



# Senator Lisa M. **BOSCOLA**

Independent • Effective • Working to Make a Difference

**SPRING 2021**



## **Spring into Legislative Action for Animals**

In early March, I visited the Lehigh County Humane Society to announce my sponsorship of **SB234**, Victoria's Law. SB234 was introduced with the intention to drive the Pennsylvania pet market towards more HUMANE sources like shelters, rescues and responsible breeders. This legislation would stop the sale of puppy mill dogs, cats and rabbits in pet stores, and protect our consumers from misleading sales tactics. This bill also requires that breeders include their state license numbers on all advertisements to ensure legitimacy. Victoria's Law is named after a German Shepherd, Victoria, who was rescued from a Pennsylvania puppy mill after 10 years of breeding. By the time she was rescued, she was paralyzed as a result of a genetic, neurological disorder called Degenerative Myelopathy. Victoria passed this vicious disease to an estimated 150-200 puppies she bred at this facility. This is heartbreaking for Victoria, for her puppies, and for the families who fell prey to the antics of the inhumane commercial breeding facilities. For Victoria and all that came before and after her – I will continue to FIGHT for the humane treatment of animals in Pennsylvania. Puppy mills need to close permanently NOW and Victoria's Law will make that happen.

## **INSIDE**

Important Voting Information  
Legislation on the Move  
How May I Help



*Thank You*

FOR YOUR SUPPORT

This past year has taken its toll on this Commonwealth's economy and well-being as we have dealt with a pandemic, economic crisis, job loss, and much more. Even though we have witnessed tremendous hardship over the past twelve months, we have also seen our communities help one another – by standing together.

I would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to each of you – my constituents. You have exhibited incredible resolve throughout this pandemic. You have notified me of what you need and what you want – and even though at times we were all angry, frustrated and confused we were truly able to channel that into actionable change.

We started a new year and a new legislative session, please know, you can count on me to never stop fighting for you, the residents of the 18th District, in Harrisburg. I am so very grateful to continue my work as your State Senator as we navigate through all the challenges that lie ahead.

*Lisa M. Boscola*

LISA M. BOSCOLA

## BY THE NUMBERS

More Than **3,000**  
Calls Made to Seniors to  
Assist with Vaccine  
Scheduling



**1,125** Neighbors  
Assisted  
with Voting & Mail-In Ballots



**\$133M**

Brought Back to the Lehigh  
Valley for COVID Expenses



**120**

Boscola Bulletin  
eBlasts Sent Out  
Since March 2020

Over **600** Businesses in  
LEHIGH COUNTY Received **\$8.5M**  
in Grants



Over **800** Businesses in  
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY Received **\$10M**  
in Grants

**180**

Constituents  
Helped with Property  
Tax / Rent Rebate  
Since Mid-February



Direct Contact with **209** Businesses  
for **\$3,875,000**  
for the First Round  
of State Grants



**3,380**

Neighbors Assisted with  
Unemployment Compensation



## Named Champion of the Industry by the Pennsylvania Restaurant and Lodging Industry Association

*“Sen. Boscola was one of the first legislators to introduce a broad package of recovery bills and regularly pushes back on extreme mitigation efforts on behalf of the restaurants in her district. Sen. Boscola is one of those legislators that exemplify what we believe legislating should be—doing what is right, not what you are told to do by someone.” – PRLA*

The pandemic has been especially hard on our small businesses in the restaurant and lodging sector. These businesses are crucial for our local economies and it has been a high priority of mine during this pandemic to fight for them. The Pennsylvania Restaurant and Lodging Industry named me a Champion for my efforts and the honor was truly gratifying. While we will not be able to reverse the damage done to our local businesses, lessening the burden, in any way possible, and getting these businesses back on their feet and successful is priority number one.

Working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and at the County level, \$18.5 million in funding was secured for over 1,400 businesses in both Lehigh and Northampton Counties.

In addition to seeking funding opportunities, I have introduced progressive legislation focused on the long-term viability of this important sector of our economy. These proposals include a revocation of the 6% sales tax for some time, as well as a provision for the Commonwealth to back small business loans as a means to reduce the cost of borrowing.





# 2021 AGENDA

**Property Tax Reform** – Property taxes are the most unpopular and unfair of ALL local taxes and that is why I continue my fight for the elimination of them year after year – session after session. Our structure is antiquated, complicated, and burdensome and not reflective of an individual's ability to pay.

