

## TAKING ON THE TOUGH FIGHTS IN HARRISBURG

### Dear SD44 Residents:

My team and I have remained busy, both in the community and in Harrisburg, so please continue reading this newsletter to learn about policy updates, issues in the state legislature and local events, including our upcoming Veterans Expo in September, across our district.

After prolonged negotiations, a **\$45.2 billion** state budget for 2022-23 was signed into law by the Governor more than a week past the constitutional deadline of June 30. Should I someday write a book following my tenure here, I hope to describe my experiences battling the powers that be and how decisions are made by those in power. One newsletter doesn't provide enough space to adequately describe the madness and partisan hoopla. While it's important to provide information about the positive components of the final budget, equally important is breaking through the smoke and mirrors and shining light on the fiscal failures and the devil in the details – exposing the harmful influence of corporate special interests and extremist agendas, once again overpowering the needs and best interests of Pennsylvanians. Icing on the cake: the Majority party passed a constitutional amendment (**SB106**) seeking to ban abortion healthcare in Pennsylvania- more on that later.

Despite a **\$10 billion** surplus heading into budget negotiations, the Majority party once again prioritized corporate special interests, including increasing the bottom line of for-profit private schools and greedy corporations, over the needs of Pennsylvania families, our public education system, and our small businesses, with the Administration eventually agreeing to some of these “deals” in order to get a budget passed. Here's a brief recap of how and why I voted for the various budget bills:

I voted in favor of **SB1100**, the General Appropriations bill, which dictates the amount of dollars spent for all of the state budget components. For example, this bill states the amount of dollars spent on education, human services, and other state departments and programs. I supported components of the School Code (**HB1642**), such as the **\$1.8 billion** increase in school funding, including a long overdue **\$100M** increase to special education, **\$100M** allocation specifically for student mental health support and enhancing career and technical school programs, but this bill also dramatically increases the amount of public dollars diverted from state funds (**\$125 million**) to non-public schools, some of which have abysmal graduation rates and fail to ensure all students succeed and thrive. Further, this bill failed to fix private charter and cyber charter school funding inequities – which is the main driver in forcing school districts to raise property taxes. In order to get the **\$1.8B** increase agreed to by the Majority Party, the Administration agreed to abolish the commonsense charter reform regulations approved in March by the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC). The regulations were a modest step toward transparency and accountability in the for-profit, private charter and cyber charter school system. While an increase in public school funding is a win, especially after decades of divestment in our public school system and attempts to privatize our schools, this School Code bill shows that the Majority party cares more about revenue increases for charter and cyber charter schools than ensuring students in every community receive the high-quality education they are entitled to under our state Constitution.

I voted against the Tax Code (**HB1342**) because it fails to ensure that multi-state corporations pay their fair share in taxes for using our roads and resources while doing business in our Commonwealth. I agree that our current Corporate Net Income Tax (CNIT) rate paid by in-state corporations should be lowered, which is why I have offered amendments on the Senate floor that would have reduced our CNIT gradually and would have also established a system of combined reporting to ensure all corporations that do business in Pennsylvania are paying their fair share. The failure to require combined reporting still allows **70%** of multi-state businesses to utilize tax loopholes that enable big wealthy corporations to avoid paying their share of the taxes even though they do business in PA and leaves our state with a looming budget deficit from lost revenue.

This is just a brief overview of the budget - there are hundreds of pages in these bills. If you'd like to read additional information about the budget, as well as more detailed articles about any of the topics covered in this newsletter, please visit [SenatorMuth.com/Newsletter2022](http://SenatorMuth.com/Newsletter2022).







For the 2021-22 legislative session, I was elected by my colleagues in the Senate Democratic Caucus to serve as Chair of the Senate Democratic Policy Committee. As Chair, I have traveled the state and hosted 40 (and still counting) public hearings over the past 18 months on so many important topics that are critical to the health, safety, education, and economic security of Pennsylvania families. These hearings allow impacted residents, subject matter experts, government agencies, and advocates to share their experiences, their concerns, and their knowledge with our Senators to help inform our votes and our legislative activism.

