

# READY TO SERVE YOU

## Dear Friends and Neighbors,

It remains my honor to represent you in Harrisburg and to serve you here at home.

My staff and I are here to help. I maintain two district offices, in Hazleton and Mahanoy City. Simply stop by or give us a call for assistance with any state-related issue or concern.

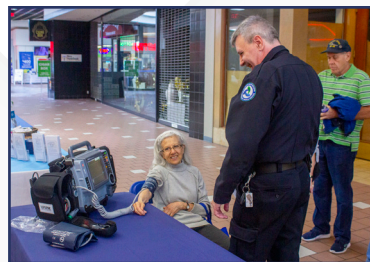
We send these mailings every few months to keep you up to date on news from the state Capitol and here in the 116th Legislative District. I hope you find them to be informative.

Another great way to stay connected is to register to receive my Friday email updates at [www.RepWatro.com](http://www.RepWatro.com), under the “Resources” tab.

Thank you,

*Dave S. Watro*

## THANKS FOR COMING TO OUR SENIOR EXPO!



We had a fantastic turnout on Thursday, Sept. 21, for our Senior Expo in Hazle Township. Laurel Mall was a very busy place, and we thank the hundreds of residents who took the time to attend the event, which I co-hosted with Rep. Mike Cabell and Sen. Dave Argall.

About 70 exhibitors took part and provided information about the programs and services they offer to older residents in our area, along with several health care providers that offered free medical screenings. We hope those who attended found our expo to be informative and helpful. We look forward to hosting it again next year!

## HEATING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

Residents who struggle with their home heating bills can now apply for assistance from the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

LIHEAP is a federally funded program that helps individuals and families pay their heating bills through home heating energy assistance grants. It also provides crisis grants to help in the event of an emergency or if a resident is in danger of losing his or her heat due to broken equipment, lack of fuel or termination of utility service.

The income eligibility guidelines for LIHEAP are set at 150% of the federal poverty income level.

Residents may apply for LIHEAP online at [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us), by phone at 1-866-550-4355 or by contacting the County Assistance Office in their county of residence. Learn more at [www.dhs.pa.gov](http://www.dhs.pa.gov) or contact one of my offices for more information.

## MY BILL TO HELP VETERANS BECOME EMTs ADVANCES TO SENATE

Legislation I am sponsoring that would streamline the professional licensing process for veterans seeking a civilian career as an emergency medical technician (EMT) or paramedic in Pennsylvania is currently under consideration in the Senate after receiving committee approval in October.

House Bill 404 would enable veterans who wish to continue their medic specialty after their military service is over to do so more easily. Current state law requires certain state agencies to strongly consider a veteran's military education, training and experience for the purpose of fulfilling requirements for professional credentials. Under my proposal, the Department of Health, which certifies EMTs and paramedics throughout the Commonwealth, would be added to the list.

Veterans with medical backgrounds from their military service can be critical to assisting the EMS system with its workforce challenges.

We also should be doing all we can to make the transition from military life to civilian life as seamless as possible for our men and women who serve their country and Commonwealth with dedication and honor.

Additionally, the bill would add the Department of Agriculture to the list, which has licensure requirements for such professions as food handlers or inspectors.

## IS THE STATE HOLDING YOUR UNCLAIMED PROPERTY?

More than \$273 million in unclaimed property was returned to Pennsylvania taxpayers in the 2022-23 fiscal year, the highest return ever.

However, more than \$4.5 billion remains, so if you haven't checked for your name on the state Treasury's Unclaimed Property database, visit [www.patreasury.gov](http://www.patreasury.gov). Remember, if you find property that is yours, you do not need to pay anyone to claim it. You may go directly through the Office of the Treasury or contact one of my offices for assistance.

One in 10 Pennsylvania residents is owed unclaimed property, and the average claim is worth about \$1,600. Unclaimed property can include dormant bank accounts, abandoned stocks, uncashed checks and more. Property is always available for the rightful owner to claim. Tangible property — often the contents of forgotten safe deposit boxes — may be auctioned after three years, but proceeds remain available to claim in perpetuity.

Military decorations and memorabilia — often turned over to Treasury from abandoned or forgotten safe deposit boxes — are never auctioned and remain in the vault for safekeeping until a veteran or their family is found.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

**DANE WATRO**

**116<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT**

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## UPCOMING EVENT

### SCAM SEMINAR

*Co-Hosted with Sen. Dave Argall*

Friday, Oct. 27, 10 a.m.

Faith Assembly of God Church

34 Fox Manor Road, Hazleton

A representative from Pennsylvania State Police Troop N-Hazleton will present information on the latest consumer scams and how to avoid them. Please contact one of my offices to register for this free event.

## AT THE CAPITOL

I recently welcomed the 2023 titleholders from the Miss Greater Hazleton Scholarship Organization to the state Capitol, where they were introduced in the House chamber. I also had the pleasure of meeting with the group privately and presenting a House citation to Executive Director Sherri Homanko (second from left), along with state certificates of achievement to each of the girls.



## Check out my social media!



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