Dear Residents of SD-44:

There’s a lot of work to do in Harrisburg! Aside from my role as the Policy Chairwoman for the Senate Democratic Caucus, I am excited to have been named the Minority Chair of the Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness Committee for the 2021-2022 legislative session. Other committee assignments include environmental resources & energy, finance, state government, and rules.

It is my job as your state Senator to represent the interests of all of my constituents and I want to know what issues are most important to you. Your input is always welcomed, and encouraged on any legislative or policy issue. Please share your thoughts and concerns to my team and I by sending an email to senatormuth@pasenate.com, or by calling us at 610-792-2137.

In honor of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, my office will be closed today. Let us use this day to honor the life and legacy of a man who brought hope and healing to America. We commemorate as well the timeless values he taught us through his example — the values of justice, compassion, dignity, humility and service that so radiantly defined Dr. King’s character and empowered his leadership. On this holiday, remember the life and legacy of MLK Jr. by participating in a service event, or attending a virtual social justice rally to learn more about ways to advocate for equality and racial justice in our community.

Senator Katie Muth

MONTCO Recovery Tuition Assistance Program
The enrollment deadline for the Montco Spring 2021 semester is two days away – January 20. We’re looking to make another push to make residents aware of the program before enrollment closes.

This is available to any Montgomery County residents who suffered full- or part-time employment loss on or after March 6, 2020, the date of Governor Tom Wolf’s Emergency Disaster Declaration. Supporting documentation is required.

For more, visit: mc3.edu/montcorecovery

COVID Vaccine Release Plan
Distribution of the vaccine has begun for Phase 1A priority groups and with the recent announcement by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services about a shift in populations included in Phase 1B, many of the counties are altering their strategy to distribute doses as they become available.

Montgomery County
The Montgomery County Office of Public Health has started scheduling appointments for the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine for Phase 1A which includes qualifying healthcare staff who live or work in the county.

If you have received ANY type of vaccine in the past 14 days, or plan to get a vaccine in the next 14 days, YOU CANNOT GET THE COVID VACCINE UNTIL 14 DAYS HAVE PASSED.

The Office of Public Health will review the responses and send a registration link to persons that fit into the 1A category, which will take them to an appointment system. Appointment confirmation and a medical license, badge, or paystub verifying employment will be required to receive a vaccination:

- Healthcare Offices and Healthcare professionals: Individuals employed by a healthcare office should have their office complete an survey form for all staff.
- Private Healthcare Contractors: Private contractors who work in the healthcare industry listed in the Phase 1A category below, and who do not have a primary employer may apply as an independent contractor. In this case “Business Name” would be “Your Name Private Contractor.” Business contact information would be the individual’s contact information. A description of the individual’s work in the healthcare industry (as described above in 1A) should be included under “describe the service your agency provides.”

Preparing for Phase 1B priority groups.

The registration is for:
- People who are 65 years of age or older.
- Individuals who have health conditions that qualify them for Phase 1B or 1C.

The Office of Public Health will review the responses and send a registration link to persons that fit into the 1A category, which will take them to an appointment system. Appointment confirmation and a medical license, badge, or paystub verifying employment will be required to receive a vaccination:

- Healthcare Offices and Healthcare professionals: Individuals employed by a healthcare office should have their office complete an survey form for all staff.
- Private Healthcare Contractors: Private contractors who work in the healthcare industry listed in the Phase 1A category below, and who do not have a primary employer may apply as an independent contractor. In this case “Business Name” would be “Your Name Private Contractor.” Business contact information would be the individual’s contact information. A description of the individual’s work in the healthcare industry (as described above in 1A) should be included under “describe the service your agency provides.”

Preparing for Phase 1B priority groups.

The registration is for:
- People who are 65 years of age or older.
- Individuals who have health conditions that qualify them for Phase 1B or 1C.

If you are having trouble viewing this email, click here.
At this time, this survey is not accepting responses from individuals who qualify for vaccination in Phase 1B and 1C based solely on occupation. We are currently working to address this issue. Please check back soon for updates, and in the meantime, contact your employer to see if they have completed the Pre-Screening for Healthcare Agency (1A) and Phase 1B Business Vaccination Registry.

Preparing for Phase 1B priority groups.

All healthcare personnel not affiliated with a hospital/health system, please complete the Healthcare Vaccine Interest Survey.

Preparing for Phase 1B priority groups.

Chester County

Chester County, through the Health Department, the hospitals and other healthcare providers, are actively receiving COVID-19 vaccine and administering it as quickly as possible.

Currently vaccinating Phase 1A priority groups.

- All healthcare personnel not affiliated with a hospital/health system, please complete the Healthcare Vaccine Interest Survey.

Preparing for Phase 1B priority groups.

Once you complete the survey, you will see a confirmation page confirming it was submitted. You will not receive an email confirming the receipt of the survey. When appointments are available you will be emailed more information to schedule your appointment.

Priority groups can be found on the COVID-19 Vaccination Information page.

Berk County

Currently in phase 1A of the vaccine distribution plan. For more information, please refer to the PA Department of Health’s vaccine distribution dashboard.

COVID Vaccine Townhall

To give you more information on the vaccine distribution plan and provide an opportunity to have YOUR vaccine questions, I am cohosting a virtual townhall with Department of Health Secretary Dr. Rachel Levine and Senator John Kane.

Dr. Levine will answer questions from our audience, along with a panel from PEMA and the Department of Health responsible for overseeing the roll out of the COVID vaccine. The townhall will be held on Zoom on January 20th, and all you have to do to participate is sign up here! The event is open to everyone and completely free.

Say ‘NO’ to Judicial Gerrymandering

Fair Districts PA recently held a town hall about the judicial gerrymandering bill that the Majority party in both chambers plan to pass again early this session, in order for it to appear as a ballot question on the Primary ballot in May of this year.

Under the bill, the General Assembly would create judicial districts based upon the number of justices or judges on each court. Since the three appellate courts have different numbers of judges – Supreme Court (7), Superior Court (15) and Commonwealth Court (9) – this means the legislature would be able to carve the state into 31 new districts of varying size.

Judicial districts would be drawn with the same secretive, partisan process that has yielded some of the nation’s most gerrymandered districts.

You have to wonder why the Majority party is so hell bent on gerrymandering the courts, when an overwhelming amount of Pennsylvanians have voiced significant support for an independent citizens redistricting commission.

If you want to learn more, you can view the town hall from Jan 6th HERE.
Policy Hearing: Raising the Minimum Wage in PA

Join Senator Haywood, Senator Tina Tartaglione, Senator John Kane, and I on MLK Day of Service for a PA Senate Democratic Policy Committee Hearing on Raising the Minimum Wage in PA!

The hearing is scheduled for Monday, 18 January 2021 at 1 p.m. on Zoom. The event will also be live-streamed at http://senatormuth.com/Live. Register now at https://www.senatormuth.com/policy!

How to Stay Informed

Pennsylvania Department of Health
- The PA DoH Daily COVID-19 report. Updated regularly throughout the day.
- Follow the PA Health Department on Twitter.
- Follow them on Facebook.

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Follow the CDC on Twitter.
- Follow the CDC on Facebook.
- Learn how to prevent "community transmission" with specific details on what to do before, during, and after outbreaks.

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Be sure to check out the complete list of information, data, and resources available to those in:

Berks County
Chester County
Montgomery County