**BLUE VALLEY TIMES FEBRUARY 4, 2025** 



## Boscola Bill to Restore the Responsible Utility Customer Protection Act Advances in the Senate

By Senator Lisa Boscola

HARRISBURG, PA – January 27, 2025 - Senator Lisa M. Boscola (D-Northampton) announced today that Senate Bill 154, her legislation to reauthorize The Responsible Utility Customer Protection Act (Chapter 14), passed unanimously in the Senate Consumer Protection & Professional Licensure Committee. The bill now heads to the Senate Appropriations Committee for further consideration.

First enacted in 2004 and last reauthorized in 2014, Chapter 14 protects responsible ratepayers by providing public utilities with tools to manage uncollected bills while safeguarding vulnerable customers through winter shut-off moratoriums and payment arrangements. The law expired on December 31, 2024, and the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) temporarily stepped in to preserve these protections until the General Assembly could act early this session.

"This framework is vital to stabilizing utility costs for hard-working families and seniors on fixed incomes," Boscola said. "With skyrocketing energy prices and mounting unpaid utility bills, the need for action is more urgent than ever."

Boscola, who has worked on all three reauthorizations of Chapter 14, emphasized the importance of swift legislative action. "The unanimous committee vote shows a shared commitment to protect ratepayers while providing utilities with the tools they need to operate fairly and efficiently."

For more information, contact Senator Boscola's office.

## They are Doing Amazing Things.' SkillsUSA Championships Showcases Next Generation of Lehigh Valley Workforce

By Paul Muschick

Lehigh Valley - Nearly 500 students who are learning skills that are sought after in the Lehigh Valley demonstrated their budding talents while potential future employers looked on at the annual SkillsUSA Council District 11 Championships on Jan. 22.

Students participated in 62 competitions related to hospitality, architecture, automotive services, culinary arts, health care, building construction, cosmetology and esthetics, criminal justice, cyber security, education, firefighting, graphic communications, information technology, mechatronics, and web design, among other fields.

Andy Hammer, Executive Director of SkillsUSA Council, encouraged leaders from education, business, and community organizations who attended the event to promote the opportunities available in such fields, and to make career and technical education mainstream.

"They are doing amazing things, and it's because of the opportunities they have in career and technical education," Hammer said.

SkillsUSA is a partnership of students, schools, and industry working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce. A nonprofit national education association, SkillsUSA serves middle school, high school, and college/postsecondary students preparing for careers in trade, technical, and skilled service occupations. The Lehigh Valley boasts the only SkillsUSA Council that not only offers all the benefits of SkillsUSA national but also professional development conferences and interest clubs year-round here in the Lehigh Valley.

Participating in the competition were students from Bethlehem Area Vocational-Technical School, Career Institute of Technology, Lehigh Career & Technical Institute, Monroe County Technical Institute, Upper Bucks County Technical School, Colonial Academy, and Northampton Community College.

Seth Winch, a junior from Northern Lehigh High School and Lehigh Career & Technical Institute, competed in mechatronics.

He said the competition let him demonstrate what he had learned in the past three years and showed him what he needs to improve on.

Winch wants to pursue a career in roller coaster engineering. He worked at Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom for two years, where he got to know the maintenance team.

"It really drove me to go into mechatronics," Winch said.

## Sesame Place Philadelphia Offers FREE **Teacher Passes for 2025 Season**

By SP

Lehigh Valley - Sesame Place® Philadelphia will offer those who qualify a FREE 2025 Teacher Pass valid for unlimited visits throughout the 2025 season, which starts on Saturday, February 15. Sesame Place offers its



free Teacher Passes as a thank you to local educators.

Teacher Passes provide unlimited admission to Sesame Place Philadelphia as well as admission to exclusive Season Pass Member-only events.\* To qualify, teachers must have a valid K-12 teaching license in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, or Delaware and meet the eligibility requirements as stated online. Interested teachers must register online by Sunday, February 9.

Once teachers download their vouchers, they can visit Guest Relations on any operating day during the 2025 season with the following items to be validated by a park representative:

Teacher Pass order confirmation voucher, Photo ID, Copy of teaching certificate - the name must match the name on the ID and Teacher Pass order confirmation voucher presented Teacher Pass holders can enjoy unlimited admission and endless furry fun throughout the year with seasonal events, including the Mardi Gras Celebration, Elmo's Eggstravaganza, Elmo's Springtacular, Sesame Summer Splash, The Count's Halloween Spooktacular, and A Very Furry Christmas. This year, the park will also celebrate its 45th Birthday, including special celebrations! Guests can look forward to the return of the fantastic Sesame Street Birthday Parade and all-new birthday fun throughout the spring and summer, with more furry fun to be announced soon.

\*Teacher Passes do not qualify for other Season Pass Member benefits other than unlimited park admission and entry to select Season Pass Member events.



**Bangor Area School District** 2025-2026 Kindergarten Registration

Do you know a child who will be 5 on or before August 25, 2025? If so, register for kindergarten and follow these three steps:

A complete registration must be submitted by Monday, August 18, 2025 to guarantee a first day start on Monday, August 25, 2025.



## Attend Screening Appointment

2025-2026 school ve

online registration p packets must be recei May 15, 2025 to gu

- Your child(ren).
- Photo identificati
  - Any other upd

5. Physical Exam Record