



# State Senator **KATIE MUTH**

Summer 2019

*Representing the 44th Senatorial District*



## Committee Assignments

I am pleased to announce my Senate committee assignments. I will serve as the **minority Chair of the Senate Committee on Urban Affairs and Housing**. It is an honor and a terrific responsibility to be minority chair of this committee. I am eager to bring new leadership to the committee and I am determined to be an advocate for community development and affordable housing for all Pennsylvanians. As chair, my priority is to collaborate with community leaders throughout Pennsylvania. Solutions must be grassroots-focused. We need to lead through listening.

My committee appointments also include the **Finance, Health and Human Services, Intergovernmental Operations, and State Government**. As a devoted advocate for working families, I am eager to serve my constituents as their voice on these committees. This is a chance to fight for commonsense solutions that put hardworking people and families first.

*Hello and thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter which details the progress that we are making together, since I was elected on November 6th of 2018 to represent the Pennsylvania State Senate's 44th District, covering parts of Montgomery, Chester and Berks Counties.*

*My name is Senator Katie Muth and I live in Royersford with my husband, Trevor, and my two dogs Vinny and Kermit. I was born and raised in western Pennsylvania where my father Scott has worked for 44 years in the industrial machine industry. My mother, Jennifer, was a nutritionist and worked for WIC, which provides supplemental nutrition services for mothers and infants. I attended Penn State where I earned a bachelor's degree in Athletic Training, and obtained my master's degree at A.T. Still University of Health Sciences in Mesa, Arizona.*

*On January 1st, I was sworn in as the new State Senator of the 44th State Senate District. I have endless gratitude for every person who gave their support, heart, and hustle to get me here. Thank you for believing in me and our mission to make Pennsylvania a place of progress and opportunity. Hardworking people and families across the Commonwealth deserve universal healthcare, quality education and legislators who aren't bought and paid for by corporations and special interests.*

*We have a lot of work to do and I am honored to be YOUR voice in the Pennsylvania State Senate. Let's get to work!*

*Our district office is open at 338 Main Street in Royersford and my staff is ready to help! To date, we have helped over 1,700 constituents! If you have a question on any state government issue, I'll try to answer it for you. And, if I don't have an answer, I'll work to get you one. If you have a problem or concern with any state government agency, please tell me about it. And, of course, your input is always welcome and appreciated on any legislative issue as I work to represent the interests of the people of the 44th District. So, please feel free to call, email, write or stop in. I look forward to hearing from you.*

**KATIE MUTH**  
PENNSYLVANIA STATE SENATOR

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

## healthcare • student debt crisis

### ■ Healthcare

I am a co-sponsor of SB50, which prohibits health insurance companies from using an individual's preexisting medical conditions to deny or exclude coverage under a health insurance policy.

I believe this legislation is important in order to prevent any future Governor from seeking a waiver that would allow insurance coverage that does not cover preexisting conditions to be sold through PA's ACA marketplace.

I have also co-sponsored SB51, in order to codify the federal essential health benefits (EHB) into state law. Before the ACA imposes EHB, three in five people's insurance policy did not provide maternity coverage and one in three policies did not cover substance abuse treatment.

Under our proposal, the ten essential health benefits (EHB) currently covered by the ACA would be placed into state law. The benefits our legislation would cover includes: ambulatory patient services; emergency services; hospitalization; maternity and newborn care; mental health and substance use disorder services including behavioral health treatment; prescription drugs; rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices; laboratory services; preventive and wellness services and chronic disease management; and pediatric services, including oral and vision care.

### Statute of Limitations- SB540

I along with members of the Senate Democratic Caucus introduced legislation to eliminate the statute of limitations for sexual offenses and open a window for civil liability.

SB 540 is a victim-centered bill that will finally allow all survivors to choose their pathway to healing and justice. Sexual violence and abuse is a public health crisis and we must stop this rape culture epidemic.

The bill would amend Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) to:

- eliminate the criminal and civil statute of limitations for ALL sexual abuse victims;
- provide a two year window for those whose claims have already expired with a six month delay for survivors who wish to voluntarily settle their claims outside the court system;
- void NDAs, contracts, settlements, or other tools that are contrary to the bill's prohibitions; and
- clarify the penalties for failing to report child abuse.



### ■ End Corruption. Increase Transparency- SB113

Hardworking people and families should not have to pay for the benefits of government employees who do not adhere to a high standard of ethics. The PA Senate voted unanimously on SB113, which amends the Public Employee Pension Forfeiture Act so that public employees are disqualified from receiving pension benefits if they plead guilty, no contest, or are convicted of any job-related felony offense.

