



STATE REPRESENTATIVE | 65TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

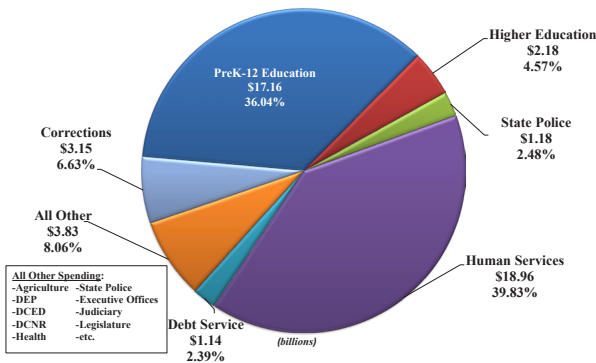
KATHY L. RAPP

SUMMER 2024



## LATE BUDGET HURTS TAXPAYERS, HELPS SCHOOLS

FY 2024-25 Budget \$47.60 Billion



This budget was not just late; it spends too much money. It calls for nearly \$3 billion more in spending than the previous budget. That's a 6% increase, and more money than the Commonwealth will collect in revenue. Sooner or later, this will overburden Pennsylvania taxpayers. I couldn't support such an unsustainable spending plan.

While we do have a healthy surplus and Rainy Day Fund, those are supposed to be saved for emergencies. They aren't meant to fund programs that will create recurring expenses. If we continue tapping into these funds, the money we're saving for a rainy day will be gone.

With that being said, I fully support some of the programs this budget funds. In particular, I'm glad to see another increase in education funding. Total 2024-25 Basic Education funding for 65th District public schools is as follows:

- *Corry Area School District – \$16.84 million, \$352,563 increase.*
- *Forest Area School District – \$3.77 million, \$98,922 increase.*
- *Penncrest School District – \$20.61 million, \$219,029 increase.*
- *Titusville Area School District – \$17.26 million, \$373,636 increase.*
- *Union City Area School District – \$10.69 million, \$156,705 increase.*
- *Warren County School District – \$29.33 million, \$510,924 increase.*

## SUPPORTING RURAL HEALTH CARE

For years, a public health crisis has been worsening within Pennsylvania's rural communities: a crisis of access to health care. For a variety of reasons, hospitals in rural communities across the Commonwealth have been forced to either shut their doors or close specific hospital units that provide essential health care, such as maternity units.

One way to address both the health care practitioner shortage and rural access to health care crisis is to provide incentives for licensed nurses and physicians to live and work in rural communities. This is an investment not only in the future of rural health care, but also in the communities they serve. I am proposing the Rural Health Care Grant Program, which would provide financial incentives through the Department of Health to do just that.

Under [House Bill 2382](#), hospitals in rural counties or in designated medically underserved areas may apply for grants from the Department of Health to assist with the hiring of health care practitioners at their facility. The hospitals can use this funding to incentivize licensed nurses and physicians to apply for open positions, as the money from the grant will assist in paying off their student loans.

This program will be extremely valuable to both rural hospitals and young health care practitioners.

## MY AMENDMENT RESTORES COMMON SENSE TO DOULA BILL

Another bill I amended that would extend Medicaid coverage to doula services has been unanimously approved by the House. My amendment removed the term "pregnant individual" and replaced it with the word "mother," reversing a change made in a prior amendment.

We don't celebrate "Pregnant Individual's Day," we celebrate Mother's Day. The word "mother" was in the original bill, but it was removed by an amendment that passed the House Health Committee by a party-line vote, with all Republicans voting no. With the bill restored to its original form, it returned to a measure I wholeheartedly support. Doulas provide vital support to women across the Commonwealth during pregnancy and childbirth.

[House Bill 1608](#) is now pending consideration by the Senate.





## Reforming PBM's Protecting Patients

# LEGISLATION TO PROTECT PHARMACIES, RESIDENTS WHO DEPEND UPON PRESCRIPTION DRUGS BECOMES LAW

A bill I supported aimed at protecting pharmacies and patients across Pennsylvania has been signed into law.

**Act 77 of 2024** reforms the practices of Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) operating within the Commonwealth. The new law aims to bring transparency and fairness to the pharmaceutical industry by requiring PBMs to disclose financial information on rebates and payments received from drug manufacturers and how these funds are distributed. Additionally, the legislation seeks to limit or ban practices like patient steering and clawbacks, which can be detrimental to consumers and pharmacies. Under the act, the Pennsylvania Insurance Department will also develop a process for resolving certain pharmacy complaints against PBMs.