Earlier this session, I had introduced an amendment that would allow you, the voter, to have your voice heard on an upcoming ballot question. You would be able to decide to abolish property taxes, along with proposing a new method to fund our education system, in an upcoming election. In a procedural move, the full Senate tabled this amendment in order to avoid a vote.

The legislature cannot avoid this issue forever. You have my word that the fight for this important reform is not over.

**Cyber Charter Reform – SB483** – Did you know that state law requires school districts to pay the same amount for a student living in their district to attend a 'brick and mortar'



*Superintendent Dr. Joseph Roy, of the Bethlehem Area School District, and I further discuss the importance for the need for cyber charter reform after a press conference.*

charter school as it does a cyber charter school despite the fact that cyber charters operate at significantly lower costs than 'brick and mortar' charter schools? My legislation seeks to align taxpayer funded payments to cyber charter schools with the actual costs of educating a child in one of these schools – providing significant savings to the taxpayers.

**Fairly Funding Our Schools** – In 2016, the General Assembly finally passed a fair funding formula to distribute state dollars to our school districts. Unfortunately, only new dollars were distributed using the formula and not the entire state education allotment. For the Lehigh Valley, this meant that our school districts were given less money than they were entitled to. As a result, our school districts have to rely more heavily on property taxes to make up the difference. After meeting with administrators from various school districts in the Lehigh Valley, the decision was made

to introduce legislation to remedy the situation. **SB123** would require ALL state funding be distributed under the fair funding formula. By enacting SB 123 we will end inequities across the Commonwealth and help out local school districts, students and taxpayers.

**Nurse Licensure Compact – SB115** passed out of my committee, Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure, authorizing Pennsylvania to join with 35 other states in the Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC). The NLC allows reciprocity of a nursing license between member U.S. states. Pennsylvania needs to be a place where nurses want to practice. We have excellent nursing schools throughout Pennsylvania and we need to do all we can to keep our students here after graduation. Joining the compact makes their license and education more valuable.



**Snow and Ice – SB114 (Christine's Law)** was once again voted out of the Senate Transportation Committee with unanimous support and now is before the full Senate. SB114 requires all motorists driving in Pennsylvania to clear snow and ice from the top of their vehicles before driving within 24 hours after the snow stops. The inspiration for the law stemmed from a tragic event involving Christine Lambert who was killed on Christmas Day while traveling with her husband and son. Tragically, a slab of ice dislodged from a truck traveling in the opposite direction and hurled through her windshield. Preventable measures such as this keep all motorists safe.

**Other Measures** – **SB306** – Registry for Domestic Violence Predators; **SB222** – Legislative and Congressional Redistricting Act; **SB346** – Allowing Independents to Vote in the Primary; **SB435** – Clean Transportation Infrastructure Act – helping to create needed infrastructure for electric vehicles.

# Appointment to Special Committee on Election Integrity & Reform

The 2020 election was challenging and put our election system to the test. This past general election was the first election held with changes implemented in 2019 pursuant to the passage of **Act 77**, the most obvious of which were no excuse mail-in balloting and the elimination of straight-party ticket voting. These extraordinary changes vastly improved elections for Pennsylvania voters and were voted on (and passed) long before anyone ever heard of COVID-19. However, the pandemic certainly had a significant impact on our election in 2020.

The pandemic revealed certain deficiencies in the ability for counties to efficiently hold elections pursuant to Act 77. As a result, the Senate created a Special Committee on Election Integrity and Reform to which I was appointed. It is a bipartisan Committee that is responsible to review all aspects of the 2020 General Election including: the security of the vote before, during, and after Election Day; the accuracy and security of the election processes across the Commonwealth; the impact and role of the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in issuing interpretations, guidance, and instructions regarding the election process and conduct of the election; and other election-related issues.

As of the date of this publication, the Committee has met twice. The first hearing focused on

understanding best practices from Colorado, Utah, and Florida. During the second hearing we heard testimony from the Pennsylvania Department of State, Pennsylvania County Election Directors, and Pennsylvania County Commissioners – including our own Northampton County Executive, Lamont McClure, about concerns and suggestions to improve Pennsylvania's election process. The first two hearings demonstrated a bipartisan willingness to work together to improve Pennsylvania elections for the better. While this past election was more

secure, more convenient, and safer than ever, due to Act 77, it is clear improvements can and should be made.

As a member of this Committee, working with my fellow lawmakers to strengthen our election process, ensuring election

reforms are focusing on the best interest of the voter, not a political party, is a priority of mine. Act 77 was a good piece of legislation. It was drawn up in a bipartisan manner with hours of debate, discussion and compromise. The Senate Special Committee on Election Integrity & Reform is a great platform to gather information, explore potential changes and come to a bipartisan agreement. As the Prime Sponsor of the bill that generated Act 77 in 2019, it's exciting to have a seat on the Special Committee to make certain our voting laws continue to encourage more participation.



