



State Representative

SETH GROVE

196th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

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Summer 2011



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Dear Neighbor,

It has been an exciting and productive legislative session so far. During the first six months of the session, the House passed nearly 150 bills and Gov. Tom Corbett signed 75 new laws.

There are many proposals of which we can be proud, and we have an aggressive legislative agenda lined up for the fall. I anticipate progress on legislation to privatize Pennsylvania's liquor industry, additional welfare reforms, school property tax reform and re-apportionment.

In addition to the vigorous legislative schedule, I also am happy to bring you several important events this fall, including the ever-popular Eggs and Issues Breakfasts, a town hall meeting, and three specialized programs.

As you read this newsletter, if you have questions about anything you read or any state matter, feel free to contact my office.

Finally, if you haven't connected with me yet on Facebook, I welcome your participation on my site. We often have lively discussions about local news and policy matters. It is a great tool for us to stay in touch.

Sincerely,

Seth M. Grove
State Representative
196th District



Community Calendar

Following is a list of upcoming district events I am hosting. I invite you and your family to join me at any of these events to discuss the issues most important to our state and our community. You can cut out this section of the newsletter as a convenient reference to what is happening in the 196th District.

LEGISLATIVE EGGS AND ISSUES BREAKFASTS

All breakfasts will begin at 8 a.m. Please RSVP as soon as possible by emailing your name, address, phone number and date of the event to wleahy@pahousegop.com or by calling (717) 767-3947.

Friday, Sept. 30

Dover Valley Restaurant
3720 Carlisle Road in Dover

Friday, Oct. 14

Windy Hill Senior Center
50 North East St. in Spring Grove

Friday, Oct. 21

Alexander's Restaurant
840 Carlisle Road in York

Friday, Oct. 28

Roundtop Mountain Resort
925 Roundtop Road in Lewisberry

LEGISLATIVE LUNCHEON

Saturday, Oct. 22

Noon
Dover Valley Restaurant
3720 Carlisle Road in Dover

I hope to see you at an upcoming event!

DEPT. OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MOBILE VETERANS CENTER VISIT

Wednesday, Sept. 21
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
1550 Kenneth Road in York
See page 2 for more information.

SMALL BUSINESS SEMINAR

Thursday, Oct. 20
7 p.m.
Dover Intermediate School
4500 Intermediate Ave. in Dover
See page 2 for more information.

PRE-RETIREMENT MONEY AND LIFE PROGRAM

Thursday, Nov. 3
7 p.m.
Shiloh Fire Company
2190 Carlisle Road in York
Call my office for more information.

TOWN HALL MEETING

Thursday, Nov. 10
7 p.m.
Dover Township Building
2480 W. Canal Road in Dover

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, Dec. 8
3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
1550 Kenneth Road in York

cut and save

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Department of Veterans Affairs Mobile Veterans Center Visit

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs operates several mobile veterans centers throughout the Commonwealth and nation to reach veterans in underserved areas. I am pleased to coordinate a visit from this state-of-the-art center to provide you with the latest information about the benefits and services available to the veterans who so selflessly defended America.

The center will visit my office in the Westgate Plaza on Wednesday, Sept. 21, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Refreshments will be available for participating veterans.

Some of the services provided through the center include:

- Individual, group, marital, family and bereavement counseling.
- Medical referrals.
- Assistance in applying for VA benefits.
- Employment counseling, guidance and referrals.
- Alcohol and drug assessments.
- Information and referrals to community resources.

The mobile veterans center is handicapped accessible and includes a wheelchair lift.

Taking On Ethanol

Recently, I introduced legislation to remove ethanol blending requirements from the Pennsylvania Biofuel Development and In-State Production Incentive Act of 2008. This proposal would send a message to Washington, D.C., and the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that Pennsylvanians are fed up with the federal government pushing for greater ethanol use.

In recent months, the EPA has proposed increasing the amount of ethanol allowed for use in late-model cars to 15 percent. It claims the blend is safe for cars produced in 2001 or later, but car manufactures say otherwise.

U.S. Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (R-Wisconsin), who recently introduced federal legislation to block the higher ethanol blend from the market, contacted a dozen auto manufacturers and all expressed concern about the EPA decision and how the higher ethanol mixture could damage vehicles and void manufacturer warranties.

