



State Senator CHRISTINE M.  
**TARTAGLIONE**

*Update to the Residents of the 2nd Senatorial District*

## 2nd District Happenings



**INSIDE** ♦ Gender Pay Equality ♦ Budget Passes Early  
♦ Raising the Minimum Wage ♦ Community Outreach



## ◆ STATE BUDGET UPDATE

Workforce development, education funding, school and community safety and support for Pennsylvanians with disabilities were among the major achievements of the Fiscal 2018-19 state budget that the Senate passed by a 47-2 margin on June 22, one week ahead of the annual June 30 deadline.

The bipartisan budget holds the line on taxes while expanding funding for job training, basic education, higher education, programs for the disabled and safety initiatives for schools and communities.

The approved budget includes increases of **\$100 million** for K-12 education, **\$20 million** for Pre-K programs, **\$22 million** for community colleges and state-owned universities, **\$30 million** for career and technical education through the PA SMART initiative and **\$15 million** for special education. It also includes a new **\$7 million** apprenticeship training program and a **\$3 million** increase to industry partnerships, both through PA SMART. It provides intellectual disability services to 800 recent high school graduates as well as 100 adults on the emergency services waiting list.

Coinciding with the passage of the budget bill, the Senate unanimously approved the creation of the Keystone Scholars Grant Program, which directs the Treasury Department to set aside **\$100** for each child born in 2019 in the Commonwealth so that the money, along with any investment earnings it accrues, will be available to the child when he or she reaches age 18 and enrolls in a qualifying institution of higher education or vocational/technical school.

Further, the legislature also passed a **\$60 million** school and community anti-violence package that will allow municipalities, institutions of higher education, community-based organizations and other entities to apply for funds to support anti-violence initiatives. The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency will administer the grants through a School Safety and Security Committee. The objective is to reduce violence in schools by addressing it at the community level. ■



## ◆ PECO Customers Speak Out on Rate Hike

Senator Tartaglione hosted a hearing of the Public Utility Commission in Mayfair in June to allow constituents the opportunity to comment on PECO's latest proposed electric rate increase. Dozens of rate payers provided oral and written testimony to a panel of administrative law judges at the Devon Theater.

While some speakers criticized the current costs of electric service and called upon providers like PECO to use more alternative, environmentally sustainable fuels to power the grid, other commenters praised PECO for its long record of service to the community and support of organizations like the Greater Northeast Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce and the Girl Scouts.

PECO requested the rate increase in late March. Under the proposal, a residential customer who uses 700 kilowatt hours a month would see their usage cost increase by **\$3.28** (3.2 percent) to **\$105.93**. Also, PECO proposes to raise the monthly residential customer charge from **\$8.45** to **\$12.50**. The rates would go into effect on January 1, 2019.

PECO last received approval for a rate increase in December 2015 when customers saw a four percent hike. The company provides electricity to about **1.6 million** customers in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia and York counties. ■

## ◆ Senator Hosts Financial Freedom Event in District

Income tax season can be a trying time of the year, but Senator Tartaglione made filing tax returns a lot easier for dozens of constituents on April 10 as she hosted a Financial Freedom for Working Families workshop at her Bridge Street district office. The event provided free tax services, unclaimed property searches, rent rebate applications, home heating assistance applications and Earned Income Tax Credit information.

Certified public accountants from the Campaign for Working Families prepared basic income tax forms on-site for the first time. Based on the strong constituent response, the inaugural program served an urgent community need. Senator Tartaglione partnered with Pennsylvania Treasurer Joe Torsella to present the workshop.



About a dozen visitors were already on hand when the four-hour event kicked off at 10 a.m. Volunteer CWF tax professionals prepared 2017 income tax returns for many visitors. The non-profit organization also provides free tax services throughout the filing season at 2113 Cottman Avenue.

Other constituents took advantage of the state treasurer's unclaimed property services. One searcher found the hidden proceeds from an old blue-chip stock transaction, while another found savings in a long-forgotten bank account. Others claimed old, uncashed paychecks and unused retail credits or gift cards.

Those wishing to search for unclaimed property on their own can do so anytime by visiting the website **PATreasury.gov** and following the "Unclaimed Property" link on the "Programs" menu. Make sure to use the official PA Treasury site. The home page URL address must contain the ".gov" domain.