Here is a look at some of the recent hearings that we have held across the state:

- *Along with the House Democratic Policy Committee, we held a roundtable discussion in Pittsburgh on various issues facing Pennsylvania's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies.*
- *We heard from impacted residents and researchers in Monroeville about the health impacts of the drilling industry which make it abundantly clear that the Majority party in Harrisburg must enact stronger regulations and close loopholes in the law so that the fracked gas industry is held to the same standards as other industries operating in our Commonwealth, and take urgent action to replace contaminated water supplies and ensure healthcare to every resident suffering from the harms they've been forced to endure for the sake of corporate profit.*
- *At Norristown Area School District, we held a hearing on student perspectives in public education that gave students from eight diverse Montgomery County School Districts an opportunity to present their research findings on the issues of school equity, school climate, and student mental health to our Senators.*
- *Earlier this Spring, the Committee held a hearing at Temple University on the issues of housing scarcity and contemporary homelessness. We need to tackle the issue of economic injustice – from raising wages to actual living wages and ensuring rent and housing prices are fair, transparent, and flexible according to each individual's financial situation.*

This Fall, we are again going to have a full schedule of hearings in communities across Pennsylvania. In September, I'll be co-hosting a public hearing with House Democratic Leader Joanna McClinton to discuss our legislation that would create a statewide rape kit tracking system to provide sexual assault survivors with access to timely information and status updates regarding evidence in their cases.

For a full list of upcoming hearings and to access video and submitted testimony from previous Senate Democratic Policy Committee hearings, visit [SenatorMuth.com/Policy](https://SenatorMuth.com/Policy). You can also fill out a form on our site if you have an idea or an issue that you would like our Committee to explore. ■

## VETERANS AFFAIRS & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE UPDATE

*As Chair of the Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness Committee, I am always advocating for legislation that improves the lives of our veterans, our current service members and all of their families. This session, I introduced legislation to establish a Recent Veterans Property Tax and Rent Rebate Program and also a bill to address the troubling issue of veterans homelessness.*

### National Guard Pay Increase Signed into Law

Very exciting news! My legislation to increase the minimum daily pay for members of the Pennsylvania National Guard was signed into law as part of the 2022-23 state budget!

The language of my **Senate Bill 1286** was included as part of the larger Fiscal Code bill - **House Bill 1421** – which was signed into law by Governor Tom Wolf as Act 54 of 2022. The bill increases the minimum daily special state duty and state active duty pay rate for members of the National Guard from **\$100** per day rate to **\$180** per day.

Pennsylvania National Guard personnel are entitled to "special state duty" or "state active duty" pay whenever they are ordered on active duty for service by the Governor for in-state community events, activities, missions or disasters and emergencies. The minimum pay for National Guard members was last increased in 2016, when it was increased from **\$75** to **\$100**.

This legislation was supported by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and was listed as a priority of the Pennsylvania National Guard Associations. It had previously passed unanimously out of Committee but was never considered on the Senate floor for a vote.

This was a small but important measure in our budget and I am grateful for the support of my colleagues who helped ensure its inclusion in our budget negotiations. ■

### OTHER COMMITTEES I SERVE ON

- Environmental Resources & Energy
- Finance
- Rules & Executive Nominations
- State Government

## FRIENDSHIP AMBULANCE IN ROYERSFORD RECEIVES \$60K GRANT

Friendship Ambulance, a division of the Royersford Fire Department, recently received a **\$60,000** grant through the Department of Community and Economic Development toward the purchase of a new utility SUV vehicle to better equip their EMS workers to respond to emergencies. The new vehicle will help Friendship Ambulance provide care during emergency calls and will also be equipped to act as an on-scene management or command vehicle when an emergency call has multiple agencies responding.

