT with Valley Ambulance Authority in the 1980s, Rep. Gaydos knows firsthand the dedication and commitment these selfless Pennsylvanians exhibit day in and day out. They don't do it for recognition, but they deserve our recognition.

Rep. Gaydos also spearheaded funding for the Valley Ambulance Parking Lot and Helicopter Pad.

To all first responders and especially our wonderful EMS providers, Rep. Gaydos thanks you!

Rep. Gaydos recently helped provide meals to those in need during the COVID-19 crisis, partnering with the Crescent Township Police Department to prepare and distribute meals across Allegheny County.



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Moon Township, PA 15108
412-262-3780
FAX: 412-262-3783

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GAYDOS VOTES FOR STABILIZING BUDGET IN FACE OF COVID-19 UNCERTAINTY

Working to responsibly move the state forward during these uncertain times, the House approved a state budget for the first part of the 2020-21 fiscal year, which began July 1. The plan provides **certainty** and **stability** through November while we await more information about how revenues have been impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. With tax collection dates changed to July and August, we needed more time to ensure we have the data necessary to make smart budgeting decisions for the remainder of the fiscal year.

The House committed to a **full 12 months of funding** for our preK-12, special education, career and technical education and higher education as part of this year's budget. Getting our students back in their classrooms this fall is a top priority, and this budget provides the necessary resources to help our schools reopen safely. This budget also **fully funds several health and human services programs**. Most of the remaining functions are funded for a period of five months.

Signed into law on May 29, this year's budget allocates approximately \$25.8 billion and includes **no new or increased taxes**.

ELECTION REFORMS IN EFFECT FOR GENERAL ELECTION

Comprehensive reforms designed to encourage greater participation in our elections will be in place for the upcoming Tuesday, Nov. 3, General Election.

For the first time, voters may choose to cast their ballots by mail for no reason other than convenience. The ballots will work similarly to absentee ballots, but voters need not be out of town or otherwise unavailable to vote in person to qualify for a mail-in ballot.

The last day to apply for a mail-in or civilian absentee ballot is 5 p.m. the Tuesday before the election, which is Oct. 29. The completed ballot must be received via mail, or dropped off in person at your county elections office, by 8 p.m. on Election Day, Nov. 3. In addition, voters who have a permanent disability may ask to be placed on a permanent absentee voter list. Voters on this list will have an absentee ballot application mailed to them by the first Monday in February each year. If you complete and return the application, the county will send you ballots in the mail for all the elections that take place that year, as well as for any special election held through the third Monday in February of the next year.

You may apply for the mail-in or absentee ballots at <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/OnlineAbsenteeApplication/#/OnlineAbsenteeBegin>.

ELIGIBLE BUSINESSES CAN APPLY FOR HAZARD PAY GRANTS

Qualifying businesses can now apply for grants of up to \$3 million to provide hazard pay to their employees working in life-sustaining occupations.

The grants are funded by \$50 million from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Grant funds may be used by eligible businesses to provide hazard pay for direct, full-time and part-time employees earning less than \$20 per hour, excluding fringe benefits and overtime, for the 10-week period from Aug. 16 to Oct. 24. Applicants may apply for up to \$1,200 per eligible full-time equivalent (FTE) employee. Employers may apply for a grant to provide hazard pay for up to 500 eligible full-time equivalent employees per location.

Program inquiries may be directed to 717-787-6245 or ra-dcedcbf@pa.gov.

SAVING TAX DOLLARS THROUGH REFINANCING

Faced with the economic fallout of COVID-19 mitigation efforts, the General Assembly has passed legislation that would require a review of all Commonwealth debt obligations and outline refinancing options in a report to the General Assembly. The measure was signed into law as Act 37 of 2020.

The law would require the Pennsylvania Treasury to identify and review all outstanding Commonwealth debt obligations, including those held by authorities, commissions, agencies, boards and other state-authorized entities. The review would be in conjunction with the secretary of the budget, auditor general and the chairperson of any state entity with the power to issue debt. A report on the findings would be given to the General Assembly by Oct. 30.



Rep. Gaydos and her staff enjoyed a very big turnout for our recent shredding event. Co-sponsored by Findlay Township, this free event was important because it provided a secure way to shred documents that contain sensitive information, such as Social Security numbers or bank account numbers. Social distancing was also maintained in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Thank you to everyone who participated.