I am proud to support legislation that ensures that taxpayer dollars won't be used for those that have taken advantage of our state. It is just another deterrent to keep our public employees accountable to the people.

### ■ Paid Sick Leave

Senator Vincent Hughes and I introduced SB13 aiming to provide mandatory paid sick leave to all Pennsylvania workers.

SB13 would create the Healthy Employee/Healthy Workplace Act, ensuring all Pennsylvania employees would have access to guaranteed, employer-paid sick leave. At least 400,000 workers would benefit from paid sick leave, particularly minimum wage and low-income workers.

Paid sick leave empowers workers to take better care of their health which ultimately leads to few absences and higher productivity.

### ■ Student Loan Debt Crisis

I know what it is like to struggle with the high cost of student debt in PA. The astronomical costs of higher education is hindering the potential of so many students who are now saddled with the worry and weight of debt. A bold and innovative plan to help students and their families save thousands of dollars, pay down crushing student loan debt and better deal with the high cost of borrowing was unveiled by Sens. Vincent J. Hughes, Lindsey Williams and I. Pennsylvania has the highest student debt per capita in the United States. Over 1.8 million residents carry student loan debt.

The plan, called the PA Student HELP (Higher Education Lending Protection) Act, is a multi-pronged effort which allows students to refinance high-interest debt and provide tax credits for those who have outstanding student loans. The plan includes incentives for employers to help pay down student loan debt of their employees. The program would also boost transparency by requiring higher ed institutions to present the estimated four-years cost of study upfront.



# KATIE MUTH

PENNSYLVANIA STATE SENATOR

*Around the 44th*



## Coffee with Katie

Earlier this year we launched a "Coffee with Katie" series throughout the district. To date, we have held 6 of these events, to hear constituents share their thoughts about issues that are important to them in an informal setting. I work for you, so I believe that it is critical that I bring your voice to Harrisburg with me each and every day.



## Read Across America

Thank you to Worcester Elementary for inviting me to read to the kindergarten class for Read Across America Day.



## Senior Expo



I was proud to see many organizations coming together to support healthy lifestyles, recreation, and practices for seniors at a Senior Expo hosted by Rep. Melissa Shusterman in Upper Providence. The event was a big success!

## Pajama Drive for Foster Kids

My office hosted a pajama drive for children in foster care. Many times when children are removed from their homes, they do not have much or any clothing with them. This clothing drive served as a way to provide some small comfort to the children in our communities that need it most.



## Blame the System not the Victim

April was Sexual Assault Awareness Month. I recently participated in a panel discussion along with Senator Maria Collett, Senator Tim Kearney, Christa Hayburn, Erin Milbourne, and LaQuisha Anthony focused on what we can do in our communities to combat sexual violence and victim shaming. I want to thank the panelists for sharing their stories in the hope that it will empower others to do the same.



## Town Halls

We have held 2 town halls throughout the 44th. If you did not have an opportunity to attend we are planning to have more in different locations throughout the district after budget hearings have concluded.



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

## ■ Minimum Wage

Citizens across District 44 and throughout the Commonwealth deserve to be paid a livable wage.

When jobs don't pay enough for our neighbors to afford the basics – things like food, car repairs and eyeglasses – it hurts the local economy. Wages are so low now that they don't even cover rent and the cost of getting around, forcing working people to rely on the local food bank to help make ends meet. Raising the wage can help restore spending on the basics and, in the process, boost the local economy.

The last minimum wage increase to match the federal rate in PA was back in 2009. The members of the State Legislature have since voted to raise their salary, in addition to cost of living adjustments every two years.

I am optimistic that a majority of my colleagues in the State Senate agree that stagnant wages are harming hardworking people and families

across the Commonwealth. As someone who used to make \$7.25 an hour and a tipped wage of \$2.38 an hour,

it's impossible to maintain financial security at the current rates.

### Who are the workers in Senate District #44 that benefit from a higher minimum wage?

54% are women

45% are over the age of 40

23% are people of color

only 7% are 19 or younger

43% the share of their family's income earned on average by workers affected by minimum wage increase

66% work full-time

56% have some college or more

On average the teenagers affected by a minimum wage increase earn 16% of their family's income

35% are parents



www.keystoneresearch.org/minimumwage

All figures above are for workers affected by a \$15 minimum wage, living in a region that includes Chester County.

