



State Senator **JOHN KANE**

Winter 2024

Proudly Serving Delaware and Chester Counties



Para leer este boletín completo en español, escanee este código con su teléfono móvil.



Inside:

- Act 12 Update • Student Mental Health • Lead Free Drinking Water
- Building a Better Workplace • To Our Commonwealth & Public School Retirees
- Aid to Addiction Recovery • Funding Frenzy



State Senator **JOHN I. KANE**

SERVING YOU

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SERVICES WE OFFER

Unemployment Application Assistance • Property Tax and Rent Rebates • SEPTA Senior ID Card Registration • PennDOT Application Assistance • Voter Registration • REAL ID Assistance • Birth and Death Certificate Applications
Information about Local Services • and Much More!



Dear Neighbor,

Join me in welcoming 2024! I had such an amazing 2023 serving the 9th and continuing to grow the connection we've built over the past few years.

The more I learn and engage with our diverse district, the more I am able to draw from my own experiences to serve you better. From my time as a master plumber, which led to legislation for safe drinking water in our schools, to my union background providing real world examples in our fight for fair wages, so many aspects of my life aids in understanding your needs. Even my personal journey to sobriety, marking 40 years this past October, inspires initiatives supporting addiction recovery. These experiences have taught me resilience, the power of second chances, and the potential for change. They shape my work as your State Senator and enable me to better understand and represent you.

In this New Year's letter, I am excited to share some of the causes we're working on. From advocating for our schools for mental health days, safe drinking water, and a cost-of-living adjustments, to building better workplaces for employees. These are not just legislative priorities, but personal issues that touch us all and impact our district, communities, and families. My priority as your Senator is to ensure everyone has a seat at the table. With your voices guiding us, we are working towards a brighter future for Pennsylvania. I am here to serve you, and I look forward to sharing more about these efforts and hearing your thoughts.

As always, don't hesitate to reach out to my office if you need assistance. We'll continue to do all we can to help.

In solidarity,

John I. Kane

9th Senatorial District

Save the Dates



APRIL

4

BLOOD DRIVE

Neumann University
10 am – 3 pm



APRIL

11

SENIOR EXPO

Upper Chichester Township
Municipal Complex
10 am – 1 pm



APRIL

13

PET EXPO

Upland Park
9 am – 2 pm



APRIL

25

WILLS CLINIC

Brookhaven
Municipal Building
10 am – 4 pm



MAY

11

SPRING SHRED EVENT

Upland Park
9 am

To stay up to date on upcoming events, visit

[PASENATORKANE.COM/EVENTS](https://pasenatorkane.com/events)

■ ACT 12 UPDATE

As many of you are aware, opposing Pennsylvania Act 12 has been at the forefront of our mission. This act

allows for the privatization of public water and sewer systems, potentially giving corporations control over our essential water supply. Privatization of these utilities has resulted in significant increases in water bills for many families in our district, and a threat to even more.

I am thrilled to announce that our campaign and #SaveCWA is continuing to gain momentum. We recently conducted a policy hearing with fellow Senators from our region, who share our opposition to water privatization. This gathering served as a critical platform for discussing the issues and strategizing on the most effective ways to repeal Act 12 completely.

However, our work is far from over. We must continue our resistance and call for Act 12's total repeal to ensure our water supply remains a public

good, free from corporate control. Rest assured, I won't stop fighting until Act 12 is history and our water is safe from corporate hands.

I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to those who attended the policy hearing. Your participation and voices are invaluable in this fight. To those who couldn't make it, there's an opportunity for you to watch the hearing in full on my website.

Thank you all for your efforts standing up against Act 12. I am committed to working tirelessly towards a future where every Pennsylvanian can access clean, safe, and affordable water.

Stay safe, stay strong, and let's stay united in keeping our water out of corporate hands!

To watch the full Act 12 Repeal Hearing & Testimony visit: PASenatorKane.com/video



■ STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

100+ Students Champion Mental Health in Harrisburg

In a heartening display of youthful advocacy and resilience, over 100 students have taken a stand for mental health support in schools at none other than our state capital, Harrisburg. I was proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with student advocate, Senator Judy Schwank and Rep. Napoleon Nelson, to throw our weight behind this much-needed shakeup of mental health legislation in Pennsylvania's K-12 schools.

