



**The Arc**

Pennsylvania

Fall 2020 - Volume XX, Issue 2

# Pennsylvania Message

## VOTING MATTERS!

**Election 2020** Information - **NOTE: THIS MAY CHANGE!!!**



**VOTESPA**

- The General Election is on **November 3, 2020**.
- Polls are open on **ELECTION DAY** from 7 A.M. to 8 P.M.
- Last day to register to vote is **October 19, 2020**.  
**NOTE:** The deadline to register to vote is now 15 days prior to an election, rather than 30 days.
- **October 27** at 5 P.M. is the last day to apply for a mail-in or civilian absentee ballot.
- **November 3** is the last day mail-in and civilian absentee ballots can be received. The cut-off time is 8 P.M.

Visit [Votes.pa](https://votes.pa.gov) for more information and to apply for a mail-in or civilian ballot.

**MAIL-IN VOTING**

[VotesPA.com/ApplyMailBallot](https://votespa.com/applymailballot)



# President's Message Sarah Holland



This year the campaigns for the upcoming elections may look different, but what is clear is that the issues facing Pennsylvanians, including those that care about individuals with disabilities and their families (which should be all of us) are clear. The current pandemic has alerted us to disparities in health care, health and safety, education, and employment.

In addition to a global pandemic, the country is experiencing an increased awareness of racial disparities and grappling with our systematic bias in ways that are demanding us to listen. All of these are reasons why each and every one of us needs to vote.

We have also learned in some very concrete ways during these past months, that local politics matter. Elected leaders at all levels impact our lives and those that we love. At the federal level, policy around Social Security, economic relief for individuals and businesses, Medicaid and Medicare funding, and guidance related to public health is at stake.

However, issues are not just debated and moved forward at the federal level. As we have seen, it was local school boards that were charged with voting on and approving school district Health and Safety Plans; local city councils approved budgets for local policing and other social services. County officials helped to guide efforts to spend dollars that were allocated to fight COVID-19 and helped businesses that were affected.

Whether you fill out your ballot in the comfort of your own home and mail it in or vote in person, be aware that you have the opportunity to shape what elected leadership looks like. Your vote is necessary. Your voice is important and showing up is more important than ever. Be safe, and use your voice. It matters!

[#PADisabilityVotesMatter2020](#)



## Candidate Questions

Find out how your candidate will support Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

- 01** What do you think Pennsylvania should do to assist families and caregivers of people with disabilities?
- 02** What investments will you make in expanding long-term services and supports in the community for people with disabilities?
- 03** How will you work against the needless institutionalization of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities ?
- 04** How will you work to address the Direct Support Professional crisis?
- 05** What steps will you take to reduce the risk of crimes committed against people with disabilities?
- 06** What steps will you take to ensure that the education system in Pennsylvania meets the needs of all children, especially those with disabilities?
- 07** What steps will you take to expand access to the general education classroom and achieve broader inclusion for students with disabilities?
- 08** What ways will you promote meaningful employment opportunities in your district for individuals with disabilities?



**“Voting is Important! I am proud to be a USA citizen and it makes me feel good to express my choices when I cast my vote.”**

**Zachary Hicks** The Arc of PA Board of Directors





# Executive Director's Message Sherri Landis



Our office is all abuzz with talk about the upcoming November election. As I attend various committees, many that include people with disabilities as key decision makers, there is much talk among self-advocates about who is running for office and which office they are seeking. And of course, there is much conversation about the office of the President.

Utilizing your right to vote is one of the most important actions an individual can exercise. This year, we have the opportunity to not only vote for our state and federal legislators, but for the person who will be the President of the United States for the next four years. According to data released by AAPD (American Association for People with Disabilities), there are approximately 35 million individuals with disabilities in the United States who are eligible to vote in the upcoming general election. The disability community IS a large and powerful voting bloc. We have not only the opportunity, but the obligation to inform and interact with candidates on key issues that affect our community.

As you go to the polls this November, it is important to educate yourself on the issues you care about. There are numerous ways to find out how candidates will support the disability community. You can check trusted non-profit organizations who work to provide individuals with non-partisan information on candidates and issues. As a non-partisan organization, The Arc of Pennsylvania does not tell individuals who they should or should not vote for; rather, we share information on what is happening or what issues are occurring. You can search the candidate's platform

issues through their campaign websites or social media accounts. If your legislator is running for re-election, you can look up their voting history to see how they have voted on key disability issues.