In addition, Senator Tartaglione's staff helped many constituents prepare their rent and property tax rebate applications and home-heating assistance (**LIHEAP**) applications. The rent and property tax rebate program is ongoing. Claims for 2017 must be filed by December 31, 2018. The 2018-19 LIHEAP program will open on October 1 and run through early spring. ■



## Legislative Update

### ◆ Senator Tartaglione leads effort to raise PA's outdated minimum wage

Earlier this year, Senator Tartaglione introduced **Senate Bill 1044** that would raise Pennsylvania's minimum wage for the first time in more than a decade, help low-wage earners to keep pace with inflation and enable them to share in the prosperity of the nation's economic recovery.

The measures proposed in the bill are long overdue.

Pennsylvania last enacted a minimum wage increase in 2006 when Senator Tartaglione was the primary sponsor of the enabling legislation. The Commonwealth's minimum wage earners last got a raise three years later when the federal government made \$7.25 an hour the nation's benchmark. Since then, 29 states and many localities have passed their own minimum wage increases above the federal level, but Pennsylvania has not.

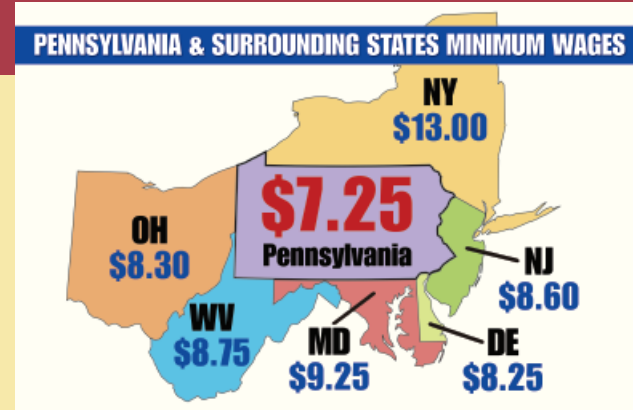
Our minimum wage is still **\$7.25** for most workers (**\$2.83 for tip earners**), a rate less than those in effect in all six of our bordering states, ranging from **\$8.25** in Delaware to **\$13.00** in New York.

Senator Tartaglione's bill proposes to raise our minimum wage to **\$12** immediately and to **\$15** by 2024, followed by annual cost of living adjustments. The bill would directly benefit an estimated **1.7 million** workers immediately, including 33,000 residents of the 2nd Senate District according to the Keystone Research Center. By 2024, **2.2 million** Pennsylvanians and 43,000 2nd district residents, that's 40 percent of the district's total workforce, would benefit directly.

As things stand, a typical minimum wage earner can't make ends meet on his or her own, according to Keystone. The average monthly expenses for a single adult living in Philadelphia amount to **\$2,785**, allowing for housing, food, transportation, health care, other necessities and taxes. But a full-time minimum wage earner makes just **\$1,257** per month, based on a 40-hour work week.

While critics of minimum wage reform often claim that the affected jobs are meant to be part-time, entry-level positions and not family sustaining jobs, the facts show that 97 percent of Philadelphians that would benefit from **SB 1044** are adults, while 72 percent are full-time workers.

**SB 1044** would also benefit local economies across the Commonwealth. Low-wage earners are also consumers. Raising the minimum wage increases their spending power and supports the businesses they patronize in their communities. ■



### ◆ Sexual Harassment Legislation Introduced

*"Sexual harassment occurs more often than we think and more often than it's reported," Tartaglione said. "I want workers to understand the protections available to them. I want the reporting process to be easier. I want to protect victims from retaliation by their employer when they do report it."*

Sexual harassment in the workplace has become an issue at the forefront of public consciousness thanks to the brave survivors who have stepped forward to tell their stories as part of the **"#MeToo"** movement.

In Harrisburg, Senator Tartaglione and several of her colleagues introduced legislation that seeks to broaden workers' protections against sexual harassment and to empower victims in those disturbing instances when it occurs.

The multi-bill package in the Senate proposes various modifications and additions to the state's Human Relations Act and Whistleblower Law. It would expand application of the act to all employers rather than only those with four or more employees. It would extend the statute of limitations for victims to report harassment and ensure their right to have the cases tried by jury.

The legislation would require businesses to present biennial, interactive anti-harassment training to employees and expand protections of the act to non-employee contractors, unpaid interns and domestic workers such as housekeepers. It would ensure that those who report workplace sexual harassment, the whistleblowers, have essentially the same protections as harassment victims. ■





## ◆ Wissinoming Park Gets Long Overdue Improvements



The children of Wissinoming and their families are reaping the benefits of a collaboration between city and state officials, along with neighborhood volunteers, that

produced **\$1.5 million** in improvements to the 42-acre Wissinoming Park this spring.