This grant is such great news for Friendship Ambulance, Royersford Borough, and the surrounding municipalities. The new emergency response vehicle will enhance and improve their capabilities when responding to regional emergencies and I was glad to support their application. We need to continue to invest state funding into our local EMS and fire companies to ensure they have the equipment, support, and resources they need to continue the great work they are doing for all our families. ■



Follow us on social media for the latest updates on legislation, community events and more!

## Harmful National Agenda Continues to Pollute Harrisburg

The Majority Party in Harrisburg continues to prioritize a far-right, extremist national agenda that is designed to dismantle voting rights, infringe on women's freedom, and attack the LGBTQ+ community. This is most apparent in their attempt to legislate by constitutional amendment because their extremist legislation would otherwise be vetoed by the Governor. For comparison's sake, the current Pennsylvania Constitution was adopted in 1968 and since then, 49 amendments have been put before voters on the ballot. Yet, during this two-year legislative session alone, lawmakers in the Majority party have introduced 69 amendments to our state Constitution. Senate Bill 106, originally drafted as a single constitutional amendment regarding the selection of our state's Lieutenant Governor, was amended during the legislative process and packed full with unrelated amendments to our state Constitution.

As a proposed constitutional amendment, SB106 must pass the legislature again in the next legislative session and be publicly advertised before it goes to voters in the form of a ballot question. If the majority party has its way, this could appear on the ballot as soon as the May 2023 primary election.

The final version of SB106 that passed this legislative session includes the following proposed constitutional amendments:

- Allowing each party's nominee for governor to select their running mate for Lieutenant Governor instead of the current process of electing the candidate.
- Requiring all voters to show identification prior to voting in each election.
- Allowing the General Assembly to negate administrative regulations without the threat of a veto.
- Giving the legislature oversight of all election audits.
- Prohibiting taxpayer funding of abortion and explicitly stating that the Constitution does not grant "any other right relating to abortion".

All of these provisions are deeply concerning, but the middle-of-the-night attack on our freedom and abortion rights, was a direct attack on reproductive, racial, and economic justice, and the right to make decisions about our healthcare and what happens to our bodies.

Throughout the Summer, our Senate Democratic Policy Committee joined the House Democratic Policy Committee, the Women's Health Caucus, and the Legislative Black Caucus, to host policy committee hearings across the Commonwealth on the future of women's healthcare in Pennsylvania following the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that overturned the protections offered by Roe v. Wade. The hearings served as a forum to discuss that abortion care is currently still legal in Pennsylvania, as well as the future of reproductive healthcare in our Commonwealth. The recordings can be watched on-demand at [SenatorMuth.com/Policy](https://SenatorMuth.com/Policy).

Lastly, along with my Democratic women colleagues in the Senate, I am currently working on legislation to expand access by removing barriers within existing state law to ensure access and timely reproductive healthcare across the state. While abortion is still safe and legal in Pennsylvania, our fight is only just beginning, but I am ready to stand up for my rights and yours.



## Legislative Solutions to Stop Corporate Greed from Driving Inflation

In June, I joined my colleague Senator Lindsey Williams from Allegheny County to introduce legislation that represents real solutions for working families facing rising prices everywhere from the gas pump to the grocery store shelves. Our two Senate bills address the roots of the economic challenges facing our families today: protecting our small businesses and stopping price gouging.

The Pennsylvania Small Business and Consumer Protection Act will help to rebalance the current economy, which only benefits the rich and powerful. The Stop Price Gouging Act will strengthen the Attorney General's ability to prosecute individuals and businesses that collude to artificially and unfairly raise prices on goods bought or sold in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvanians are feeling the burn of the rigged economy that only benefits wealthy corporations and corporate special interests. We must demand that the Majority party takes urgent action to pass meaningful legislation that stops powerful entities like utility companies and energy providers from price gouging; breaks up corporate monopolies to ensure a fair and open market; and ends the exploitation of workers and consumers. Our bills offer permanent solutions to ensure economic fairness and protections for workers and consumers.



