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Pennsylvania Electric Ratepayers Should Not Subsidize Maryland's Failed Energy Policies



Earlier this week, the Senate Consumer Protection & Professional Licensure Committee took a closer look at how electric bills are structured to help consumers better understand what they are paying for every month.

Transparency and clarity were key focuses as we discussed efforts to improve marketplace efficiency, reduce barriers for customers looking to switch suppliers, and address rising transmission and distribution charges.

With prolonged cold weather leading to higher utility bills, these conversations are more important than ever. You can watch my questions at this hearing on my YouTube channel in three parts: here, here, and here.

Honoring an American Hero: Harold "Bud" Pressel



This week at the Dallastown American Legion Post 605, I had the incredible honor of presenting a Senate citation to Harold “Bud” Pressel, a true American hero, as he received his long-overdue Purple Heart 80 years after his B-24 bomber was shot down over Germany during World War II.

Standing alongside Maj. Gen. David Lyons, commander of the Fifteenth Air Force, and the family of the late Maj. Richard Olson, we recognized the immense sacrifices made by these brave airmen, both of whom endured captivity as prisoners of war. Their courage and resilience serve as a powerful reminder of the dedication and service of our nation’s veterans.

This recognition was especially meaningful as Bud approaches his 101st birthday on Feb. 3. It was a privilege to celebrate this moment with him, his family, and our community. His legacy of valor will continue to inspire generations to come.

You can read more about Bud’s remarkable journey here and more photos from the event here.

Launching the Pennsylvania Competitiveness Caucus



Pennsylvania is ready to compete and win. Earlier this week, we launched the Pennsylvania Competitiveness Caucus, a bipartisan, bicameral effort to make our Commonwealth the best place for businesses, families, and economic prosperity.

This initiative comes as Pennsylvania faces significant challenges in attracting and retaining business investment. Currently ranked 41st for business friendliness, we risk losing opportunities to other states with more competitive policies.

I have heard from many business owners in our community who are trying to start or expand their businesses, only to run into roadblocks at every turn. Whether it's delays in permitting, burdensome regulations, or a lack of workforce support, these challenges are making it harder for Pennsylvania to compete. That's unacceptable, and it's why this caucus is committed to breaking down the barriers that slow economic growth.

The Pennsylvania Competitiveness Caucus will focus on key public policy areas, including tax reform, workforce development, regulatory efficiency, and other factors that shape our business environment. By working together across party lines, members will push for meaningful reforms that promote job creation, sustainable growth, and a stronger economy.

You can watch the event below:



The game plan is clear: we need to create opportunities, streamline processes, and ensure Pennsylvania is a top contender for business investment. The launch of this caucus is just the beginning. Stay tuned as we work to position Pennsylvania as a leader in economic performance, ensuring prosperity and opportunity for all.

Senate Acts to Fight Waste, Fraud and Abuse in Public Assistance Programs



This week, the Senate passed three bills to stop waste, fraud and abuse in Pennsylvania's Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medical Assistance program (Medicaid). The bills will be sent to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for consideration.

Senate Bill 155 would prevent deceased people from receiving benefits by requiring the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) to check death certificates at the Bureau of Vital Statistics against recipients of public assistance. A state audit previously found 2,324 deceased public assistance recipients received benefits totaling $700,000 in a 12-month period.

Senate Bill 156 would require DHS to compare wage records held by employers and the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue with public assistance recipients quarterly to prevent fraud. From 2019-23, the Pennsylvania Office of State Inspector General filed more than 2,900 criminal complaints of welfare fraud, with more than $15 million owed in restitution.

Senate Bill 157 would update the Public Assistance Integrity Act to require DHS to issue a yearly report on its efforts to ensure lottery winners are not receiving cash benefits. The Public Assistance Integrity Act, a bipartisan initiative signed into law in

2018, closed a loophole that did not require lottery winnings to be considered as income when determining eligibility for benefits.

New Law Conveniently Returns Money to Pennsylvanians



Money you weren't expecting may soon be coming your way! The Pennsylvania Treasury Department sent the first batch of letters this week to people who have unclaimed property, thanks to legislation passed by Senate Republicans.