Senator Tartaglione joined local and state officials for a ceremonial ribbon cutting in the newly renovated park. The improvements were months in the making and include a newly equipped playground area, water spray area, walking paths, rain gardens that help manage storm water flow and picnic grove. The project also included installing security cameras, the creation of a “Cultivate Respect” mural on the park’s recreation building, the planting of 40 new trees and accessibility improvements.

In a multi-agency effort, Senator Tartaglione helped the project secure funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation of Natural Resources. The work also received support from Philadelphia Parks and Recreation, Mural Arts, Philadelphia Water Department, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Fairmount Park Conservancy, Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia and Friends of Wissinoming Park.

A colorful mural adorning the recreation building features bigger-than-life images of long-stemmed flowers and butterflies in flight with the slogan featuring prominently on the structure’s angled walls. An act of vandalism at a nearby Jewish cemetery in early 2017 inspired the artwork. ■



## ◆ Working for YOU!

### ■ COMMUNITY GRANTS

Senator Tartaglione has always believed that strong neighborhood-based organizations like youth sports leagues, veterans groups and civic associations are integral to establishing and improving vibrant communities. The 2nd Senate District is fortunate to have many of these strong organizations to serve and support local families.

This spring, the senator enthusiastically marched in the annual parade through Fox Chase that celebrates the start of the Fox Rok Athletic Association youth baseball season. As team sponsor of the junior Phillies, Senator Tartaglione swapped baseball stories with the players and coaches, tossed out the season’s ceremonial first pitch and presented the youth organization with a state grant to help ensure its continued success.

While the Fox-Rok parade is a decades-old tradition, Juniata Park Boys and Girls Club’s parade is relatively new. But it’s growing by leaps and bounds. The senator joined dozens of ballplayers, musicians, dancers and Vejigante – the colorful character from Puerto Rican folklore that represents the island’s festive spirit – in a march through neighborhood streets to the club’s Cayuga Street home.

Senator Tartaglione is helping to secure state funding for the Boys and Girls Club program, as well as the championship football programs of the Frankford Chargers and Oxford Circle Raiders, the U.S. military veterans of Lloyd C. Wilson Jr. American Legion Post 224 and the Lawncrest Community Association. ■

### ■ TRANSPORTATION GRANTS

One of Philadelphia’s most hazardous roads and one of the city’s elementary schools will each become safer thanks to a pair of million-dollar transportation grants awarded by the state within Senator Tartaglione’s 2nd district.

Gov. Tom Wolf and PennDOT Secretary Leslie S. Richards recently announced the award of **\$1 million** to the City of Philadelphia for new pedestrian sidewalks and bus stop improvements on SEPTA’s Direct Bus route along Roosevelt Boulevard. Also, the administration selected the city for **\$995,000** in funding to create a “*slow zone*” around William Cramp Elementary School in Fairhill.

The projects were among 82 approved by the administration statewide through the Surface Transportation Block Grant program Set-Aside and Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside, representing a combined investment of **\$66.8 million**.

The Direct Bus route serves Roosevelt Boulevard between Frankford Transportation Center and the Neshaminy Mall in Bensalem Township. The route took effect on February 25, 2018, and includes a fleet of 60 buses easily recognizable by their distinct branding, including a bright green color scheme and large “D” logo.

Cramp School, at 3449 N. Mascher St., serves about 600 children from kindergarten through fifth grade. The slow zone will consist of traffic calming interventions to reduce vehicle speeds, promote safety and advance the city’s commitment to eliminating all traffic deaths, an initiative known as Vision Zero. ■

### ■ Annual Picnics Help Schoolkids

Senator Tartaglione’s annual Community Picnic series proved to be a hit once again as hundreds of children and their families joined the fun at three locations in the 2nd district: Fairhill Square Park on August 2, Wissinoming Park on August 16 and Fox Chase Recreation Center on August 23.

Each participating child walked away with a brand-new backpack stuffed with a trove of school supplies for the upcoming academic year. The young learners and their families also enjoyed music, dancing, free water ice and soft pretzels.

