Dear Residents of SD-44:

On Friday, Montgomery, Chester, and Berks Counties will move to the yellow phase of the reopening plan, as outlined by Governor Wolf. Late last week, Governor Wolf announced updated guidelines for restaurants that includes dine-in service in outdoor seating areas so long as they strictly adhere to the requirements of the guidance, including maximum occupancy limits. I am hopeful that we will see additional guidelines and additional Personal Protective Equipment that will permit other industries such as barbershops, salons, and pet grooming services to resume in the near future.

The primary election is on June 2nd and our region has seen an overwhelming amount of voters request mail-in ballots. Due to the circumstances around the pandemic, some of those ballots were received this past week and the PA Department of State is urging voters to drop their mail-in ballots at your county board of elections office or secure drop-box by 8pm on election day.

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 website as we receive it to ensure you, your family, schools, and small businesses have the most up-to-date information.

Senator Katie Muth
"In" Harrisburg

Earlier this week, the Senate voted on a partial state budget (HB2387) that included a $25 billion spending plan. I voted NO on the general appropriation bill since it did not account for a multi-billion dollar revenue gap.

I know that my constituents have suffered immensely due to the economic effects that the pandemic has had on our region. I was one of only 6 Senators to vote against the spending plan as it did not meet the needs of the hardworking people and families of my district. I do, however, appreciate and acknowledge the Governor’s commitment to education, which over the last six years, has seen funding boosts every year and will not see cuts in state funding during this unprecedented time.

In more positive news, the Senate voted 50-0 to allocate $2.6 billion in one-time, federal funding to help workers, families, and businesses impacted by COVID-19 in Pennsylvania. I am thankful that this allocation reflects the priorities that the Democratic Caucus laid out in our PA CARES Plan in April.

This one-time federal money will go to:

- Health & human services
- Housing assistance
- Safety net programs
- Child care & early education
- School Safety
- County & municipal relief
- Small businesses
- Agriculture
- EMS
- Higher education
- Community ID waiver
- Hazard pay
- EMS
- Higher education
- Agriculture
- EMS
- Higher education
- Agriculture

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Do You Plan to Vote In-person on June 2nd?

Due to COVID-19, your polling place may have changed. For the primary election only, counties may combine polling places to address a loss in polling place locations, such as senior centers, which may be closed to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Find your polling place: votesPA.com/Polls.

If you are voting by mail-in ballot and have not yet mailed your ballot, you must return your ballot to your local board of elections or to one of the designated drop-off locations in Montgomery and Chester counties.

Drive-Thru Antibody Testing in Chester County

The Chester County Health Department and Chester County Department of Emergency Services, in partnership with Lehigh Valley Genomics, invite all essential workers who have been working onsite at their workplace through the red phase, who live or work in Chester County, and their household members to drive-thru COVID-19 Antibody Testing. Click here to register. Public testing will be available at a later date. For any questions about testing, please call 610-344-6225.

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Update

Due to an increase in fraudulent claims, PUA Claimants will be receiving their PUA and FPUC benefit payments via paper checks for the foreseeable future as an added precaution.

The Notice of Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Filed was mailed to all PUA claimants in the system due to their recent discovery of attempts by scammers using personal information obtained from sources other than L&I to apply for PUA.

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 CDC on Facebook.
- Learn how best 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