



State Senator MARIA COLLETT

Representing the 12th Senatorial District

Winter/Spring 2022

Inside:

- Harrisburg Update
- In the Community
- Upcoming Events

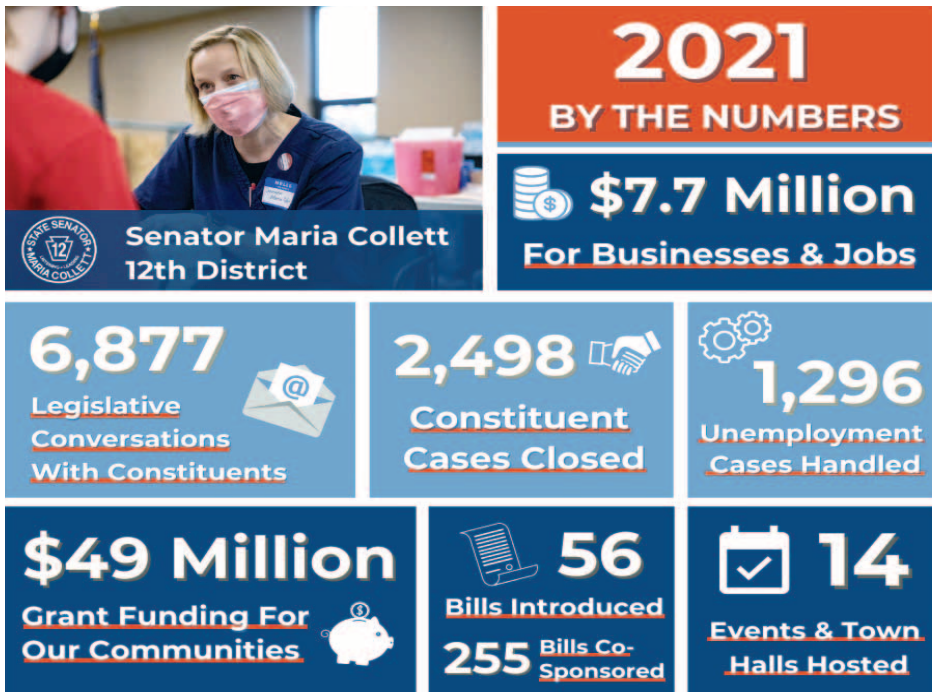


Dear Neighbor,

I hope your 2022 is going well. It continues to be my distinct honor to represent you in Harrisburg and in our district. I appreciate all of you who've taken the time over the years to let me know what you want from your state government – your stories, challenges, accomplishments and priorities motivate me every day. My staff and I have enjoyed reconnecting with you across the district as it's become safer to do so, and we look forward to hosting more events, returning to our senior living communities, and finding even more ways to engage with you in 2022. Whether you need help with unemployment, PennDOT, taxes, or any other state-related issue, my staff and I are always ready to assist you. If you're not sure where to go for help, you can always start by contacting my office.

Sincerely,

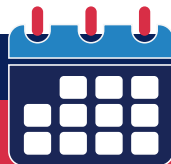
Senator Maria Collett, 12th Senatorial District



2021 was another challenging year for the 12th District. I am proud of what my team and I were able to accomplish last year. I'm particularly proud of our efforts to assist nearly 1,300 constituents with unemployment-related issues, roughly the same number of total cases we worked on in all of 2019. I'm also proud to have helped bring more than \$49 million in state grant funding to the district, with more than \$17 million going to small businesses and non-profit organizations.

■ Save the Date!

My staff and I are looking forward to hosting several community events this year, including:



- **COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE** 
 - Monday, March 21, 2pm-7pm
 - Hatboro Borough Community Center, 414 S. York Road, Hatboro
 - Register: redcrossblood.org (enter code "community" or zip code 19040) or call **1-800-RED-CROSS**.
- **FREE ELECTRONICS RECYCLING EVENT WITH REP. MALAGARI** 
 - Saturday, April 23, 9am-11am
 - Indian Crest Middle School, 139 Harleysville Pike, Souderton
 - Open to the public. No TVs, monitors, large appliances, hazardous waste.
- **FREE SHREDDING EVENT WITH REP. HANBIDGE** 
 - Saturday, May 21, 10am-1pm
 - Upper Gwynedd Township Parking Lot, 1 Parkside Place, North Wales
 - Open to the public. Three bag limit. No plastic bags, binders, ledger books, cardboard, x-rays, CDs or large binder clips.
- **COFFEE WITH COLLETT** 
 - This Spring, Senator Collett will visit coffee shops and community centers to chat with constituents about issues that matter most to them.
 - **Dates and locations to be announced!**

Be sure to sign up for my e-newsletter at senatorcollett.com and follow me on social media for additional details about these and other upcoming events.