For those who missed the picnics, the senator is planning to do it all again next summer. “Senator Tina Tartaglione” on Facebook, “@SenTartaglione” on Twitter and “Senator\_Tartaglione” on Instagram – to stay up to date on her full event schedule.





## ◆ Lawmakers Tour Hi-Tech Carpenters Training Center

Senator Tartaglione, the Democratic chair of the Pennsylvania Senate Labor & Industry Committee, joined several of her colleagues on a recent tour of the Northeast Regional Council of Carpenters Training Center in Philadelphia, where they witnessed how labor and industry are partnering through a state-supported apprenticeship program to meet the growing need for skilled craftsmen and women.

Joining Tartaglione on the tour were Labor & Industry Majority Chair Kim Ward, Senate Education Committee Democratic Chair Andrew Dinniman and Senator John Sabatina, whose district includes the training center site at 10401 Decatur Road.

Constructed more than 35 years ago, the training center has seen many additions over the years so that today's apprentices receive instruction in a 60,000-square-foot indoor space with designated shops for general carpentry, interior systems, cabinetmaking, floor laying, millwrighting, pile driving, lathing and welding. Even underwater welding is part of the hands-on curriculum inside the center's large dive tank.

The facility also has nine classrooms and a 125-seat, theater-style lecture hall for blueprint, math and layout & theory courses. There is a state-of-the-art computer learning center for introductory and software-specific instruction.

During the tour, Northeast Regional Council hosts highlighted the increasing demand among young people for vocational training programs and among employers for skilled, well-trained workers. To help meet this demand, the union is partnering with many employers who sponsor trainees with the expectation that they will hire the apprentices upon completion of their coursework. ■



## ◆ Tartaglione Fights for Equal Pay for Women

*"Women with the same education, training, skills and job responsibilities as their male counterparts should be paid the same. But that's still not happening."*

Senator Tartaglione joined Gov. Tom Wolf, other elected officials and women's rights advocates at the Capitol in June to announce a new package of measures that seek to eradicate Pennsylvania's gender pay gap.

Pennsylvania's working women collect just 79 cents for every dollar that their male counterparts make based on median annual earnings, ranking the Commonwealth 29th among U.S. states according to the American Association of University Women. Nationally, women make about 80 cents for every dollar that men make.

"In 1959, the Pennsylvania legislature passed a law to correct the gender pay gap, yet here we are, almost 60 years later, and women are still getting short-changed," Tartaglione said. "Women with the same education, training, skills and job responsibilities as their male counterparts should be paid the same. But that's still not happening."

Tartaglione's **Senate Bill 1200** focuses on several key areas of Pennsylvania's existing Equal Pay Law. It would redefine "wages" to include non-monetary compensation and would define "comparable work" based on skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions, while precluding the use of job title as a factor in pay differential.

Further, **SB 1200** would require employers to defend pay differentials and would expand the powers of the state's Department of Labor and Industry and Attorney General to pursue unpaid wages and damages claims on behalf of employees.

A separate bill in the package would protect an employee's right to discuss her or his wages and would make it unlawful for an employer to require a prospective employee to disclose past wages.

Gov. Wolf endorsed both new Senate bills and issued an executive order mandating pay equality for state employees. ■



## ◆ Out and About in the 2nd District



Senator Tartaglione helped launch the annual youth baseball seasons in Juniata Park (top left) and Fox Chase (bottom left). She toured the City Year improvements at Cramp Elementary School (top right) and celebrated the 100th birthday of Philadelphia Protestant Home resident Helen Harnatkiewicz (bottom right).



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## Senior Expos Coming this Fall

***Senator Tartaglione invites the community to attend her three upcoming Senior Fairs at locations around the 2nd district.***

**Thursday, September 27 • Mayfair Community Center • 2990 Saint Vincent Street**

**Thursday, October 4 • St. Anne's Rectory PAL Center • 2328 E. Lehigh Avenue**

**Thursday, October 11 • Fox Chase Rec Center • 7901 Ridgeway Street**

All senior fairs will run from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and offer information about a wide range of senior-specific services. Attendees can learn about government programs, health care, housing, financial services, accessibility and many other topics.

***No reservations are required. Call Senator Tartaglione's district office at 215-533-0440 for more information.***



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**Follow me on social media to stay up to date on my event schedule:  
"Senator Tina Tartaglione" on Facebook, "@SenTartaglione" on Twitter, "Senator\_Tartaglione" on Instagram**

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### OFFICES TO SERVE YOU

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