I also encourage you to take the opportunity to get to know your local legislators and build relationships with them. For many of the everyday issues individuals face, your local legislator would be a first point of contact for assistance. Many legislative offices can help with questions on Department of Transportation, notary services, or accessing community programs. Another key reason to build a relationship with your legislator is to educate them on the important issues faced by the I/DD community. Many of the supports and services individuals with I/DD need to live in the community are reliant on state funds that are allocated through the budget process. By having a relationship with your local legislator, you can advocate for funding these Home and Community-Based Services.

The 2020 General Election will be held on November 3rd. It is important that you research Pennsylvania's voting rules and guidelines, especially the deadline to register to vote or apply for a mail-in/absentee ballot. I encourage you to utilize your voice and vote this coming November! The Disability Community has the right and opportunity this November to let our voice be heard and vote on issues that affect our community!

## Inclusive. Dedicated. Determined.

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## Achieve with us.



# OUR DEMOCRACY NEEDS YOUR VOTE

Kathy Boockvar, Secretary of State,  
Pennsylvania Department of State

On Aug. 26, 2020, we celebrated the centennial of the historic day when the 19th Amendment was added to the U.S. Constitution, which granted women suffrage.

It's hard to imagine now, but it took 144 years after the birth of our democracy for half of American citizens to get the vote. The suffragists endured great hardships, including hunger strikes, arrests, beatings and public ridicule just to win the vote.

It took even longer, until the Voting Rights Act of 1965, for men and women of color to truly gain access to the ballot box. And, today, many voters with physical and intellectual disabilities still struggle with barriers at polling places and hurdles to their right to vote.

As Pennsylvania's chief election official, and a former voting rights and civil rights attorney, I know that when everyone has a voice, our democracy is enriched and strengthened. I want Pennsylvanians with disabilities, including those with intellectual disabilities and autism, to know that when they exercise their right to vote, their voices are valued and heard.

The Department of State is committed to making voting accessible, convenient, and secure for all eligible Pennsylvanians. Toward that end, we have taken several important steps in recent years.

In 2018, we set new, higher standards of security and accessibility for voting systems in use in the commonwealth. In our certifications, we make sure that:



- Expert examiners review the system to assess its accessibility and usability for voters with physical and intellectual disabilities.
  - Volunteer voters with disabilities test and review the system with sample ballots.
  - Election staff and poll workers test the set-up of accessibility features on the system, and
  - Examiners consolidate their findings into a report provided to the department.

As of the June 2, 2020, primary election, all counties are now using new voting systems that meet this standard. You can learn what accessibility features are available on your county's voting systems, as well as step by step instructions on how to use the new systems, at [votespa.com](https://votespa.com).

Additionally, thanks to Act 77, the historic, bipartisan legislation passed last fall, for the first time, all Pennsylvanians can now vote by mail-in ballot without having to provide an excuse.

The timing couldn't have been better as the COVID-19 pandemic creates concerns among some voters about going to the polls on election day. It is important for all voters to know that they now have a choice when it comes to voting, whether they want to do so by mail or in person.

Mail-in voting allows Pennsylvanians to vote safely from home with the confidence that their ballot will be securely protected and accurately counted. It adds a new level of convenience and accessibility to voting. Mail-in voters can return their voted

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Linda Wise  
The Arc of PA  
Board of Directors

I vote for candidates that are concerned about:

- Government accountability from candidates who exhibit leadership
- Economics, job creation, and fair wages
- Civil rights and inclusion including strict adherence to the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility guidelines
- Healthcare and prescription drug prices
- Clear policies and guidelines related to COVID-19 pandemic including testing, tracing, and treatment.



ballot by mail (it must reach their county election office by 8 p.m. on election day), or they can hand-deliver it to their county election office any time before election day.

Additionally, in Pennsylvania we are implementing this fall a tool so that voters with disabilities may vote more easily by mail via an accessible ballot marking solution they can use independently from their home.

Pennsylvanians also will have the option of voting early in person at their county election offices and voting at polling places on election day.

