

GREG VITALI

STATE REPRESENTATIVE — 166TH DISTRICT

P.O. BOX 202166

HARRISBURG, PA 17120-2166

lpo.km.1123

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

DECEMBER 2023

GREG VITALI

STATE REPRESENTATIVE — 166TH DISTRICT

Capitol Office:
30 East Wing
P.O. Box 202166
Harrisburg, PA 17120
(717) 787-7647

District Office:
1001 East Darby Road
Havertown, PA 19083
(610) 789-3900

EMAIL: RepVitali@pahouse.net

WEBSITE: www.RepVitali.com



Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program – LIHEAP

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is now open and accepting applications until April 5, 2024. LIHEAP offers cash grants to help with home heating bills and emergency situations, such as a broken furnace or an unexpected fuel shortage.

Applicants can be renters or homeowners, and the grant will be sent directly to your utility company or fuel provider and credited on your bill. You do not need to be on public assistance or have any unpaid heating bills. Grants do not need to be repaid.

This season's annual income limit for LIHEAP grants begins at \$21,870 (yearly) for an individual. This limit increases by \$7,710 for each additional person in the household. Grant awards range from \$300 to \$1,000 based on household size, income, and fuel type.

You can apply for LIHEAP online, www.compass.state.pa.us, or by submitting a paper application to the Delaware County Assistance Office (701 Crosby Street, Suite A, Chester, PA 19013). My office can also help complete and submit paper applications, or you can call the Delaware County LIHEAP Hotline at 610-447-3099 for assistance.

Property Tax Rent Rebate Deadline Approaching

Benefit Expansion Coming in 2024!

The deadline to file a claim for a Property Tax Rent Rebate (PTRR) for the 2022 calendar year is **December 31, 2023**. The PTRR program provides a state rebate on rent and property taxes paid in the year prior to income-eligible residents who are 65 or older; widows and widowers 50 or older; and people with disabilities 18 or older. The maximum standard rebate is \$650.

To be eligible for a 2022 rebate your household income must be \$35,000 or less if you are a homeowner, or \$15,000 or less if you are a renter. When applying, only half of your Social Security or Federal Railroad Retirement Tier I benefits will count toward your total income.

Next year, for the 2023 claim year, the maximum standard rebate will be increased to \$1,000. Additionally, to be eligible, your household income in 2023 will need to be \$45,000 or less for both renters and homeowners. An annual Cost of Living Adjustment has been established so that the program will keep pace with inflation and increases in Social Security benefits.

PTRR applications can be submitted online via [MyPath](#) or by mail. To help you submit your rebate application, my office will be hosting PTRR clinics throughout the district (see box for dates and locations), or you may call or stop by if you have additional questions or concerns.

SEPTA Senior ID Card Events

No appointments are required. Just stop by with an ID that contains your birth date, and your old SEPTA card if you are renewing.

- **Friday, January 12th**
10 a.m. to noon
Trinity Christian Reformed Church
144 Lawrence Rd., Broomall, 19008
- **Saturday, February 10th**
10 a.m. to noon
Lynnewood Elementary
1400 Lawrence Rd.,
Havertown, 19083
- **Friday, March 15th**
10 a.m. to noon
Surrey Senior Services
505 Park Way Dr., Broomall, 19008

Property Tax Rent Rebate Clinics

- **Friday, January 26th**
10am to 3pm
Trinity Christian Reformed Church
144 Lawrence Rd., Broomall, 19008
- **Saturday, February 24th**
10am to 3pm
Lynnewood Elementary
1400 Lawrence Rd.,
Havertown, 19083
- **Friday, March 29th**
10am to 3pm
Surrey Senior Services
505 Park Way Dr., Broomall, 19008

APPOINTMENTS REQUIRED

Call 610-789-3900 to check your eligibility, book your appointment, and receive the list of needed documentation to bring.

SEPTA Key Senior ID Cards

SEPTA Key Senior ID Cards (SEPTA Key Cards) allow seniors (65 years and older) to ride for free on all SEPTA service lines in Pennsylvania. The cards expire four years after issuance.

Due to COVID-19, SEPTA extended the expiration date on most cards to 2023, however normal card expirations will resume in 2024. This means that your Senior Key card will expire the last day of the month listed on the card. You cannot renew the card until the first day of your expiration month. For example, if your card is set to expire "08/24" you may renew as soon as 8/1/24, and that card will expire on 8/31/24.

My district office can submit first-time and renewing key card requests and take your photo. You will need to bring to my office identification containing your birth date, such as a Pennsylvania driver's license or non-driver ID, U.S. Passport, or birth certificate, and your expiring SEPTA card if you are renewing. No appointments are necessary. My office will be hosting SEPTA Key Card sign-ups throughout the district (see box for dates and locations).

To replace a lost or stolen SEPTA Senior Card, you must call SEPTA Customer Service at 855-567-3782.

State Could be Holding Your Unclaimed Property

The Pennsylvania Treasury is seeking the owners of more than \$3.5 billion in unclaimed property. One in 10 Pennsylvanians has money to claim that is legally theirs. Types of unclaimed property include checks from employers and utility companies, dividends and interest from savings accounts and stocks, and credit balances.

My office regularly checks the database for local residents to see if their names are listed, but you can conduct a search for yourself any time. Visit www.patreasury.gov to see if you have property with the state.

