

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

JESSICA BENHAM

State Rep. Jessica Benham took office on a platform of fighting for the interests of residents in the 36th Legislative District and solving the critical problems that her constituents face: lack of access to quality health care and to economic opportunity, poor air and water quality, and failing infrastructure. Benham's background is in advocacy for health care, education and worker's rights, with experience advocating for legislation on the federal, state and local levels. Prior to holding public office, Benham was Director of Development for the Pittsburgh Center for Autistic Advocacy (PCAA), a grassroots self-advocacy project run by Autistic people for Autistic people. She co-founded PCAA after moving back to college, and it remains the only LGBTQ Autistic-led advocacy organization in the Greater Pittsburgh Area.

Through her work with PCAA, Benham has worked to ensure that individuals with disabilities are treated fairly in the legislative process. She has provided feedback and consultation for legislation including the Autism CARES Act on the federal level and health care efforts at the state level. She advocated strongly for Paul's Law, which states that an individual can't be deemed ineligible for an organ transplant simply because of a disability and was signed into law in Pennsylvania in 2018.

However, her advocacy efforts are not limited to health care. Benham also has experience fighting for workers' rights, notably during her time as a graduate worker at the University of Pittsburgh, where she was involved in efforts to organize a union of graduate student workers through the United Steelworkers.

Benham has B.A. degrees in Political Science and Communication Studies from Bethel University, an M.A. in Communication from Minnesota State University, and an M.A. in Bioethics from the University of Pittsburgh.

She currently resides in the Southside Slopes with her cat, Ravi.

