Dear Residents of SD-44:

In this newsletter you will find information on state resources available to you and your family, hazard pay application information for frontline workers, and updates from Harrisburg and our community.

I have received a number of calls from concerned parents, teachers and staff regarding the various reopening plans presented by school boards throughout the district in preparation for the upcoming school year. I know that this is a challenging time and I have been in contact with all of the boards throughout the 44th to help bridge communication between the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the district. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to my office and we will do our best to get you an answer or connect you with the right resource.

My staff and I are always available by phone at 610-792-2137 and by email at senatormuth@pasenate.com to help answer your questions and provide you with the resources that you need. We will also continue to share new information through E-blasts, social media and on connect as we receive it to ensure you, your family, schools, and small businesses have the most up-to-date information.

Sincerely,

Senator Katie Muth

Policy Hearing on Worker Protections

I, along with my colleagues, State Senator Lindsey Williams (D- Allegheny), State Representatives Elizabeth Fiedler (D- Philadelphia) and Patrick Harkins (D- Erie), in coordination with the Senate and House Democratic Policy Committees, held a joint virtual public hearing on worker protections during the COVID-19 pandemic. Essential workers have kept our Commonwealth moving throughout the pandemic and we need to continue to bring their voices to the table and learn about the challenges that they continue to face while serving our communities.

Among the bills discussed was SB1221, which I introduced to ensure sufficient PPE and sanitation supplies for workers and businesses. Rep. Patrick Harkins spoke about HB1082, which extends OSHA protections to public sector workers. Both of these bills have not moved out of committee.

Watch a recording of the full hearing HERE.

The Path to Zero Waste Hosted by PennEnvironment

Last Thursday, I moderated a roundtable discussion hosted by PennEnvironment that consisted of a panel of experts equipped to discuss the crisis facing our recycling systems. During the roundtable we discussed how we can respond, as government officials and as individuals, to changes in the recycling landscape and to the flood of single-use plastics we’re facing every day.

If you missed the discussion you can check out the full recording HERE.

Watch the Paws!

Over the past few weeks the temperatures outside have risen to extreme levels throughout the region. Keep in mind that temperatures on concrete/asphalt can rise to over 140 degrees by late morning.

Follow the below safety tips to protect your pet(s) from the heat and avoid burning their paws.

Watch a recording of the full hearing HERE.
Pennsylvania Resources and Assistance

The additional $600 federal unemployment benefit ended on July 25th, but help is available. Pennsylvania Department of Human Services provides assistance through a variety of state programs. DHS programs are designed to help eligible Pennsylvanians who have lost income or employment meet essential needs until they are able to start work again. Public assistance programs help ensure that individuals and families can access health care, have enough food to eat, and can pay utilities—things everyone needs to stay healthy and safe and succeed in the workforce.

Programs include:
✅ Medicaid
✅ Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
✅ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
✅ Child Care Works (CCW) subsidized child care
✅ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

If you need assistance applying for any of these programs, please do not hesitate to reach out to my office by either emailing senatormuth@pasenate.com, or via phone at 610-792-2137. Learn more HERE.

DEADLINE: Hazard Pay for Frontline Workers

$50 million from CARES Act funding is being allocated as Hazard Pay for frontline workers via the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED).

Applications will be open for a two-week window closing on July 31, 2020.

Businesses, healthcare non-profits, public transportation agencies, and certified economic development organizations may apply for funding for employers located and operating in Pennsylvania within one of the following eligible industries:
✅ Healthcare and Social Assistance
✅ Food Manufacturing
✅ Food Retail Facilities
✅ Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation
✅ Security Services for eligible industries listed above and commercial industries that were not closed as a result of the Governor’s Business Closure Order
✅ Janitorial Services to Buildings and Dwellings

Additional details about eligible industries and employers can be found in the program guidelines.

APPLICATIONS OPEN NOW THROUGH JULY 31 FOR COVID-19 PA Hazard Pay Grant

To help employers provide hazard pay to employees in life-sustaining occupations during the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses in these industries are eligible to apply:
✅ Healthcare & Social Assistance
✅ Food Manufacturing
✅ Food Retail Facilities

The hazard pay of up to $200 per week, full-time equivalent (FTE) employee must be paid over the 16-week period of August 16, 2020 through October 24, 2020 at a $3/hour hazard pay increase to their regular pay rate.

Learn more: https://dced.pa.gov/programs/covid-19-pa-hazard-pay-grant

How to Stay Informed
Below is an extensive list of information, statistics, and resources to ensure you stay up-to-date with any changes happening due to COVID-19.

Check out my website for a comprehensive list of resources or one of the helpful sites below.

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
- Track confirmed cases in the US. (This site is updated weekdays at noon and shows numbers that were current as of 4 p.m. the previous day.)
- CDC provided information regarding “What you should know about COVID-19”.
- Follow the CDC on Twitter.
- Follow the CDC on Facebook.
- Learn how to prevent “community transition” with specific details on what to do before, during, and after outbreaks.

World Health Organization
- Learn what’s happening Worldwide with the WHO’s Daily report. The most recent report is located at the top of the page. It includes confirmed case and death tallies.
- Additional COVID-19 information is provided on their website.
- Stay informed on Twitter.
- Follow their Facebook page.

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

- Berks County
- Chester County
- Montgomery County

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