Ethanol wreaks havoc on car engines, boat motors, small engines and any machines relying on a carburetor. The use of ethanol as an additive in gasoline also reduces fuel efficiency, thus increasing the amount of gasoline consumed.

Finally, corn-derived ethanol drives up the cost of food around the world. If the United States were to completely transfer to an ethanol-based society, it would take 95 percent of the U.S. total farmland to supply enough ethanol for domestic use. When you consider that it takes 1.3 gallons of fuel to create 1 gallon of ethanol, it is clearly not a sustainable energy source.

The ethanol industry receives \$6 billion in annual subsidies from federal taxpayers, which the U.S. Senate in June voted to eliminate; all for a product which has yet to prove its worth.

Since introducing my legislation, I have heard from many constituents who support efforts to remove ethanol from gasoline. While it is vital for us to reduce our dependence on foreign oil, ethanol is clearly not the answer.

If you have any questions about my legislation, feel free to contact my office.

Small Business Seminar

On Thursday, Oct. 20, at 7 p.m., I am hosting a small business seminar to address questions and concerns of small business owners and potential entrepreneurs who are looking for advice about running a successful business in Pennsylvania.

The event will feature speakers from the departments of Community and Economic Development, Labor and Industry and General Services. We will also welcome a guest from the Shippensburg University Small Business Development Center.

The seminar will take place at the Dover Area Intermediate School, located at 4500 Intermediate Ave. in Dover.

If you have any questions about this event, feel free to contact my office. I look forward to meeting those individuals who help to drive Pennsylvania's economy and employ Commonwealth citizens.

Around the 196th District



Over the summer, participants from Camp Quest in Spring Grove visited Harrisburg. My son, Andrew, joined me in welcoming them to the Capitol. If you would like to arrange a group tour of the Capitol, contact my office.



On April 30, I joined with the West Manchester Township Police Department to collect unused prescription and over-the-counter medicines as part of the Drug Enforcement Administration's National Take Back Initiative.



During session, I welcomed the Rev. Larry Katz to the Capitol in Harrisburg to serve as a guest chaplain for the day. Pictured from left are Speaker of the House Sam Smith, Katz and me. If you are an ordained member of the clergy from any faith and you would like the opportunity to open the House session with prayer, contact my office. We also always welcome guest pages.

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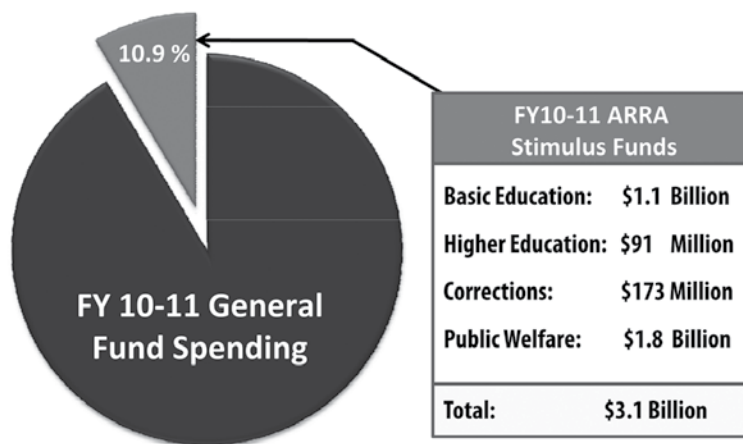
Pennsylvania's Budget: A Plan for Now and for the Future

On June 30, Gov. Tom Corbett signed a new budget into law for the 2011-12 fiscal year. I want to take this opportunity to provide you with facts about this budget and to dispel some of the myths surrounding our Commonwealth's new spending plan. Following is a breakdown of what was included or eliminated from this budget and how it will impact our daily lives.

Spending: Pennsylvania lawmakers held overall General Fund spending to \$27.15 billion in this budget, which represents a \$1 billion reduction from last year. We believe spending grew at an unsustainable rate under the previous administration, so the 2011-12 budget is our attempt to rightsize state government.

Taxes: The new budget will not rely on any new or increased state taxes. Raising taxes was never an option during this process because taxes stifle job creation, which we desperately need to foster economic recovery.

Loss of Stimulus Funds: During the height of the economic downturn, the federal government gave billions of dollars in aid to states. Many legislators wanted this money to be used only for one-time expenditures or for infrastructure improvements. Former Gov. Ed Rendell did allocate some of the funding in this manner, but he also poured billions of dollars into public education.