Our young advocates raised their voices for Senate Bill 886 and HB 1519, which, if passed, would join us with 12 other forward-thinking states recognizing the importance of excused mental health days for students. The COVID-19 pandemic has, without a doubt, underscored the pressing need for mental health support among students.

This proposed legislation is a

breath of fresh air. It allows our students to put their mental health first, without the looming fear of penalties, and encourages schools to step up and provide much-needed resources and support.

A tip of the hat to the PA Youth Advocacy Network, a dynamic committee of high school students, who have been instrumental in advocacy efforts around this legislation. They are fighting the

good fight for much-needed changes in mental health systems.

The voices of students and parents resonate in unison on this matter, with a whopping 75 percent of parents in a recent poll underlining the need for mental health days for students.

With this legislation, we could see Pennsylvania leading the charge in acknowledging that mental health is just as crucial as physical health for our students. And that's a future we can all get behind.



LEAD FREE DRINKING WATER

I have been working alongside Senators Devlin Robinson and Art Haywood on Senate Bill 986. We are aiming to address a critical issue affecting our children's health and future: lead contamination in our schools' drinking water.

Many of you know that before my public service career, I was a master plumber. I believe this grants me a unique perspective on water safety. Our motto is, "We protect the health of the nation," and I'm proud to be doing that now in a different arena. As a father and spouse to educators, I'm aware of the challenges our students and teachers face. Ensuring safe drinking water should not be an added stressor.

Senate Bill 986 proposes the creation of the Safe School Drinking Water Fund. The objective? By 2026, all school drinking water outlets will be fitted with certified filters, outdated drinking fountains replaced with bottle-filling stations, and, crucially, schools won't be burdened with an unaffordable expense. We are committed to providing the necessary funding by using up to \$10 million each year for up to 3 years awarded by the Department of Education.

Lead's impact on our children can be severe, causing brain and nervous system damage, physical growth delays, and learning and behavioral problems, among others. The silver lining is that these issues are entirely preventable. Senate Bill 986 builds upon the positive groundwork laid by Act 39 of 2018 and pushes it further.

Making Pennsylvania a leader in combating lead in school water is a priority for me and should be at the forefront of discussions about our schools. Senate Bill 986 accomplishes just that.



I have always believed in hard work, fair wages, and a safe workplace and I want to share our recent strides towards these ideals.

Recently, Senators Vincent Hughes, Christine Tartaglione, Lindsey Williams, and I supported the PA Supreme Court's decision allowing PennDOT to enforce the Prevailing Wage Act. It disqualifies firms not following rules from state roadwork contracts, and G.O. Hawbaker Inc. faced consequences for wage theft.

Despite this victory, wage theft remains a major issue. Senate Bill 987 aims to address this, requiring employers to inform workers about wage theft and protect those who

BUILDING A BETTER WORKPLACE

Battling Wage Theft and Worker Misclassification

report it. We're also advancing Senate Bills 46, 47, and 577 to further combat wage theft.

Worker misclassification, especially in construction, robs employees of their wages and benefits. It also steals from the state by avoiding necessary taxes. Senate Bill 577 strengthens the Construction Worker Misclassification Act, levying penalties on violators and providing protection for whistleblowers.

We are committed to a fair state for our workers and have seen companies pay millions in stolen wages. However, there is more work to do to ensure a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. We invite you to join us on this journey towards justice for all workers.

TO OUR COMMONWEALTH & PUBLIC SCHOOL RETIREES

For over twenty years, you have patiently waited for our Commonwealth to do the right thing and offer a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) to your pensions. It is unbelievable that this has not happened yet. The costs of living are rising, and it's been a long wait. This isn't fair to you, especially after a lifetime of serving our communities and schools. I am here to reassure you that your hard work hasn't been forgotten.

I am passionately sponsoring and advocating for Senate Bill 951 with Senator Katie Muth. This bill specifically outlines and implements an update to the pensions of Pre-Act 9 retirees - those who retired before July 1, 2001. This bill aims to align those pensions with the current cost of living by increasing pensions by

10% to 20%. Importantly, this increase will not be paid by school districts, preventing additional burdens on our schools, but will be funded by the Commonwealth. This bill isn't just about numbers; it's about providing the financial support that our long-time retirees need and are owed during their retirement.

