



State Senator **SHARIF STREET**

Representing the 3rd Senatorial District
Summer 2018

PASSSB942



Senator Street Co-Sponsors Cannabis Reform Legislation

Senator Street has joined hundreds of advocates (NORML chapters, the ACLU-PA) who rallied to legalize recreational marijuana. The opportunities for \$300 million in revenue, personal freedoms and social justice reform can no longer be ignored.

INSIDE: *Parole Reform Redemption Tour • Your Health Matters • Standing Up for Your Rights Around the 3rd District • Criminal Justice Reform • Gun Violence: A Health Crisis*

Your Health Matters

The most important role of government is the protection of our constituents. I am privileged to be a member of the Health and Human Services Committee which gives me a key role in crafting policy for your protection. This includes combatting the opioid crisis, ensuring the safety of students in the public school system, providing access to health care and protecting your overall health and well-being. Currently Medicaid recipients who wish to receive in-home care must wait for several months to be confirmed. They often do not have the luxury of waiting for such a long period of time for care. Our loved ones are sometimes forced into nursing home care instead of their preferred choice of in home care

which brings comfort, a sense of security, proximity to families, and is less expensive. I have cosponsored legislation (*Senate Bill 912*) that will extend "presumptive eligibility" to those who meet the qualifications for Medicaid and wish to stay at home

to ensure they receive in-home care without delay. Our loved ones deserve the opportunity to remain in their own homes and age with dignity, comfort and security without being forced into nursing home care.

Food vs Medicine

Access to quality affordable healthcare is a right for all citizens in Pennsylvania. Since cost is a significant barrier to access, protection from predatory practices and price gouging is important. I am proud to be a co-sponsor of Senate Bill 637 which will create the Pharmaceutical Transparency Commission to better educate consumers about prescription drug

costs and ensure they are reasonably priced. This bill will address both affordability and access to critical medications and the challenge many face with the rising costs of prescription drugs. Having transparency of overall profits from prescriptions is key in holding drug companies accountable and ensuring fair pricing and availability of prescription drugs. Choosing between food and medicine, a reality too many people must face, is no choice at all.

Fighting for your Rights in Harrisburg

As your Senator, I am incredibly committed to defending your civil liberties, rights, and freedoms, and will not tolerate discrimination in any form. Diversity in race, religion, and culture must serve as a unifying factor rather than a divisive one, and that is why I am so committed to being a leader in the Senate when it comes to protecting my community members' civil rights.

Recently, Nasihah Thompson-King, a local Philadelphia student athlete for Mastery Charter School, was asked to remove her hijab at the beginning of her playoff basketball game. When Ms. Thompson refused the request, she was barred from the game by the referee, who cited a Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association rule requiring a special waiver for religious headgear during athletic events. As Pennsylvania's only Muslim Senator, I was proud to pen a letter to the head of the PIAA encouraging him to change this intolerant rule, and was honored to hear back that the rule has since been changed. Nasihah and

others like her will be able to practice their religions while still being able to play the sports they love.

As I'm sure you know, news stories of racial discrimination throughout the U.S have been on the rise, but these terribly unfortunate accounts hit especially hard when they are so close to home. Locally, two African



American men were unjustly arrested in a Philadelphia Starbucks while waiting for a friend, in what I believe to be an inconsistency and implicit bias based on race in how the business

treats its customers.

My fellow Senators and I pressed Starbucks to review and reconcile their policy to stamp out any sign of racial bias. I will not tolerate any form of discrimination in public accommodations. As a leader in racial justice, I will be holding Starbucks and all other businesses accountable for how they treat their customers, and work to ensure that instances like this do not happen in Pennsylvania.

Lastly, I wanted to update you on an instance of vandalism at Mt. Carmel Cemetery, a historic Jewish cemetery. While this sacred space has been repaired, I will not stand for any bigoted act of vandalism and anti-Semitism. I have introduced Senate Bill 571 to give district attorneys more power to fight the desecration of religious sites.

Our civil rights and religious freedoms are rights we enjoy as citizens, and defending these same rights is one of the proudest things I do as your Senator.

Around the 3rd District



◆ **Stop & Gos Gone**

Thanks to you and a collaborative effort, communities are now empowered to shut down nuisance Stop & Gos. Call 311 to report any Stop & Go nuisances in your community.



◆ **RACP grants**

Proud to bring in over 5.5 Million Dollars to communities.

Uptown Theater – \$500,000

Smith Memorial Playground – \$500,000

WES Corporation – \$1,000,000

North Station District – \$2,500,000

Metropolitan Opera House – \$1,000,000



◆ **College signing Day at Temple University**

Honored to join Michelle Obama and Temple University in celebrating our youth as they pursue higher education on National College Signing Day! The future is bright!

◆ **North Philadelphia Rehabilitation**

Governor Wolf and I joined North10 Philadelphia, Michelle Taylor and Chase Lenfest to talk bold visions for holistic community revitalization for North Philadelphia. Big changes are coming!