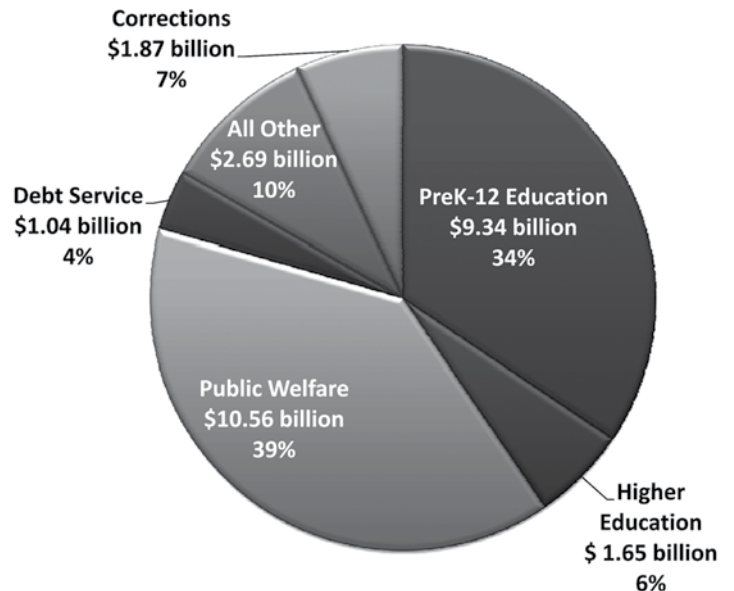


Education: We were successful in increasing the governor's request for education funding; however, Pennsylvania did not have the resources to compensate for the loss of \$1.1 billion in federal aid for education. During the last budget cycle, lawmakers cautioned school districts not to become reliant on federal money and urged them to allocate this extra funding to one-time expenditures. In addition to restoring some public education money, we also were able to increase funding for higher education above the governor's initial proposal.

Property Taxes: In an effort to protect property tax payers, Special Session Act 1 of 2006 was amended as part of the budget agreement. The new provision will limit the number of exceptions by which school districts can increase property taxes above the state-set inflationary index without seeking voter approval. Where previously 10 exceptions existed, now only three remain. The legislation, for which I led the charge, also places standards on the remaining exceptions so they are no longer rubberstamp formalities automatically approved by the Department of Education. This is just the first step in our effort to overhaul Pennsylvania's public school funding system.

Welfare: One of the bright spots in this budget was the effort to finally get a handle on out-of-control welfare spending. We were able to reduce the governor's welfare request by \$400 million, sending a portion of this money instead to education programs. Some of the cost-saving measures include a plan to curtail benefit shopping by welfare applicants, better management of the special allowances program and the implementation of an Income Eligibility Verification System. We will also begin drug testing welfare recipients who have had a felony drug conviction in the past five years.

General Fund Spending: \$27.15 Billion



So-Called Surplus: For the first time in several years, Pennsylvania's revenue collections actually exceeded expectations. This left us with a \$785 million balance for 2010-11 fiscal year. Some lawmakers, calling this balance a surplus, wanted to use this \$785 million. Unfortunately, Pennsylvania has more than \$50 billion in unfunded liabilities with which to contend. These include \$4 billion owed to the federal government for unemployment compensation assistance, almost \$30 billion needed to appropriately fund public pensions, and nearly \$13 billion in long-term debt. To put it in mathematical terms:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 785,000,000 \text{ (\$785 million)} \\
 - 50,000,000,000 \text{ (\$50 billion)} \\
 \hline
 - 49,215,000,000
 \end{array}$$

Negative \$49.2 billion is not a surplus!

Looking Ahead: One of our goals with this budget was to map out a spending plan for this year, and also to look ahead to Pennsylvania's future. This budget is about sustainability now and for years to come. Fiscal responsibility is the new motto. With the new year under way, we are now examining ways to further streamline state government and to continue to enhance our appeal to employers. This budget lays the groundwork for a return to prosperity, and I am proud to have been a part of it.



House Majority Appropriations Chairman Bill Adolph and I had the best seats in the house to watch Gov. Tom Corbett sign into law property tax increase protections for homeowners.