Beginning in a few weeks, all eligible voters in Pennsylvania will be able to vote early by paper ballot. Once ballots are finalized in late September or early October, voters can go to their county election office, apply for their ballot, complete the paper ballot, and cast it while at the election office, all in one visit! This allows everyone to vote in person, at their convenience, weeks before Election Day.

Polling places also will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on election day for in-person voting. The department is providing counties with masks and face shields for poll workers, along with hand sanitizer, floor marking tape, plastic “sneeze guards” and other supplies so Pennsylvanians can safely exercise their right to vote at the polls during this COVID-19 emergency.

The department also works with advocacy groups and counties to recruit poll workers with disabilities and to make sure poll workers are well-trained on how to make voting as accessible as possible for all voters.

If you haven’t registered to vote yet, you can do so online at [votespa.com](https://votespa.com), or you can register in person at a county election office or by mail. The deadline to register to vote in the Nov. 3 election is Oct. 19.

You can also apply for a mail-in ballot online, or in person or by mail. Don’t wait to apply - start today! -- and return your ballot as soon as you receive it in September or October. Postage will be pre-paid so you can return your ballot free of charge.

For additional trusted and accurate information on voting in Pennsylvania, visit [votespa.com](https://votespa.com).

In honor of all those who fought for voting rights for all in our history, let’s continue that legacy and make sure that all eligible voters can - and do - participate in our democracy and exercise our right to vote.



**Joshua Stranix**  
The Arc of PA  
Board Secretary



**I vote for a candidate that is concerned about:**

- More accessible transportation so people can get to work and other places that they need to go.
- Encouraging more businesses to hire people with disabilities.
- Students should have a job when they graduate.
- Closing State Centers that house people with intellectual disabilities. People live a better life when they live in their community.



**Anne Couldridge**  
The Arc of PA Board of Directors



**I am looking for a candidate who believes in person-centered planning and is respectful of all perspectives so to ensure a wide-array of services exist for people with ID/A. Their policies should include actionable steps that address the challenges facing people with ID/A. This includes: increasing special education resources that set students up for a successful and seamless transition to post-graduation goals, investment into the ID/A service system that targets the DSP staffing crisis and policies that protect the health and safety of people with ID/A.**





# OPEN PENNSYLVANIA SENATORIAL & HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES SEATS IN 2020



District No.	County	Republican	Democrat	Notes
Senate 1 <sup>st</sup>	Philadelphia	N/A	Nikil Saval	Beat Incumbent Sen. Larry Farnese
Senate 17 <sup>th</sup>	Delaware	Ellen Fisher	Amanda Cappelletti	Beat Incumbent Daylin Leach (D)
Senate 19 <sup>th</sup>	Chester	Kevin Runey	Rep. Carolyn Comitta	Replacing retiring Sen. Dinniman
Senate 25 <sup>th</sup>	Cameron, Clearfield, Clinton, Elk, Jefferson, McKean, Potter & Tioga	Rep. Cris Dush	Margaret Satterwhite Brown	Replacing retiring Sen. Joe Scarnati
House 20 <sup>th</sup>	Allegheny	N/A	Nickolas Pisciotano	Beat Incumbent Rep. Adam Ravenstahl
House 28 <sup>th</sup>	Allegheny	Robert Mercuri	Emily Skopov	Replacing retiring House Speaker Mike Turzai
House 36 <sup>th</sup>	Allegheny	Adrian Doyle	Jessica Benham	Replacing retiring Rep. Harry Readshaw
House 38 <sup>th</sup>	Allegheny	NA	Nickolas Pisciotano	Replacing retiring Rep. Bill Kortz
House 75 <sup>th</sup>	Clearfield/Elk	Michael Armanini	Ryan Grimm	Replace retiring Rep. Matt Gabler
House 84 <sup>th</sup>	Lycoming/Union	Joseph Hamm	Amanda Waldman	Replacing retiring Rep. Gareth Everett
House 86 <sup>th</sup>	Perry/Cumberland	Perry Stambaugh	NA	Replacing retiring Rep. Mark Keller
House 123 <sup>rd</sup>	Schuylkill	Timothy Twardzik	Peter Symons	Replace retiring Rep. Neal Goodman
House 125 <sup>th</sup>	Schuylkill/Dauphin	Joseph Kerwin	NA	Replacing retiring Rep. Mike Tobash
House 127 <sup>th</sup>	Berks	Vincent Gagliardo	Manuel Guzman Jr.	Replacing retiring Rep. Tom Caltagirone
House 131 <sup>st</sup>	Lehigh/Montgomery/Northampton	V. Milou Mackenzie	Kevin Branco	Replacing retiring Rep. Justin Simmons
House 138 <sup>th</sup>	Northampton	Ann Flood	Tara Zrinski	Replacing retiring Rep. Marcia Hahn
House 147 <sup>th</sup>	Montgomery	Tracy Pennycuik	Jill Dennin	Replacing retiring Rep. Marcy Toepel
House 152 <sup>nd</sup>	Montgomery/Philadelphia	Karen Houck	Nancy Guent	Replacing retiring Rep. Tom Murt
House 154 <sup>th</sup>	Montgomery	Kathleen Bowers	Napoleon Nelson Sr.	Replacing retiring Rep. Steve McCarter
House 160 <sup>th</sup>	Chester/Delaware	Wendell Williams	Anton Andrew	Replacing retiring Rep. Steve Barrar
House 185 <sup>th</sup>	Philadelphia/Delaware	NA	Regina Young	Beat incumbent Rep. Maria Donatucci
House 188 <sup>th</sup>	Philadelphia	NA	Rick Krajeski	Beat incumbent Rep. Jim Roebuck
House 190 <sup>th</sup>	Philadelphia	Wanda Logan	Amen Brown	Beat incumbent Rep. G. Roni Green (D)
House 198 <sup>th</sup>	Philadelphia	NA	Darisha Parker	Replacing retiring Rep. Rosita Youngblood