## ■ Pipeline Safety

I will be introducing two pieces of legislation that would mandate specific safety and public awareness standards for pipeline construction and operation. While pipelines may be considered the safest way to transport volatile liquids and natural gases, Pennsylvania has garnered a lengthy history of gas-related accidents, leaks, and disasters.

My legislation ensures that residents are adequately informed of,

and involved in, safety procedures that are necessary to make sure their communities are not being harmed or damaged by pipeline activity.

The first bill would require early collaborative creation and approval of comprehensive risk assessments for each individual pipeline proposal. The assessments would be used to create an Integrity Management Program (IMP) and Emergency Response Plan (ERP). The second bill seeks to create an exception to Act 156 of 2006 that would allow agencies and a qualified Independent Third Party (ITP) to conduct the evaluations required by the first bill.

Pipeline companies need to operate with full accountability to the communities they are proposing to build through. My legislation will hold these companies accountable to the communities their projects impact.



## Animal Rights



While many pets are provided plenty of love and care at home, so many others are mistreated and abused. I am proud to support the legislative efforts that seek to end animal cruelty and justly punish those who participate in the mistreatment of animals.

- Victoria's Law SB44
- Animal Abuse Registry SB213
- Retired Research Animals for Adoption SB534
- Animal Shelter Tax Credit SB563



## FUNDING FOR THE 44TH DISTRICT

### ■ Chester, Berks, and Montgomery Counties Earn Department of Labor And Industry Grants

Chester, Berks, and Montgomery Counties received grants totaling more than \$350,000 from the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. The grants connect businesses and schools to provide students with job training for high growth careers in Pennsylvania. These grants will help ensure that students are learning the skills that will help them succeed in their chosen career path by providing them with work-based learning experiences.

### ■ PAsmart Grants for Schools Across Berks, Chester, and Montgomery Counties

School districts in Chester, Berks, and Montgomery Counties will receive grants through the next phase of Governor Wolf's PAsmart initiative. The grants will provide high-quality computer science and STEM education funding across the tri-county region. With these grants, Pennsylvania now ranks second in the country for its investment in K-12 computer science and STEM programs. The PAsmart grants include 221 school districts, two career and technical centers, 18 charter and cyber charter schools, and eight intermediate units. Grants to schools in the 44th district total over \$105,000.

### ■ Senator Muth Applauds Approval of Teacher in the Workplace Grants

Over \$250,000 of teacher in the workplace grants were awarded to strengthen collaboration between local businesses and educators to help students prepare to enter the workforce. career. The funding is used to implement programs for teachers, counselors, and administrators to directly interact with local industries and businesses. These experiences by educators can then be used to enhance classroom career readiness support for students.

### Limerick Fire Department Grant

Congratulations to the Limerick Fire Department on the approval of grant funding that will help the department's consolidation efforts. Consolidation will help the department improve operations, enhance efficiency, and better serve the community. The department will receive \$84,520 to assist with legal fees and other costs associated with renaming and rebranding.

### School Safety Grants Awarded

I am pleased that several local school districts have been awarded grants to implement school safety programs and initiatives. The grants support a variety of ways that our schools can better educate and protect students. While it is important to implement structural and technological safety improvements, I am encouraged to see schools also working to educate students and staff on how to appropriately assess and address violence.



#### MOBILE OFFICE HOURS

For your convenience, my staff and I are offering  
**Mobile Office Hours across the 44th District each month!**  
Come see us for help with a variety of state government services.  
For more information, contact my office at: 717-576-0376  
or email me at: [senatormuth@pasenate.com](mailto:senatormuth@pasenate.com)

[www.SenatorMuth.com](http://www.SenatorMuth.com)