It's our duty, and we owe it to you to do all we can get this COLA done. I want you to know that I am as dedicated to this as you have been to your service in our classrooms and commonwealth. My colleagues and I are fighting for your financial stability in retirement. The goal is simple: every retiree deserves to retire with the respect and security they've earned. This Commonwealth is grateful for your service to our communities, and it's past time to put our money where our mouth is.

■ AID TO ADDICTION RECOVERY

Folks struggling with addiction often find the road to recovery confusing and hard to navigate. There are so many different treatment options, complex insurance issues, and a system that is difficult to understand. It feels like a tough fight, not just against the addiction, but also against a system that should help but often complicates things.

Alongside Senators Christine Tartaglione and Jimmy Dillon, we have introduced a comprehensive package of bills aimed at overhauling our state's addiction recovery system.

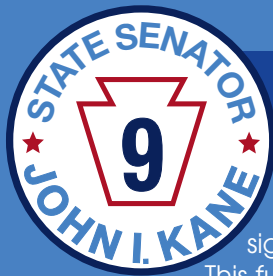
The bills, numbered Senate Bill 874 through Senate Bill 879, are designed with one goal in mind: to provide desperately needed support to those on the path to

recovery. They address a range of issues, from encouraging Substance Use Disorder counselors to join the fight, through loan forgiveness, to requiring insurers to testify their compliance with the federal Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act. Each bill is a piece of the puzzle in our fight against addiction, a crisis that is ravaging our communities and families.

Forty years ago, I began my own journey to recovery. Today, I am proud to be part of an initiative that will simplify the process for others following the same path and ensure that no Pennsylvanian is denied the life-saving treatment

they need due to confusing insurance coverage rules. I am committed to tearing down the barriers between people who need help and the treatment they deserve because I have seen what the other side of addiction looks like.

To keep up on our legislation and view bills in detail visit: pasenatorkane.com or scan:



■ FUNDING FRENZY: BIG WINS FOR THE 9TH DISTRICT!

Kennett Library Secures Funding for Exciting Enhancements!

We're thrilled to announce that we've secured funding for significant improvements at the newly renovated Kennett Library! This funding will help Kennett Library enhance various infrastructure elements, including a state-of-the-art security system, upgraded telecommunications and AV equipment, and the introduction of double-faced bookshelves! As the Kennett Library embarks on its exciting new chapter, it is definitely worth your time to explore and excite your imagination!



Chester Water Authority Making Waves with Funding Win!

The Chester Water Authority has taken a significant step forward in maintaining and enhancing our water infrastructure. We were able to secure COVID-19 ARPA H2O PA funds, which will be directed towards upgrading the existing water transmission lines in the City of Chester, Aston Township, and Upper Chichester Township and Chester County. This is a monumental win for our public water provider, marking a significant stride towards improved efficiency and reliability of our water supply system. Congratulations to the Chester Water Authority on this achievement!



Oakbourne Park Trail Set for Transformation with Secured Funding!

We've managed to secure funding for a major renovation of our beloved walking trail within Oakbourne Park in Westtown Township. This isn't just about a simple upgrade - it's about making the trail safer and more accessible for everyone in our community. These enhancements will transform our everyday walks into quality outdoor experiences!

"These funds will ensure that the visitor experience in Oakbourne Park around Oakbourne Mansion remains second to none in eastern Chester County."

- Jon Altshul, Township Manager


My staff and I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped secure this funding. Your dedication and diligence were crucial in this process. We look forward to seeing these funds used to improve our 9th District for everyone. Stay tuned for more updates on these exciting projects!

State Senator
JOHN I. KANE

Proudly serving Delaware and Chester counties

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PROPERTY TAX/RENT REBATE PROGRAM 2024 UPDATES

THE 2024 PTRR EXPANSION:

- **Increases** the maximum standard rebate from \$650 to **\$1,000**
- **Increases** the income cap from \$35,000 to **\$45,000** for homeowners
- **Increases** the income cap from \$15,000 to **\$45,000** for renters
- **Automatically increases** the income cap to grow with inflation in years to come

PTRR ELIGIBILITY

The rebate program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians:

- Age 65 and older
- Widows and widowers age 50 and older
- People with disabilities age 18 and older

Submit your application online
through myPATH.pa.gov



For more info:
Revenue.PA.Gov

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PASenatorKane.com



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