## Energy Transfer Convicted of Environmental Crimes

While we are still waiting for Sunoco to clean up Marsh Creek Lake (**yes, you read that correctly, they missed their July 1 deadline**), at least the Office of the Attorney General has convicted Energy Transfer of environmental crimes related to the construction of the Mariner East Pipeline from 2017 through October 2021. The conviction would not have been possible without the hard work of community watchdogs and impacted residents and their persistence, consistent documentation, and reporting of issues related to the construction.

Thank you to all of my constituents and other residents who came forward and documented the many failures of Energy Transfer, and ultimately helped the Attorney General build a strong case to finally convict this serial corporate polluter for their crimes against our environment, our communities, and our water.

As part of the plea, Energy Transfer is required to fully restore safe drinking water for any resident whose water quality was impacted by the construction of the Mariner East 2 Pipeline. The plea agreement also requires Energy Transfer to pay **\$10 million** to make the water sources most damaged by construction cleaner and safer. Read more at [SenatorMuth.com/Newsletter2022](https://SenatorMuth.com/Newsletter2022).



# SD44 STATS SINCE BEING ELECTED

BILLS COSPONSORED THAT BECAME LAW: **24**

INTRODUCED

**146**

BILLS



POLICY  
COMMITTEE  
HEARINGS HELD



**40**

AND COUNTING

DRAFTED AND  
INTRODUCED **THE MOST**  
FLOOR AMENDMENTS IN  
THE STATE SENATE!

DRAFTED

**262**

AMENDMENTS

AMENDMENTS  
FILED:

**54**

BILLS  
COSPONSORED:

**719**

TOTAL CONSTITUENT  
CASE CONTACTS:

**31,500+**

OVER  
**\$100 MILLION**  
IN STATE FUNDING FOR  
SD44 PROJECTS

## FOLLOW SESSION AND TRACK LEGISLATION

The Senate is scheduled to be in session September 19-21, October 17-19 and 24-26, and on November 15.

You can watch all Senate session proceedings live at [PSenate.com](http://PSenate.com) and you can track the progress of all legislation at [Legis.State.PA.US](http://Legis.State.PA.US)

## SD44 Grant Highlights

State investments into our communities are so important to economic growth, recreational opportunities, and community stability. During my first term as a Senator, I have advocated for and secured millions of dollars in state grant funding for projects in SD44. Here are some of the **2021-22** grant highlights in our district:

- Resources for Human Development received a **\$2.5 million** RACP grant for the construction of a new facility to house the Coordinated Homeless Outreach Center (CHOC) homeless shelter in Montgomery County
  - Chester County Intermediate Unit 24 received **\$1 million** for the construction of a new Toddler Center in Caln Township.
  - Great Valley Community Organization received a **\$600,000** RACP grant for the Great Valley Community Center in East Whiteland Township, Chester County.
  - Collegeville Borough received **\$500,000** to revitalize the 400 block of East Main Street (Ridge Pike) in the borough.
  - Montgomery County Emergency Services received **\$101,000** in grant funding to establish Leadership Training: Managing Stress and Trauma courses for local EMS providers
- Stay tuned for additional announcements about funding for our community in the fall!



## PSERS Update: Fighting for Transparency

I continue to work to protect the retirement security of our teachers as a member of the PSERS Board of Trustees. Earlier this spring, Commonwealth Court sided with transparency in government and unanimously overruled the baseless preliminary objections filed by PSERS in my lawsuit to rightly access records and documents related to my duties as a Board member. I'm still waiting for PSERS to provide me with the information I've requested to ensure the system is adhering to fiduciary requirements and making responsible investments in the best interest of the annuitants.