#### LOCATIONS

**AMITY TOWNSHIP BUILDING**  
2nd Friday • 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

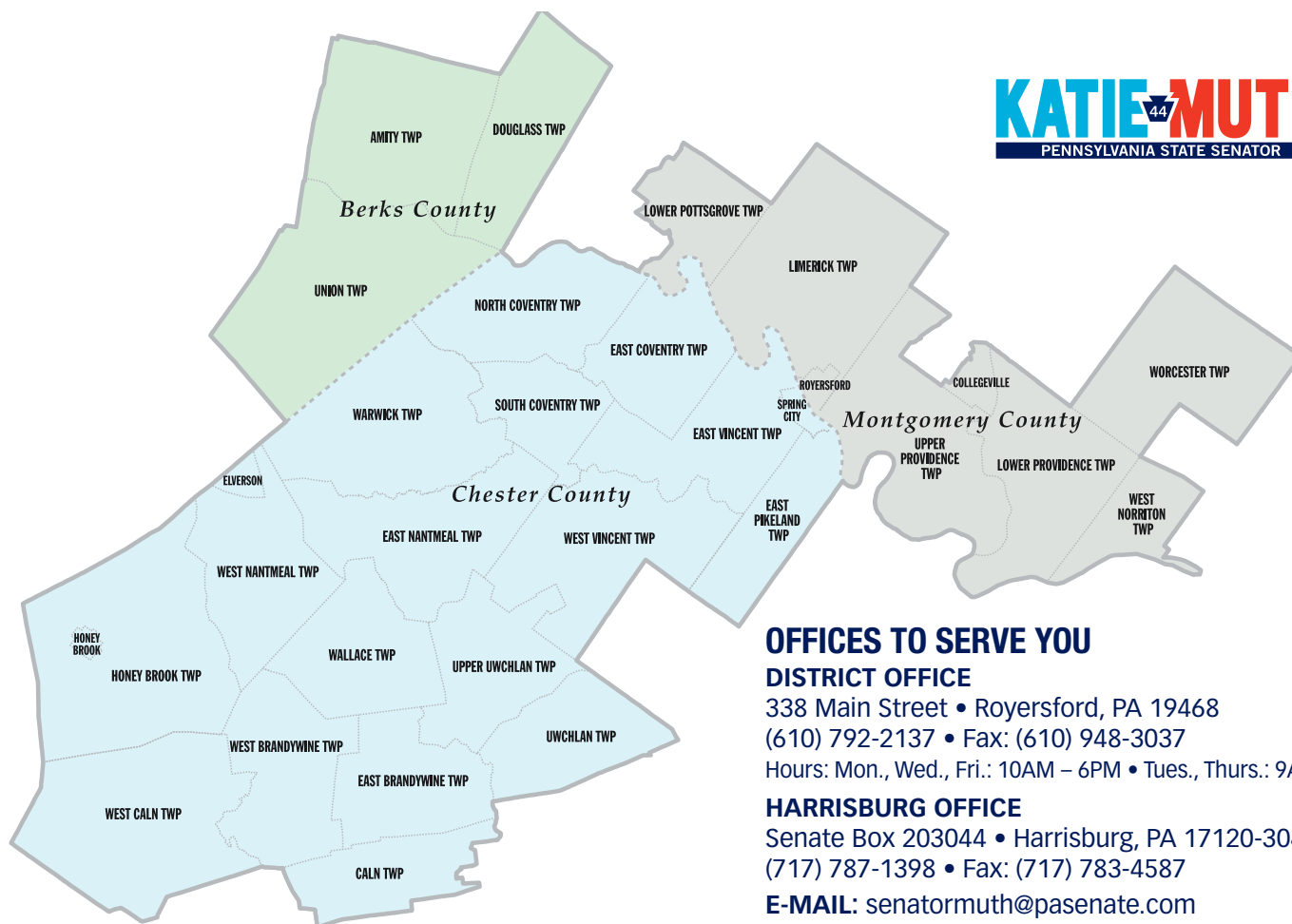
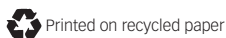
**MEADOWOOD SENIOR LIVING**  
2nd Wednesday • 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.  
(Every Other Month)

**SHANNONDELL AT VALLEY FORGE**  
1st Friday  
Ashcroft • 10 a.m. - 11 a.m.  
Bradford • 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

**WALLACE TOWNSHIP BUILDING**  
4th Friday • 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

#### SERVICES AVAILABLE

- ◆ SEPTA Sr. Citizens Card Applications
- ◆ Birth/Death Certificate Applications
- ◆ Handicapped Plate & Placard Applications
- ◆ Driver's License and Non-Driver Identification Applications
- ◆ Property Tax/Rent Rebate Applications
- ◆ PACE/PACENET Applications
- ◆ PennDOT Real ID
- ◆ Notary Services
- ◆ State road conditions concerns
- ◆ Vehicle Registrations



## OFFICES TO SERVE YOU

### DISTRICT OFFICE

338 Main Street • Royersford, PA 19468

(610) 792-2137 • Fax: (610) 948-3037

Hours: Mon., Wed., Fri.: 10AM – 6PM • Tues., Thurs.: 9AM – 5PM

### HARRISBURG OFFICE

Senate Box 203044 • Harrisburg, PA 17120-3044

(717) 787-1398 • Fax: (717) 783-4587

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**ACCESSIBILITY:** Wheelchair accessible entrance and handicap parking located in rear of building

Follow me online for the latest updates on legislation, community events and more!