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The Senate overwhelmingly approved (41-7) legislation I co-authored with my Democratic colleague, Sen. Steve Santarsiero from Bucks County, that would prohibit the PA Treasury's Office, the State Employees' Retirement System, the Public School Employees' Retirement System and the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System from boycotting or divesting from Israel. The measure also would cut off state tax dollars from going to higher education institutions that boycott or divest from Israel.



Senate Bill 1260 sends a loud message that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania stands with its top ally in the Middle East – Israel. On Oct. 7, 2023, more than 1,000 Israelis, mostly civilians, were murdered by Hamas terrorists. U.S. college campuses experienced volatile antisemitic protests that called for the complete destruction of Israel.

Jewish students were required to shelter in place in their dorm rooms out of fear for their lives. Protesters were successful in getting some colleges to consider divesting from Israel, as well as companies that do business with the Israeli government.

In the wake of the Oct. 7 terrorist attacks, Pennsylvania's Treasurer Stacy Garrity, who supports the legislation, invested an additional $20 million in Israel bonds, bringing the Treasury's total investment in Israel to more than $56 million.

Set for Enactment: Senate Bill Expanding Access to



Legislation expanding access to telemedicine in Pennsylvania received final Senate approval and will be sent to the governor for enactment.

Telemedicine allows individuals to access health care services online using a computer, tablet or smartphone. It allows medical services to be provided to some of the most vulnerable Pennsylvanians who otherwise would not be able to receive them due to location or other circumstances.

Senate Bill 739 sets a base for how telemedicine will be covered by insurance companies and medical providers in Pennsylvania. The legislation requires:

- Health insurance policies to provide coverage for covered health care services delivered through telemedicine consistent with the insurer's medical policies.
- Insurers to pay providers for covered health care services delivered through telemedicine consistent with the terms of the contract between the insurer and participating network provider.
- Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) programs to pay for covered health care services consistent with federal and state law.

Felton Borough Celebrates 125th Anniversary



Congratulations to Felton Borough on its 125th anniversary! It was a pleasure to join in the celebration and present a Senate of Pennsylvania citation to commemorate this remarkable milestone of community spirit, hard work and dedication since 1899. The festivities continued throughout the day, finishing the celebration with fireworks in the evening.

You can find more photos from the celebration here.

Senate Approves Education Measures Putting Parents in the



The Senate of Pennsylvania approved a measure that would put parents in the driver's seat when it comes to their child's mental health treatment in school.

Schools are annually required to receive the consent of parents for their children to participate in various activities and services. Under Senate Bill 913, schools would also be required to receive parental consent before providing students with uncertified or unregulated behavioral health support. In-person, school-based counseling and licensed telehealth services would be unaffected by the bill.

Sen. Wayne Langerholc, who sponsored the measure, said, "Parents should be notified of third-party mental health services and be required to provide consent." I completely agree. Parents should always be in the driver's seat.

Additionally, the Senate advanced a bill to ensure children with autism, developmental delays or intellectual disabilities are better prepared to enter the classroom. The measure would allow parents or guardians to delay their children attending school for as long as one year.

Senate Bill 1157 would allow them to request a waiver from the Department of Education to delay compulsory attendance when their child reaches the age of six if:

- The child has been diagnosed by a qualified health professional with autism spectrum disorder or has been identified by the state as having developmental delays or intellectual disabilities.
- The child has been evaluated by a qualified health professional in the last six months and has been recommended for continued intensive early intervention services.
- The parent or guardian provides evidence of alternative services being provided or documentation of their efforts to obtain such services.

The bill would offer individualized learning and specialized approaches so children are able to develop the social and emotional skills necessary for future success.