LINKS ARE AT RepGrove.com

New Laws I



Following is a list of new laws I either co-sponsored or voted in favor of. Please note, this does not constitute a complete list. You can learn more about all laws signed in 2011 at www.legis.state.pa.us. If you have any questions, contact my office.

Act 5 (HB 218): Designates State Route 462 in West Manchester Township, York County, from its intersection with U.S. Route 30 to its intersection with State Route 24 in Springettsbury Township, as the Korean War Veterans Memorial Highway.

Act 6 (SB 1030): Comprehensively reforms the PA Unemployment Compensation Law. It also creates a shared work program, which will allow businesses that want to hire workers, but do not have the capital, to retain workers or hire workers through sharing the cost with their unemployment claim.

Act 7 (SB 1006): Bans synthetic marijuana and illicit drug-mimicking bath salts.

Act 9 (SB 274): Allows the PA Game Commission to set regulations to allow the transfer of certain tags or permits from a licensed mentor hunter to a youth hunter participating in the Mentored Youth Hunting Program. It also changes and simplifies the fee structure for obtaining falconry permits.

Act 10 (HB 40): Known as the Castle Doctrine, this law allows a citizen to stand his or her ground and use force to fend off an attacker. The law will apply to the home, vehicle and any place where the individual has a right to be.

Act 17 (SB 1131): Called the Fair Share Act, this law will bring about lawsuit abuse reform by holding a defendant in a civil lawsuit financially responsible only for its share of the damages. This is a pro-job measure that also will help Pennsylvania attract and retain medical professionals and will send a message to businesses that we are serious about making Pennsylvania a business-friendly state.

Act 18 (HB 15): This law creates a public Internet website containing information about Commonwealth funding actions and expenditures to allow citizens greater insight into how tax dollars are spent.

Act 21 (HB 463): Allows senior citizens to remain eligible for PACE and PACENET even if minor Social Security cost of living adjustments cause income to exceed allowable limits.

Act 24 (HB 1352): Provides mandate relief for school districts so they can allocate available funds as necessary. The law will place a moratorium on the requirement for school districts to report certain data unless it is federally required or reimbursed by the state. My PLANCON process exemption for school districts not seeking state reimbursement for construction projects also was included.

Act 46 (HB 797): Designates cancer as an occupational disease for firefighters, allowing them to collect workers' compensation if they can prove a direct exposure to certain carcinogens in the course of firefighting duties.

Act 62 (SB 326): Allows the Department of Health to issue Certificates of Birth Resulting in Stillbirth.

Legislative Scorecard



To keep you updated about the proposals I have introduced and where they stand in the legislative process, I am introducing the "Legislative Scorecard" section. This does not represent a complete list of bills, but only includes those that have received action.

House Bill 247 would add text messaging to the types of telephone communication prohibited by the Telemarketer Registration Act and would prohibit telemarketers from contacting a consumer via text message if he or she is enrolled on the "do-not-call" list. It has been approved by the House and is now before the Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee.

Language from **House Bill 257** was amended into House Bill 1352, which was signed into law as Act 24 of 2011. The measure will exempt school districts not seeking state reimbursement for construction projects from approval by the Pennsylvania Department of Education through its PLANCON process.

House Bill 815 would create the offense of sexting by minors, which would be graded as a second-degree misdemeanor. It was approved by the House and is now awaiting consideration in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

House Bill 816 would clarify the experience requirements for clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, and professional counselors. It has been approved by the House and is now awaiting consideration in the Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee.

I fought to have a provision similar to my **House Bill 1326** amended in Senate Bill 330, which has now been signed into law as Act 25 of 2011. The inclusion of the amendment mandates school districts to seek voter approval for any property tax increase above the state-set inflationary index, unless an exception is sought for special education expenses, grandfathered/electoral debt or pension costs. The proposal would require school districts to meet certain financial criteria before gaining approval for the exceptions.

House Bill 1323, which would add "coin auctions" to the definition of "games of chance," was examined during a House Gaming Oversight Committee hearing. The bill is still awaiting an up-or-down vote of the committee.

If you have any questions about these or any of my legislative proposals, feel free to contact my office.



I am taking on the current method of public school funding as the co-leader of the House Majority Policy Committee's Property Tax Policy Development Team. During a special caucus held in April, I led a discussion about the challenges to eliminating school property taxes and the revenue sources we could tap to replace property taxes.

REP. SETH GROVE - 196th Legislative District

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