■ DocterAdams CommunityPark

In July, we broke ground for DocterAdams Community Park in Willow Knoll with Warrington Township native and New Orleans Saints running back Josh Adams, his family, local officials and community members. I was thrilled to announce a \$50,000 state contribution to help make this new and improved park a reality. I'm thankful to Josh for giving back to his hometown so the next generation can thrive. Playground equipment has begun to go up this winter, and the park is expected to open in Spring 2022!



Photo Credit: Warrington Township

■ Together in Harmony Event

Over the summer, I was excited to co-host the "Together in Harmony" cultural event in North Wales with the Korean American Association of Greater Philadelphia. Free for community members to enjoy, the event featured Korean food vendors, cultural displays, and a wide range of Korean American organizations – from language schools and health clinics to civic engagement groups. My staff and I were glad to be there to share the services our office can help with.



Supporting Pennsylvania's Nurses

- The pandemic has taken a brutal toll on our healthcare workers, especially our nurses. That's why I'm so proud to have worked with Governor Wolf to dedicate \$6.5 million in pandemic response funds to create the **Nursing Workforce Initiative**, establishing three programs designed to recruit, train and retain Pennsylvania's nursing workforce:

- **\$5M** to PHEAA to create the Student Loan Relief for Nurses (SLRN) Program
- **\$1M** to the Dept. of Labor & Industry to create nursing apprenticeships & industry partnerships
- **\$500,000** for the Department of Human Services to expand the number of nurse residencies and nurse mentoring programs

- Recognizing the demand for the student loan relief program, I continued to advocate for more funding. In January, the legislature voted unanimously to approve HB 253 (now Act 2 of 2022), which provided an additional **\$15 million** for loan relief (bringing the total to \$20M) and **\$210 million** for health care workforce supports, funded by federal American Rescue Plan dollars.
- I am hopeful this is just the beginning. I'll continue to push our legislative leaders and the administration for even more funding to support programs like SLRN that will attract and keep health care workers – and other essential workers – on the job.



Student Loan Relief for Nurses (SLRN) Program

The SLRN Program officially launched in January 2022, and applications will be accepted until March 1, 2022. The loan relief program will provide selected qualified nurses with up to \$2,500 for each year they work at a qualified nursing facility, with a maximum benefit of \$7,500.

Learn more and apply at PHEAA.org/SLRN.



2021 Health Fairs

In November, I hosted two community health fair events, one at Grace Lutheran Church in Hatfield, and another at the Willow Grove YMCA. Both fairs offered a wide range of health and wellness resources, including insurance, nutrition, mental health services, medical marijuana info, physical therapy and more. We also teamed up with local pharmacies, Skippack Pharmacy and Eric's RX Shoppe to offer flu shots and COVID vaccines. I look forward to planning our 2022 health fairs and connecting constituents to these important resources.

Are You Eligible for the PFAS Health Study?



Our region is one of only seven sites chosen across the U.S. to take part in this groundbreaking federally-funded multi-site study on the health impacts of PFAS exposure. PFAS, or "forever chemicals," spread into our soil and groundwater from firefighting foams used on local military bases in Warminster and Horsham.

Eligibility:

- The study team is currently recruiting adults (ages 18+) and children (ages 4-17) who lived in the following Bucks and Montgomery townships between 2005 and 2017: Horsham, Ivyland, Warminster, Warrington, Abington, Hatboro, Northampton, Upper Dublin, Upper Moreland, Upper Southampton, or Warwick.
- Children whose mothers lived in these areas between 2005 and 2017, prior to their child's birth, may also be eligible to participate.



SCAN FOR
MORE INFORMATION

Call **877-267-2890** to join the study.

Email papfashealth@rti.org

or visit papfas.rti.org for more information.



Harrisburg Update



ROOM FOR PROGRESS

Each day I'm in Harrisburg, I'm advocating for the issues that matter most to you.

WHAT WE'VE PASSED

The legislative process can be slow and frustrating, but I was proud to sponsor several bills that were signed into law this session, including:

■ **Expanding Access to Affordable Medication**

In December, the legislature passed HB 1260. Now Act 94, this law expands income eligibility for PACENET, our low-income prescription drug assistance program, so more seniors can access it. I was proud to be a prime sponsor of the Senate version of this bill, SB 668.

■ **Supporting Ventilator Patients**

SB 108, now Act 56, will increase Medicaid funding to facilities providing ventilator care, allowing Pennsylvanians who depend on these services to remain where they are comfortable and stay out of the hospital, where costs are higher and outcomes could be worse.

■ **Boosting Breast Cancer Research Funds**

SB 445, now Act 23, gives individuals renewing their vehicle registration or driver's license an option to donate to the Pennsylvania Breast Cancer Coalition for breast cancer research efforts.