Pennsylvania's current and retired public school employees deserve informed representation on the Board of Trustees and we should not continue to vote on hundreds of millions of dollars of investment proposals without full access to records and documents. For more information on my work on the PSERS Board of Trustees, visit [SenatorMuth.com/PSERS](http://SenatorMuth.com/PSERS)



## 2022 VETERANS EXPO SCHEDULED FOR FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

Last October, we had over 200 veterans from SD44 attend our annual Veterans Expo at the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center and I am certain that this year's will be another success! This year's Veterans Expo will take place on Friday, September 30 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Hall D of the Greater Philadelphia Expo Center located at 100 Station Avenue, Oaks, PA 19456.

Our Veterans' Expo is an opportunity for veterans of all ages to interact with dozens of local and statewide veterans' organizations and service providers to ensure that veterans are accessing the services and benefits available to them.

The event is free for SD44 veterans and lunch will be provided. Interested veterans must register in advance to attend the event and to be eligible for free lunch at

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

or by calling **610.792.2137**.

## 2022 VETERANS' EXPO

**Friday, September 30, 2022**  
**11 a.m. - 2 p.m.**

**Greater Philadelphia Expo Center, Hall D**  
**100 Station Ave., Oaks, PA 19456**

Register at [www.SenatorMuth.com/VetExpo](http://www.SenatorMuth.com/VetExpo)

THE REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26.

Follow us on social media for the latest updates on legislation, community events and more!





## Shredding Event Held at Lionville Middle School

In April, we teamed up with Rep. Danielle Friel Otten to host a paper shredding event for district residents at Lionville Middle School in Exton. It was great to interact with the many district residents that came out to have their documents shredded.



## Go100PA Town Hall

In early June, I joined Senator Amanda Cappelletti at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Pottstown to discuss our **Go100PA** legislation to transition our Commonwealth to 100% Renewable Energy by 2050. Numerous studies have shown that transitioning to renewable energy alternatives is the best way to achieve energy independence. **Go100PA** is a critical step in stopping further harm from global warming caused by fossil fuel industry pollution and ensuring a safe and sustainable future for Pennsylvania. Learn more at [www.go100pa.com](http://www.go100pa.com).

## 2022 PrideFest Chester County

My team and I joined more than 1,000 allies and members of the LGBTQIA+ community at PrideFest Chester County in downtown Phoenixville Borough in June. As one of the co-chairs of the LGBTQ+ Equality Caucus, I will continue to stand up against hate and fight for equal rights for members of the LGBTQIA+ community in SD44 and across the Commonwealth.



## Chester County Food Bank

Earlier this summer, Trevor and I volunteered at the Chester County Food Bank to help collect donations as part of their America250 Food Drive! Thank you to all of the volunteers who showed up to support the work that the Chester County Food Bank does and all of the community members who generously donated food to help our neighbors most in need. If you would like to support the Chester County Food Bank, visit [chestercountyfoodbank.org](http://chestercountyfoodbank.org).



## West Vincent Community Day

My team and I had a great time at West Vincent Township Community Day meeting with members of the community and local businesses earlier this spring. As always, it was a hard decision to pick the winners in the Pet Parade and Contest! Thank you to the Phoenix Animal Rescue and The Bazil Group for your continued advocacy and hard work on behalf of our furry friends.



## Spring-Ford Softball Wins State Championship

It was an honor to host the State Champion Spring-Ford Area School District softball team as my guests in the Senate in late June! The Spring-Ford Rams won the PIAA Class 6A state championship at Penn State University's Beard Field by defeating Seneca Valley 5-0 in the championship game. Spring-Ford has had so many amazing players and teams come through their softball program over the years but this year's team is the first to hold the title of State Champs. Congratulations again to all of the players, coaches, parents, and the entire Spring-Ford community!

## Annual Veterans Picnic Held in Spring City



My team and I had an amazing time at our annual Veterans Appreciation Picnic at The Whitehall Apartments in Spring City held at the end of May! Thank you to all of our veterans and all current members of our armed forces for your service!



