

PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE REP. MARK M. GILLEN

SERVING THE 128TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

FALL 2023

Dear Friends,

As a chairman of the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee, resident of Robeson Township, and father of five daughters, I was very alarmed about a recent breakout at Abraxas Academy. This juvenile detention facility is located within my legislative district and serves as a secure lock-up center for males and females. It also provides a secure residential treatment program for habitual and sexual male offenders. I immediately – and repeatedly – called Abraxas to determine two things. First, how could nine juveniles escape the facility undetected. Second, what, if any, protocols were in place to alert neighboring communities of security breaches at that facility. Fortunately, each juvenile involved in the breakout has been safely returned to the facility. That said, as of the morning of Wednesday, Sept. 27, no Abraxas employee has ever responded to my inquiries.

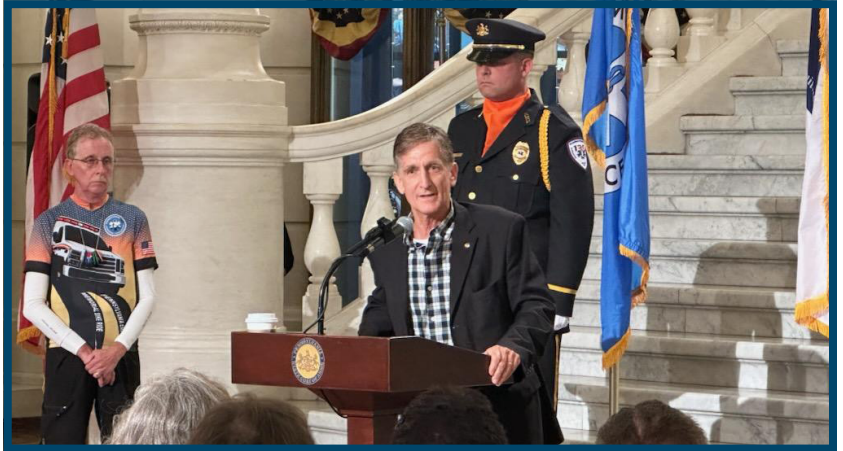
Rest assured I will continue to pursue answers to these questions to assist in assessing and preventing a repeat episode. In fact, I am currently working in tandem with the Pennsylvania House Judiciary Committee, which has oversight of these kinds of secure settings. The legislation I am co-sponsoring focuses directly on making these facilities more secure and informing the public when an escape occurs. These efforts will go far in making certain any future miscommunications will not occur.

I am also co-sponsoring legislation to accomplish my goal of protecting Pennsylvania's residents better by upgrading standards at all our Commonwealth's prisons. Community safety is non-negotiable, and any failure to protect Pennsylvanians from criminal behavior is abhorrent to me.

Sincerely,

Mark M. Gillen

State Rep.
Mark M. Gillen



I spoke at the 13th annual Pennsylvania EMS Memorial Service at the state Capitol where the names of 77 EMS workers from Pennsylvania who were killed in the line of duty were read aloud. In attendance were bikers from The Annual PA EMS Memorial Bike Ride, who finished their journey from Carbondale at the Capitol that morning. I would like to thank every emergency services worker who serves our Commonwealth. I hope you will join me in honoring and remembering the EMS providers who lost their lives in the line of duty.



I had the opportunity to meet with Base Commander Col. Ray Hyland for a tour of the 171st Air Refueling Wing in Pittsburgh. They have been in operation since 1964 and, through the National Guard's State Partnership Program, have hosted Lithuanian Air Force personnel for security exercise training since 1993. To commemorate this 30-year partnership, I also met with Lithuania's ambassador to the United States, Audra Plepytė.



I hosted the Civil Air Patrol in the Pennsylvania State Capitol for the day. Responsible for 90% of inland search and rescue in the U.S., they provide important emergency services for state, local and federal agencies during disasters or search-and-rescue operations.





STATE REPRESENTATIVE **MARK M. GILLEN**



RepGillen.com



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District Office Information

Cumru Township

29 Village Center Dr., Suite A-7, Reading, PA 19607
P: 610-775-5130 | Open Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Amity Township

2004 Weavertown Road, Douglassville, PA 19518
P: 610-385-0704 | Open Tues. & Thur., 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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- Applications for Birth and Death Certificates.
- Voter Registration Forms.
- Pennsylvania Laws Related to Firearms.
- Pennsylvania Tax Forms.
- Personal Estate Inventory Books.
- Household Inventories.
- Biblical Quotations in the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building.
- Pennsylvania Hunting Booklets.
- Pennsylvania Campground Directories.



I had a great time talking with veterans and their families who came to our Veterans Luncheon. Veterans have given so much to our country. It was nice to be able to have an event centered on honoring them.



I helped lead a tour of Fort Indiantown Gap, which is home to the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. It is also the headquarters — and the largest national training center — of the Pennsylvania National Guard. We met with military officers, toured the base, learned about the new Keystone State Challenge Academy, tried out aviation and gun simulators and, best of all, took a ride in an Army helicopter!