Community Unites for Building Bridges for Brianna



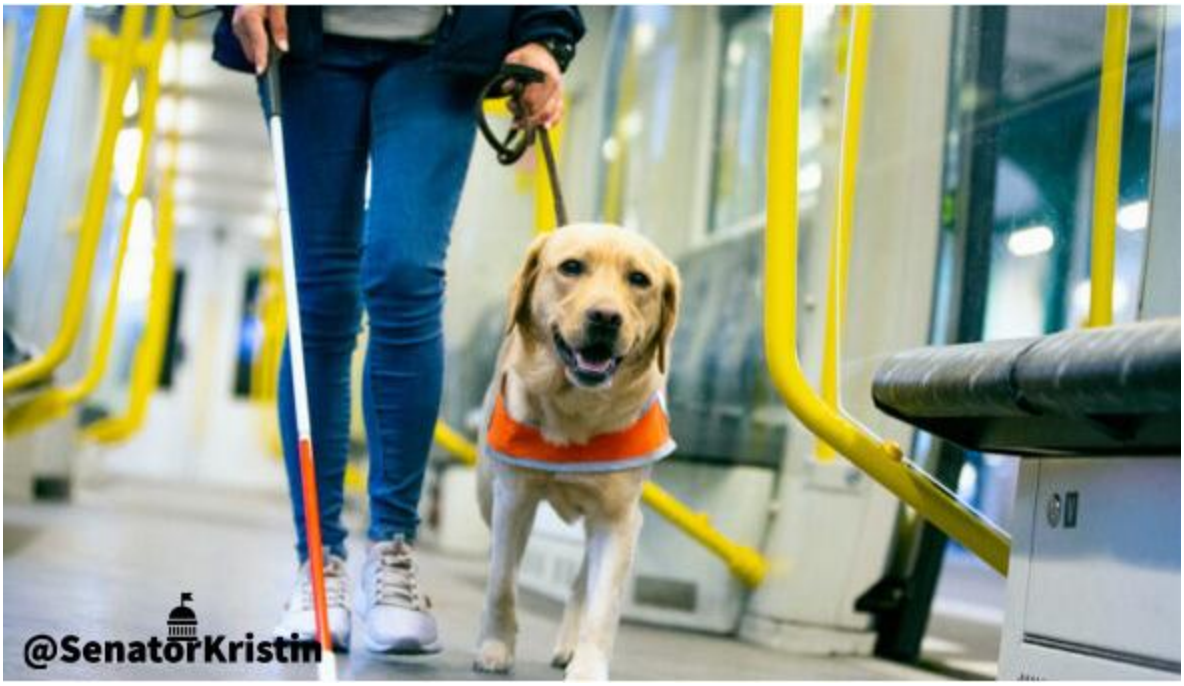
Thank you to everyone who braved the heat last weekend to support Building Bridges for Brianna's 4th Annual Bridge Building Festival! What started as Matt Dorgan's unimaginable sorrow has grown into a mission of hope for our entire community, especially for those struggling with mental health issues.

Brianna's beautiful life and legacy live on thanks to the community members who

compassion, and support for good mental health.

You can find more photos from the day here.

Senate Approves Bill to Expand Service Dog Fee Exemptions



The Senate approved my legislation to extend license fee exemptions to service dogs integral to fire departments, sheriff's offices and rescue services. This exemption, which previously applied only to municipal and state police departments, recognizes the invaluable contributions of service dogs in enhancing public safety.

Additionally, the measure addresses challenges from a recent revision to the state's dog law, allowing out-of-state residents to board their dogs in Pennsylvania-based kennels. With Senate approval, the bill now advances to the House of Representatives for consideration.



This week the Senate Finance Committee voted in approval of my legislation aimed at enhancing the Sales and Use Tax Vendor Discount, providing much-needed relief to small businesses across the state.

Small businesses are the backbone of our economy, and they faced unprecedented challenges in the past few years. The bill now heads to the full Senate for consideration. You can watch my remarks during the committee meeting on my YouTube channel.

Senate Republicans Continue Negotiations for Pro-Growth,



State budget negotiations are ongoing in Harrisburg, and we are encouraged by the dialogue between the Senate, House and governor. While it appears clear at this point that we will not have a full budget agreement which could be implemented by June 30, we are hopeful to reach a consensus very soon and avoid any negative impacts on the people of Pennsylvania. The Senate will return to session on Monday, July 1, at 3 p.m.

Senate Republicans continue to push for a spending plan that respects taxpayers, ensures existing resources are used wisely, and leads to economic and demographic growth in Pennsylvania. Since Gov. Josh Shapiro presented a budget plan in February that would increase overall spending by $3.2 billion, we have voiced the amount he wanted to spend is much higher than Senate Republicans believe is fiscally responsible.

I recently spoke with Dennis Owens of ABC27 about my concerns about overspending in the state budget as your state government cannot simply print money like the federal government can.

Learn more about the process of enacting the 2024-25 state budget and watch the Senate in session here.

Set for Enactment: Bill Providing Free Credit Monitoring for Data Breach Victims



Bipartisan legislation to strengthen notification requirements for data breaches and provide affected citizens with free credit monitoring for a year and a credit report is set to be signed into law. The bill was approved by the House of Representatives this week, following Senate passage last year.