# R E F O R M I N G PENNSYLVANIA'S PERMITTING PROCESS

Another important change made in this year's budget is some much-needed reform of Pennsylvania's permitting process. A program called Streamlining Permits for Economic Expansion and Development (SPEED) has been rolled into the budget plan to make several key improvements to state permitting processes for several key PA Department of Environmental Protection permits designed to reduce delays in development and business expansion projects.

Some of the changes will allow employers to work with third-party professionals to facilitate permit application reviews, establish timeframes with clear accountability measures for permit responses and implement measures for easier and more transparent tracking of permit applications.

These changes will help streamline the permitting process, further encouraging investment and job creation.



# PUSHING FOR LEGISLATION TO HELP VETERANS' FAMILIES

I'm happy to have supported a bipartisan bill to help the families of Pennsylvania veterans.

Last year, the Pennsylvania Department of Health issued a notice clarifying that a veteran's spouse will only qualify for a fee-waived death certificate if the spouse predeceases the veteran, which was a change from the traditional policy. The issuance of these death certificates is done without a fee to the veteran's family.

**House Bill 1963** would amend the Vital Statistics Law of 1953 to make it explicit that the spouses and dependents of veterans are entitled to receive fee-waived death certificates.

This bill passed the House unanimously, and now heads to the Senate for consideration.





## MARKING MEMORIAL DAY

I was honored to be asked to speak at this year's Warren American Legion Memorial Day service. It was a beautiful ceremony fitting for honoring our fallen heroes.



## CRAWFORD COUNTY SCOUT EARNS EAGLE

I presented a House citation to Logan Grantham for earning the rank of Eagle Scout! To fulfill his community service requirement, Logan constructed four benches for the Rose Hill Cemetery. Congrats, Logan!



## JUNIOR GRANGE AMBASSADOR VISITS THE CAPITOL

Braden Thompson visited the Capitol as part of his duties as a Pennsylvania Junior Grange Ambassador. These ambassadors advocate for issues that affect children, including education, nutrition and agriculture. Braden is a member of Watson Junior Grange No. 385 of Warren County. His future is bright!



## CABLE HOLLOW GOLF COURSE GRAND OPENING

There's a new spot for golfers to hit the links in the 65th Legislative District! I was in attendance for the grand opening of Cable Hollow Golf Course in Pine Grove Township. Best wishes for future success to Arthur Stewart, his family and the Cable Hollow staff!



## TRACKING SASQUATCH AT THE BIGFOOT FESTIVAL!

I tracked Bigfoot to Marienville, just in time for the Forest County Bigfoot Festival! It was another great event packed with food trucks, vendors and the annual hunt for Bigfoot hidden in the Allegheny National Forest!



## CONCEALED CARRY SEMINAR

Thanks to everyone who came out to my Concealed Carry Seminar! Thanks to Crawford County Sheriff Dave Powers and Pennsylvania State Police Trooper Cindy Schick for sharing your knowledge with us.



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COUNTRY STAR RETURNS HOME TO  
CRAWFORD COUNTY

I was happy to attend the unveiling of a new sign in Townville, recognizing it as the hometown of Grammy-winning Grand Ole Opry legend Jeannie Seeley!

Jeannie is credited with appearing on the Grand Ole Opry stage more than any other performer, with more than 5,000 appearances in her nearly 60-year tenure. Not only was she the first Pennsylvania native to be invited to become a member, but she was also the first female to regularly host Opry segments.

Rep. Lee James and I presented Jeannie with a PA House citation recognizing her continuing success! The entire Pennsylvania House of Representatives also recognized her in 2017 with [House Resolution 259](#), marking her 50th anniversary of being a member of the Grand Ole Opry.

UNCONSTITUTIONAL GUN CONTROL BILLS  
DEFEATED IN THE HOUSE

House Democrats recently called up two gun-control bills that would have stifled Second Amendment rights and made criminals out of law-abiding gun owners.

**House Bill 335** would have criminalized multi-burst trigger activators by adding them to a list of “offensive weapons” currently prohibited by the Pennsylvania Crimes Code. A violation of this law carries a penalty of a first-degree misdemeanor, making criminals out of law-abiding gun owners who use this technology. **House Bill 2206** would have created a digital registry of firearms. Back in 2019, the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General created the Track and Trace Initiative to assist in tracing gun crimes and preventing gun trafficking. This gave willing firearm retailers the ability to submit their sales records electronically. Why is the current system suddenly insufficient?

Thankfully, these bills were defeated when one House Democrat crossed party lines to vote in favor of Second Amendment rights and individual liberty.