Senate Box 203044  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3044

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## STATE SENATOR KATIE MUTH

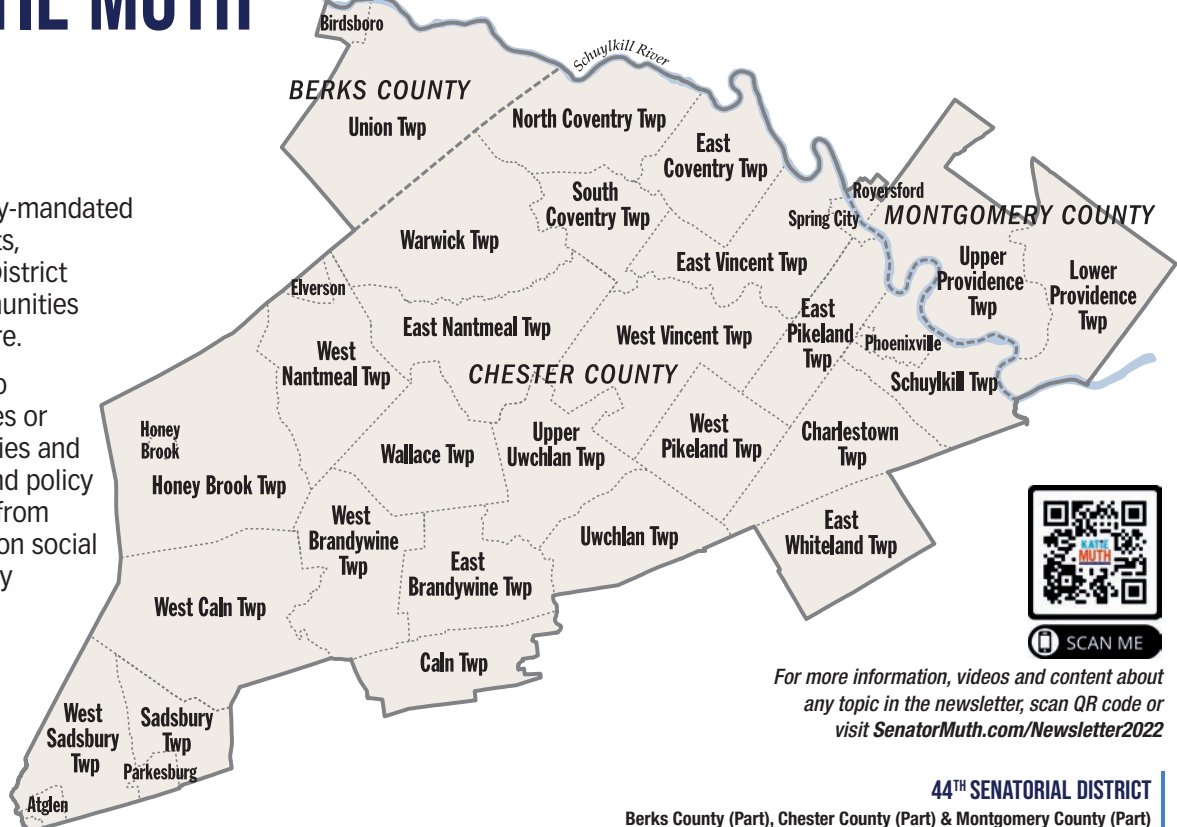


As a result of the constitutionally-mandated redistricting of all Senate districts, Pennsylvania's 44th Senatorial District will now include all of the communities pictured in the map pictured here.

We encourage all constituents to contact our office with any issues or questions regarding state agencies and services, as well as legislative and policy matters. We would love to hear from you! Also, follow, like and share on social media and sign up for our weekly e-blasts at [SenatorMuth.com/subscribe](https://SenatorMuth.com/subscribe).

I am honored to represent you in Harrisburg!

  
State Senator  
Katie Muth



SCAN ME

For more information, videos and content about any topic in the newsletter, scan QR code or visit [SenatorMuth.com/Newsletter2022](https://SenatorMuth.com/Newsletter2022)

44<sup>TH</sup> SENATORIAL DISTRICT

Berks County (Part), Chester County (Part) & Montgomery County (Part)

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