The new law, PA Money Match, allows the Pennsylvania Treasury to automatically return certain unclaimed property. Eligible properties must be valued at $500 or less and belong to a single owner. Those with eligible properties will receive a letter in the mail to confirm their address. After doing so, they will receive a check for their property in about 45 days.

Pennsylvania Treasurer Stacy Garrity announced this week that the first round of PA Money Match has the potential to return more than $2 million to more than 8,000 Pennsylvanians – and more will be coming later this year. Treasury is working to return more than $4.5 billion in unclaimed property, which includes things like dormant bank accounts, uncashed checks, rebates, insurance payments and more.

Check if you have unclaimed property, and contact my office if you need any assistance in filing a claim.

Game Commission Provides Avian Influenza Information



Earlier this year, the Pennsylvania Game Commission announced that highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) was the cause of death for wild waterfowl in northeastern Pennsylvania.

To best protect the health of wildlife, domestic animals and humans, the Game Commission asks the public to assist them by doing the following:

- Report sick or dead wild birds to the commission by calling 1-833-PGC-WILD (1-833-742-9453), emailing pgc-wildlifehealth@pa.gov or using the online Wildlife Health Survey
- Dispose of a dead wild bird found on your property – if the commission hasn't responded within 24 hours – by burial or commercial/residential trash. Both methods will protect scavenging wildlife. If electing to dispose of the carcass, the following guidance is provided:

- Before picking up the wild bird carcass, put on disposable or washable gloves. If gloves are unavailable, a plastic bag can be used as a makeshift glove.
- If performing on-site burial, a burial hole at least two feet deep will discourage scavenging. Do not bury the carcass in an area that could contaminate a water supply.
- If disposing of the carcass in commercial/residential trash, place the carcass in a plastic bag along with any disposal gloves that were used. Then place everything in a second plastic bag before disposal.
- Once disposal is complete, immediately wash your hands and any non-disposable gloves that were used.

Because HPAI impacts more than just wildlife, please also report any sick or dead domestic bird to the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture at 717-772-2852. Anyone who isn't feeling well after having contact with sick or dead birds is encouraged to contact their primary care physician or the Pennsylvania Department of Health at 877-724-3258.

York College's Workforce-Driven Mission



York College of Pennsylvania continues to build strong local partnerships that prepare students for career success. This week, I joined the York County legislative delegation and county commissioners to discuss ways we can collaborate to ensure the college remains a national leader in education and workforce development.

It was great to hear that enrollment trends and admission applications continue to rise year over year, reflecting the college's growing impact. From manufacturing to agriculture, York College works closely with industry leaders to tackle workforce challenges and drive research that benefits our region.

Bill Enabling World Cup Team Doctors to Practice in PA Receives Senate Support



With World Cup soccer set to come to Philadelphia, the Senate approved legislation enabling international team doctors to treat their players in the commonwealth. The bill now moves to the House of Representatives for consideration.

Philadelphia will host the FIFA Club World Cup this summer and the FIFA World Cup in 2026. In both of those contests, athletes will be supported by their traveling team doctors. Under current law, each international doctor would be required to obtain a

medical license from the Pennsylvania State Board of Medicine to treat players, even for just a single match.

Senate Bill 184 would exempt international team doctors from needing to obtain a Pennsylvania medical license to care for their athletes. Much like how the law treats team physicians licensed in other states, international doctors would be limited to treatment of just their players and would be prohibited from practicing in all health care facilities in the commonwealth.

Recognizing National School Choice Week



Students succeed in different environments. By giving families the opportunity to choose their child's school, students will be more successful and better prepared to enter the workforce with skills that will make Pennsylvania competitive in a variety of fields.

When campaigning, Gov. Josh Shapiro agreed with the Senate Republican perspective that parents need greater school choice, and we intend to hold him to

that promise. Families and educators visited the Capitol this week to highlight this important need in honor of National School Choice Week.

We will continue to lead efforts in 2025-26 to increase parental involvement in the education of their children. Parents know best and should be able to choose the education option that allows their children to succeed.