## Take the Lead

What a surprise and honor it was to receive the call that I was chosen by the Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania (GSEP) as a 2021 Take the Lead honoree for their signature event. This award recognizes the community's most distinguished women whose leadership and professional achievements "make the world a better place" and it is humbling to have been thought of in that category. Take the Lead is an event for the girls, by the girls.

As a Take the Lead honoree, I was able to invite Girl Scout, Hayley Gable, to Harrisburg to see what it is like on a Session day at the Capitol. Immediately upon meeting Hayley, I could tell that she was confident, responsible, and committed to changing the world for the better – simply wanting to make the world a better place – and I knew we would get along just fine. I would like to personally thank the Girl Scouts of Eastern Pennsylvania for this incredibly meaningful award and for giving me the opportunity to take part in this event.



I was honored to accept the Victory Through Service Award from ASPIRE to Autonomy, a LV anti-trafficking non-profit promoting awareness & helping survivors, for my hard work & commitment to helping victims of Domestic Violence.



# 3 Constitutional Amendments on the May 18th Ballot

**1** Voting **YES** to the first question would limit a Governor’s ability to act unilaterally under a Declaration of Emergency to 21 days. At the expiration of 21 days, the Declaration of Emergency would need to be extended with a passage of a resolution by a majority of the General Assembly.

This ballot question allows voters to decide whether there should be a balance of power between the Governor & the General Assembly during emergencies.

**2** A vote of **YES** to the second question would allow the General Assembly to terminate a disaster declaration by the passage of a concurrent resolution by a majority of the General Assembly instead of a veto proof majority as required pursuant to a recent Pennsylvania Supreme Court decision. The Governor would not have the ability to veto a concurrent resolution ending the emergency declaration.

There is no better time to hear from voters about the impact of Pennsylvania’s Emergency Declaration laws than now.

**3** A **YES** vote to the final question would amend the Pennsylvania Constitution to make explicit prohibiting discrimination against individuals in Pennsylvania on the basis of race or ethnicity. Currently, such a prohibition is only in statute and not listed in the Constitution.

I think all of these questions are important and I want to encourage all voters, of **any party affiliation**, to vote on the ballot questions **May 18**.

**Attention all voters registered as Independents, Green Party, Libertarian, or no party affiliation, remember you are eligible to vote on the statewide ballot questions!**

Cut along the dotted line and mail survey to: Senator Lisa M. Boscola • One East Broad Street • Suite 120 • Bethlehem, PA 18018

## Constituent Survey

As your voice in Harrisburg, the feedback that my team and I receive from constituents helps form legislation that is introduced and co-sponsored. I work for you and it is important for me to understand what issues are most important to you and your family. You can also fill out this survey online at [www.senatorboscola.com/survey](http://www.senatorboscola.com/survey).

*Your opinion is important to me!*

- Should registered Independents be permitted to vote in primary elections?
- Would you be willing to pay more for energy if it was from a renewable or clean source as opposed to a fossil fuel source?
- Do you support raising the state personal income tax in order to eliminate property tax?
- Do you support raising the state sales and use tax to eliminate property tax?
- Do you support the legalization and taxing of adult-use marijuana?
- Would you support legislation giving an individual the choice to terminate his or her life following a diagnosis with a terminal disease?
- Do you support the tolling of bridges in order to better fund PennDOT transportation projects?
- Cyber charter schools receive the same amount of funding per students as bricks and mortar schools do, do you support cyber charter school reform to better align funding with actual costs?
- Should someone be required to report a lost or stolen gun to the police?
- Do you believe Pennsylvania should continue to permit people the choice to vote by mail without needing an excuse?
- **Circle one** – Do you support increasing the minimum wage to **\$10.00 – \$12.00 – \$15.00** an hour?

YES	NO
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Thank you for taking the time to take this survey, and please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions, concerns, or suggestions you may have.





**State Senator**  
**LISA M. BOSCOLA**

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### SENIOR CITIZEN'S APPLICATIONS

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### SOLVING STATE PROBLEMS

State Income Taxes • State Lottery • Consumer Protection • PennDOT  
Unemployment Compensation • State Agencies that Serve the Public

**WE CAN ALSO HELP YOU WITH LOCAL SERVICES!**

## WHERE TO FIND US

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