◆ **Olney Elementary**

Surprised our kids from Olney Elementary to join them in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Gun Violence: A Health Epidemic

Governor Tom Wolf's recent announcement of the Gun Violence Reduction Initiative, a statewide grant program to reduce the threat of gun violence in Pennsylvania is the proper response to what can only now be identified as a health crisis.

Report statistics reveal a steady increase in shootings. In 2016, there were more than 5,000 assaults by firearms, which amounts to 40 shootings per every 100,000 Pennsylvanians.

I was pleased to join my colleagues in the Pennsylvania Legislative Black



The proliferation of gun violence in our communities has reached the level of an epidemic. Since 2014, the Pennsylvania Uniform Crime

Caucus, the House PA SAFE Caucus and the Governor in announcing his pledge of \$1.5 million in competitive grants for any municipality in Pennsylvania to reduce gun violence. With two press conferences in only a few months, each pledging and delivering measurable resources to combat gun violence, our

collective resistance and commitment is clear. I pledge to continue collaborative efforts to restore the damage this violence has caused.



Team 26

I also met with Team 26 and Moms Demand Action during their stop in Philadelphia on their ride to Washington D.C. to raise awareness of the lax gun laws in America. Every year since the Sandy Hook tragedy where 26 preschoolers were lost to gun violence, Team 26 has cycled across multiple states to deliver the simple message to Washington that American citizens want sensible gun laws.

Policy must follow prayers in the wake of gun violence if we are to heal our communities and meet one of the most important mandates of government, protection of the people.

Criminal Justice Reform

One of our most pressing concerns in Pennsylvania is our broken criminal justice system. I am encouraged by Governor Wolf's recent announcement, along with my constituent Robert Romeek Williams (*Meek Mill*) and the Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus on his Justice Reform Package. The package includes legislation I have both sponsored and co-sponsored to change the culture of overincarceration. I also have the privilege of sitting on the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing Board and the Advisory Council to the Board of Pardons which affords significant leverage in making our Criminal Justice System more progressive.

Sentencing Commission: Helps to guide judges on how to hand down sentences in Pennsylvania. Many arrests result in no charges. Racial bias can compound the number of arrests an individual has on record. Including arrest data to measure the likelihood of someone recommitting a crime during sentencing by a judge, presents a systemic bias that unfairly targets



countless communities.

Using conviction data is a more fair and balanced approach. This is an important change I was able to recommend for sentencing reform.

Advisory Council to the Board of Pardons: Advises the Board of Pardons on issuing recommendations for pardons by the governor to allow people to expunge their records and rehabilitate their lives.

Faster processing time: We have met with the Lieutenant Governor to recommend changes to the pardon application to remove duplicated information and reduce applicant error. Our office will continue to help constituents with the application and refine the overall process.

Join Me in my Redemption Tour for Parole Reform

Senate Bill 1067

The case of my constituent Robert Romeek Williams (Meek Mill) has thrust PA's Criminal Justice System into the spotlight. It revealed the ugly truth of overincarceration, fed in part by an imperfect parole system with a tendency to stalk those who seek to rehabilitate their lives. The reality is these are old problems that affect thousands of Philadelphians and people

throughout Pennsylvania.

A criminal justice system should serve as a fountainhead of rehabilitation, redemption, and a pathway to a better future, which is why I am so proud to have co-sponsored Senate Bill 1067 which will reform parole, which too often leads to the reincarceration of many for technical violations (like missing a meeting or failing a test). Parole is meant to rehabilitate and

reintegrate, not to stalk and re-imprison for the smallest infractions.

Senate Bill 942

The imperfections of our criminal justice system are many and the flaws of parole manifest in numerous ways. All life sentences in Pennsylvania are imposed without the possibility of parole, no matter how old, rehabilitated, or unlikely to re-offend a person is. Not only is this a betrayal of the virtues of redemption – a core American value – it is a multimillion dollar cost we can no longer afford. If we are serious about change then our actions must reflect our convictions. I am the prime sponsor of Senate Bill 942, which would extend access to parole to lifers who have served a reasonable amount of time. We must first understand the diverse faces of lifers: aging seniors (least likely to reoffend) cost between \$70,000 and \$100,000 per year per person; frequent drug offenders which include those suffering from the disease of addiction; and those serving life for simply being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Among these number hundreds of men and women who have never taken a life. This is not what justice looks like. Progressive criminal justice reform will save us millions of dollars which can be reinvested into schools, affordable housing, and addressing the opioid crisis and rehabilitation. Join me in my Redemption Tour, a coordinated statewide media campaign to raise awareness about the urgent need for passage of Senate Bill 942. We began with a Kickoff in Harrisburg in March and have held events in Philadelphia, Chester, Allentown and Pittsburgh; this will continue throughout 2018.

To learn more about Senate Bill 942 or tell your story, please visit my website, www.passSB942.com or facebook: [passSB942](https://www.facebook.com/passSB942)





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legislation, community events and more!**

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**3rd
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