



Meet the July 23rd, 2022 WaterFire Orb Lighter: **Senator Michele Brooks**

Sen. Michele Brooks has built a reputation as a compassionate supporter of children, senior citizens, veterans and those in need. She has also emerged as an outspoken, results-driven advocate for job growth, regulatory reform, and a commonsense approach to budgeting.

Elected to represent Mercer and Crawford Counties, along with parts of Erie and Warren Counties, in the Senate in 2014, and overwhelmingly re-elected in 2018, she now serves as Chair of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee and Vice-Chair of the Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee. In the 2017-2018 session, she served as Chair of the Aging and Youth Committee and Vice-Chair of the Health and Human Services Committee. Sen. Brooks made history as the first woman ever elected to represent the area in the state House of Representatives, and then again in the state Senate. Before her service in the Senate, she served eight years in the House of Representatives, after gaining valuable experience as a Mercer County Commissioner and a Jamestown Borough Council member.

Her work to expand and improve services for older citizens and children earned her a prestigious, statewide "50 Over 50" Award from City and State PA as one of the Keystone State's most influential leaders. In 2018, she also earned a Capitol Caregiver Award from AARP, numerous "Friend of Business" Awards from the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), and a "No Place Like Home Legislative Champion" Award from the Pennsylvania Home Care Association. In 2022, she was honored as "Legislator of the Year" by the Pennsylvania State Association of County Fairs.

Since 2006, Sen. Brooks has worked on a host of significant state issues, including reducing regulations on farmers and businesses; phasing out the inheritance tax; reducing the Corporate Net Income Tax; promoting tax depreciation strategies that encourage investment; expanding fundraisers for nonprofits, fire departments, veterans' organizations, and families facing tragedies; creating an HVAC grant program to protect patients by improving air quality in long-term care facilities; combating drug abuse and diversion; and holding the line on sales, personal income, gas and other taxes. She helped lead the charge to successfully retain the Department of Aging as a standalone department, to keep the Mercer State Correctional Institution open as one of the state's most well-run public safety facilities, and to reform the prison closure process. She served on a statewide commission to help recruit and retain firefighters and emergency medical technicians; is working to better prevent and treat Lyme disease through a multi-part legislative package; brought a service dog training program to SCI Mercer for veterans in the community; and was part of a newly formed work group on school safety.

During her tenure in the House, she organized a group of legislators to travel to Washington, D.C. to meet with Federal Highway Administration officials to convey their opposition to the tolling of I-80. She was one of the first to oppose the Wolf Administration's nine-bridge tolling plan, and is a strong advocate for education and preparing our children for the jobs of today as well as tomorrow.

In her home area, Senator Brooks has succeeded in reviving the McKeever Environmental Learning Center and Tuttle Point Campground, which are part of beloved childhood memories for many local families, in an effort to keep them operating for generations to come.

She also places a high priority on working personally with her constituents, helping them cut through red tape, celebrating their achievements, and ensuring that state programs and services fulfill their needs. She has worked hard to build coalitions and partnerships, achieving success through shared goals and an uncompromising work ethic.



WaterFire Sharon is Honored to have Michele Brooks light the Orb tonight!

ART

MUSIC

DANCE

PERFORMANCES

FOOD