**Jeanne Downey**  
The Arc of PA  
Board of Directors



As citizens, we enjoy many rights and with those rights, comes responsibilities. Voting is one of those responsibilities. We need to vote and we need to educate ourselves about the issues before we vote. As a parent of an adult with disabilities, I have some additional responsibilities. I am responsible to help my daughter understand the issues, while not influencing her vote. This is a responsibility that we have as parents and caregivers. We must show them that they have the same exact rights and RESPONSIBILITIES that everyone has.





**Deb Brubaker**  
The Arc of PA  
Board of Directors

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Some people may fear voting because they aren't familiar with the candidates. This is an easy one. Reach out to your local Arc chapter who can provide candidate views on issues that affect YOU (financial security, safe independence, and community awareness are priorities to me). It is important to vote for candidates who understand the daily struggles of people with disabilities. Candidates who care! Candidates who will take action!

”



**Sara Wolff**  
The Arc of PA  
Board of Directors

“

I vote because I want to make a difference for people who can't vote for themselves. I vote for respect, integrity, and not judge people on who they really are. I vote for people with different types of disabilities.

”



**Lucille Piggot-Prawl**  
The Arc of PA  
Board Treasurer

“

It is important to vote because your life depends on it. I have voted since I was 18 years old and never missed an opportunity to do so. It is our civic duty to participate in the voting process.

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In Touch is an electronic newsletter that is emailed every 2 weeks. It shares the most up to date information about legislative and governmental actions, resources, and events. If you'd like to receive it, email Shirley Keith Knox at [skeithknox@thearcpa.org](mailto:skeithknox@thearcpa.org).



*Pennsylvania*

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The **Pennsylvania Message** is published by The Arc of Pennsylvania.

The Arc of Pennsylvania is affiliated with The Arc of the United States and 30 local chapters serving 50 counties and 8,000 members.

The Arc of Pennsylvania announces the

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## Meet the Candidate Series!

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A pre-recorded Q&A of a candidate running for election for an open seat in the 2020 General Election. A self-advocate affiliated with an Arc of Pennsylvania chapter will conduct the interview.

These interviews will focus on key issues that affect the Disability Community.

*Episodes available now on our Youtube Channel & Facebook page!*

## VOTING BY MAIL-IN BALLOT

- ✓ Deadlines for the November 3 General Election:
- ✓ 5 pm October 27- APPLICATIONS must be RECEIVED by your county election office
- ✓ 8 pm November 3 - VOTED BALLOTS must be RECEIVED by your county election office - postmarks are not enough
- ✓ Applications and ballots may be delivered to your county election office by the deadline. Contact your county election office for their hours of operation.

### MISSION STATEMENT

*The Arc of Pennsylvania promotes the human rights of people with intellectual and development disabilities and actively supports their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.*