Welcoming Reverend Dr. Daniel Moore to the Senate



It was a privilege to welcome Reverend Dr. Daniel Moore from Guinston Presbyterian Church in Airville as guest chaplain in the Senate this week. His willingness to step in at the last minute is a true testament to his dedication to serving others.

Joining him on the Senate floor were his daughters, Marilla and Cora, and it was a pleasure to have them with us for this moment.

Celebrating New Business Growth in New Freedom



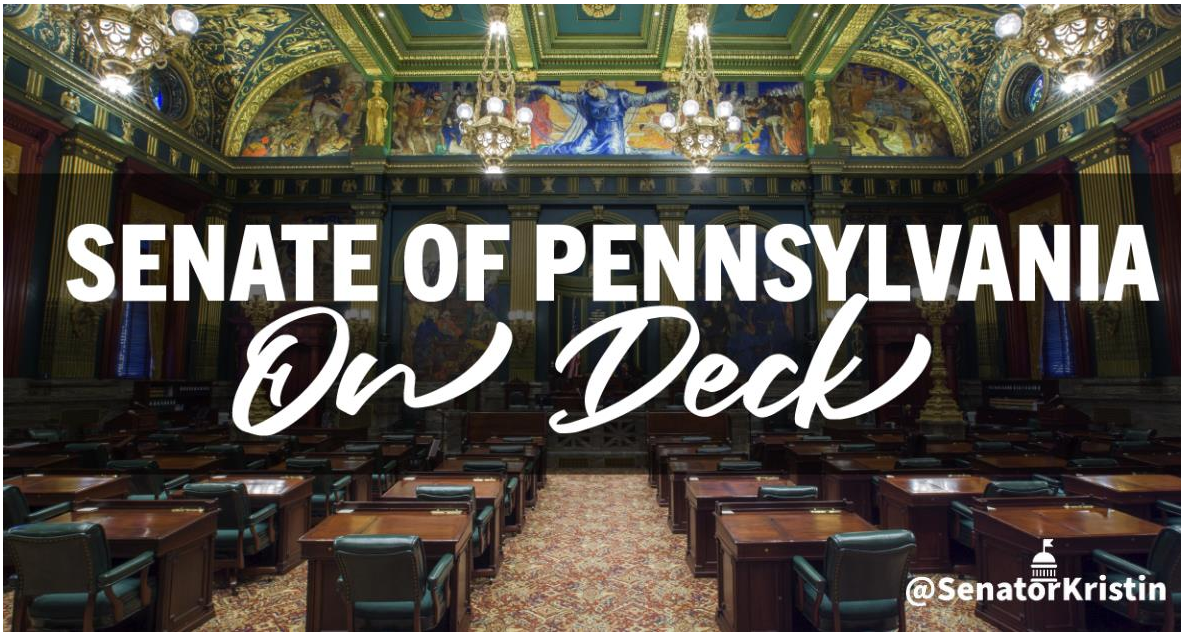
This past week, my team joined the York County Economic Alliance and Rep. Kate Klunk for the ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the grand opening of Sherwin-Williams in New Freedom. Located at 836 E. Forrest Ave., this new addition highlights continued business growth in our community. Supporting local businesses and economic development remains a top priority, and I look forward to seeing the positive impact this expansion will have in York County.

Upcoming PennDOT Maintenance Projects



Most weeks, PennDOT provides me with its upcoming maintenance schedule. While my team and I aim to keep this information up to date, please note that the page may not always reflect the latest changes. For the most accurate details, I recommend checking back on Friday afternoons or over the weekend, as we usually receive updates from PennDOT on Fridays. You can view the full list here to see if any roadwork might impact you and your family.

On Deck



The Senate of Pennsylvania reconvenes on Monday, Feb. 3, at 1 p.m. Additionally, Gov. Josh Shapiro will present his budget for the 2025-26 fiscal year. Follow me on X for all of the latest updates on session convening times, as well as my input on how we protect your tax dollars in the upcoming budget negotiations. You can watch all of the Senate votes and view our agenda here.

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