Senate Bill 824 would cover instances in which an individual's first and last name or first initial and last name have been accessed in combination with any of the following information: Social Security number, bank account number, driver's license or state ID number. The bill also strengthens state notification requirements and mandates Attorney General notification if a data breach occurs in the commonwealth.

A record 3,122 data breaches occurred nationally in 2023, affecting hundreds of millions of Americans and costing billions of dollars, according to the Identity Theft Resource Center. It marked a 72% increase in data compromises from the previous all-time high in 2021.

Job Well Done: Congratulating Dr. Ioannidis on Retirement



After a day of session this week, I headed to Spring Grove Area School District to congratulate Dr. George Ioannidis on his well-deserved retirement. After more than 37 years of dedicated public service, Dr. Ioannidis' lasting impact on education and the Spring Grove community has made the school district a better place to live, work and raise a family.

Congratulations and best wishes on your next chapter!

A Day at the State Capitol: Susquehannock Student



Thank you to Anna Hombach, a rising sophomore at Susquehannock, who job shadowed me on a busy day at the state Capitol earlier this week. Anna participated in several meetings where they spoke with constituents and advocated for legislation supporting small businesses and Israel. She has a bright future ahead of her!



Independence Day is right around the corner, which means many of us will enjoy celebrations that include an American tradition: fireworks. Being aware of restrictions on consumer fireworks can help prevent injuries and property damage.

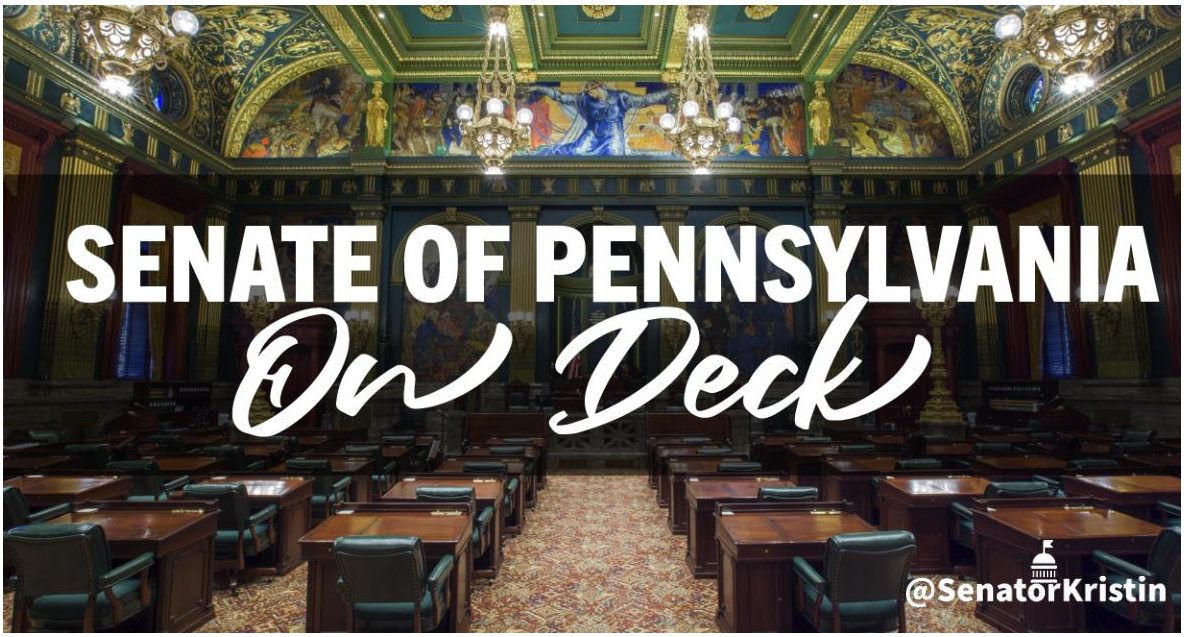
They cannot be discharged within 150 feet of a building or vehicle, regardless of whether the building or vehicle is owned by the user of the consumer fireworks. Fireworks cannot be discharged while the person is under the influence of alcohol, a controlled substance or another drug.

Read more about state restrictions, and check with your local municipality for applicable local ordinances.



Most weeks, PennDOT shares with me its maintenance schedule for the week ahead. When it becomes available, you can view the full list here to see if it will impact you and your family.

On Deck



The Senate of Pennsylvania reconvenes on Monday, July 1, at 3 p.m. You can watch all of the Senate votes and view our agenda here.

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