■ **Putting Federal ARP Funds to Use**

Pennsylvania is sitting on billions of dollars of unspent federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds. These funds were allocated with the understanding they'd be used to provide direct and immediate support for residents and businesses struggling due to the COVID crisis, not sit in reserves. My colleagues in the Democratic Caucus and I have introduced several proposals to get that money to small businesses, childcare facilities, schools, healthcare workers and more. I'll continue to push for these funds to be released and look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to get this done, like we recently did with Act 2.

■ **Raising the Minimum Wage**

In 2022, the minimum wage will increase in 25 states, but not Pennsylvania. Our legislature hasn't voted to increase the minimum wage since 2006. Too many of our essential workers are earning poverty wages, and nearly 70% of PA residents think it's time for a raise.

■ **Paid Family Leave**

The bipartisan Family Care Act (SB 580), of which I am a prime sponsor, would establish a paid family and medical leave program for working Pennsylvanians. This bill will keep our economy competitive with other states and make sure workers can take the time they need to care for themselves or loved ones.

■ **Patient Safety Act**

With a growing number of bipartisan cosponsors in both the House and Senate, it's time to make safe nurse-to-patient ratios a reality in Pennsylvania. My bill, the Patient Safety Act (SB 240) is key to retaining and recruiting the skilled staff we need to keep our healthcare system afloat.

■ **Gun Safety**

Each session, we see the majority push drastic legislation unwinding what few gun regulations exist, such as their SB 565, which would have eliminated the permit requirement and lowered the age to carry a concealed firearm, while they refuse to even discuss popular commonsense gun safety measures. I'll continue to stand up against these bad bills and advocate for legislation in line with your priorities, like my SB 625, which would allow local municipalities to implement gun safety ordinances on their own properties; SB 134, which would allow a court to temporarily suspend an individual's access to firearms if there is evidence that they are a threat to themselves or others; and SB 581, which would require gun owners to safely store firearms when not under direct control of the owner.

■ **Clean Water**

While I'm excited that both the US EPA and PA DEP are working on establishing maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) for the dangerous, currently unregulated PFAS chemicals that leached into the soil and water surrounding local military bases, that process will take years. That's why I continue to push so hard for my bills, SB 611 and SB 612, which will set interim MCLs for PFOA and PFOS and formally classify them as "hazardous substances," finally allowing us to force largescale clean-up efforts at these sites and make the polluters – not local taxpayers – bear the costs.



In The Community



Jefferson Bioprocessing

The Jefferson Institute for Bioprocessing (JIB) is the first specialized education and training institute for biopharmaceutical processing in North America. After helping to secure major grant funding for JIB in 2019, I was excited to see the facility at Spring House Innovation Park in Lower Gwynedd for myself in September.



Hatfield History Museum

It was great to be back at the Hatfield History Museum for their ribbon cutting and grand opening event in October. The museum features iconic signage, items from historic businesses, family records, and more.

Centennial 'Stuff the Bus'

I was happy to participate in the Centennial School District's "Stuff the Bus" food drive event this December benefiting the district's free farmer's market at Klinger Middle School.



Volunteering at Vaccine Clinics

I was excited to continue volunteering as a nurse at local vaccine clinics over these last few months. I participated in my first pediatric clinic this fall with Skippack Pharmacy at North Penn High School.



Bryn Athyn Historic District



The Bryn Athyn Borough Historic District is a beautiful slice of living history right here in our district! The Borough was founded as a religious community in 1877 by members of the New Church, a Christian denomination. Today, visitors are welcome to explore their grounds, museum, and cathedral.

Celebrating Diwali

Thanks to the BAPS Hindu communities in Lansdale and Warrington for inviting me and my staff to celebrate Diwali with you again in November! We left with full hearts and full stomachs.



Roth Center for Sustainable Agriculture



Delaware Valley University's Roth Center for Sustainable Agriculture in Upper Gwynedd allows students to get hands on experience with livestock, agriculture, and marketing. They also host a seasonal farmer's market!

12th District Town Hall



In December, I hosted an in-person town hall at the Horsham Community Center to share legislative and district updates with my constituents and field their questions and concerns.



Photo Credit: Allison Barto



STATE SENATOR **Maria Collett**

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■ **Redistricting Update**

Every ten years, after the Census, Pennsylvania's legislative districts are redrawn to account for population changes. This process is now underway, and our district, along with your PA House and US Congress districts, may shift. No matter what the lines of the future 12th district look like, the people of our current district elected me, and I'm proud to represent you. You can expect the same quality of service from us this year that we have always provided.

Things may have changed since my newsletter was printed. Visit www.redistricting.state.pa.us, sign up for my e-newsletter, and follow my social media pages for the latest redistricting updates.

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www.SenatorCollett.com