If you need help, my staff can help you search or claim something in your name.

Automatic Voter Registration at Driver and Photo License Centers

Pennsylvania has implemented automatic voter registration at Pennsylvania Department of Transportation driver and photo license centers. Now, if you are eligible, you will be automatically taken through the voter registration application when obtaining a new or renewed driver's license or ID unless you opt out of doing so. Previously, eligible voters were required to take additional steps to opt into the voter registration process. Automatic voter registration reduces paper application processing burdens, and electronic registrations are more secure and take a fraction of the time to process.

How I Voted

Each legislative session, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives casts nearly 2,000 votes on bills, amendments, resolutions, and procedural motions. The General Assembly's website (www.legis.state.pa.us) keeps a record of every vote taken, so you can see how I or any other legislator voted.

You can search by bill number, sponsor, or topic and find information on voting schedules, committee meetings, the schedule of session days, and more. Alternatively, you can always call my office to find out how I voted on an issue.

School Bus Stop-Arm Camera Program Extension

A new state law has indefinitely extended the School Bus Stop-Arm Camera Program and added additional provisions for the fine appeal process.

This program uses stop-arm cameras to catch motorists who disregard school bus stop signs and penalizes them with a fine of \$300. The stop-arm cameras program was established in 2018 and was set to expire this October.

The new law also ensures that motorists have the right to appeal fines. Vehicle owners will not be held liable if they were not the driver or if the camera was found to be out of compliance in terms of accuracy, certification, or calibration. A thorough police review is mandated to confirm any violations.

Shop for Health Insurance Online

Pennsylvanians can now enroll in 2024 health insurance coverage through Pennie until January 15, 2024. Pennie is Pennsylvania's official health and dental coverage marketplace and offers free meetings with Assistants who can help you understand what options are available for you.

To have a coverage effective date of January 1, 2024, you must enroll by December 15, 2023. Otherwise, following enrollments will have a coverage effective date of February 1st. Healthcare coverage through Pennie can only be purchased during Open Enrollment unless a person experiences a Qualifying Life Event, such as a loss of health coverage or changes in their household.

If you have questions or need enrollment assistance, call Pennie Customer Service at 1-844-844-8040 or visit www.Pennie.com/connect.

New PA Law Provides Free Breast Cancer Screening

A new PA law (Act 1 of 2023) helps people with a personal or family history of breast or ovarian cancer access genetic testing to know their cancer risk. Act 1 eliminated out-of-pocket costs associated with BRCA1 or BRCA 2 gene testing for hereditary breast and ovarian cancers. The law also eliminates out-of-pocket costs on supplemental breast MRI or ultrasound imaging for women who have a high risk of developing breast cancer.

Genetic testing for hereditary cancers is an invaluable tool that leads to early cancer detection and the chance of someone never developing cancer at all.

To find out if you qualify under Act 1 or to learn more, visit the PA Breast Cancer Coalition's Webpage at www.pabreastcancer.org/act-1-of-2023/

Updates to Dog Licensing Requirements

Changes have recently been made to Pennsylvania's dog licensing and enforcement laws. Beginning in March 2024, all dogs in Pennsylvania will be required to be licensed at the time of purchase or by three months old, whichever comes first, and fees and penalties for violations will be increased.



The annual dog license fee will be increased by \$2 to \$8.70, and lifetime licenses to \$52.70. Fines for unlicensed dogs currently range from \$100 to \$500, plus court costs. However, next year, criminal penalties for other violations of the dog law will be increased to \$500-\$1,000 for summary offenses and between \$1,000 to \$5,000 for misdemeanor offenses plus court costs.

Delaware County residents can purchase a dog license online at www.padoglicense.com or get a paper application by calling the Delaware County Treasurer's office at 610-891-4276.

Office Notary Services

Many official documents can be notarized for free in my district or satellite office. Please call ahead to make sure our notary is available and can notarize your type of document.

Some of the documents my office cannot notarize include birth certificates, car titles, wills, deeds, marriage certificates, mortgages, powers of attorney, personal financial documents, non-state pension documents, and the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9.

The person whose signature is to be notarized must sign the document in person and provide proof of identity. If you are unable to climb the stairs to my district office, our notary can meet you at your vehicle or you can visit my satellite office (144 Lawrence Road, Broomall, 19008) on Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Join My Email Update List

I maintain an email list for those who wish to receive periodic email updates about public meetings, traffic alerts, community events, state and local programs and services, and other items of interest to the community. To be added to that list, email RepVitali@pahouse.net with your name, address, and request.

Receive My Newsletter Electronically

In an effort to reduce postage costs and paper waste, you can opt out of receiving the paper version of my newsletter and receive only the electronic version.

Just email your name, request, and address to my office at RepVitali@pahouse.net.

District & Satellite Office Hours

My Havertown district office is open to help with your state-related matters from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Fridays.

You may also visit my Broomall satellite office, located at the former Trinity Christian Reformed Church (144 Lawrence Rd., 19008), on Thursdays

from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This office is on the ground floor and handicap accessible.

My staff can assist with SEPTA Senior ID cards, Property Tax/Rent Rebate forms, birth/death certificates, notary services, and more at both locations. No appointments are necessary to visit.