



## What state government issues are you most interested in?

May 2013

On May 30, I held my annual Senior Expo at the Cranberry Township Municipal Building. The event offers attendees an opportunity to learn more about their health, along with opportunities and services available to them in our community. I always enjoy the time it gives me to visit with, and most importantly listen to, those citizens who are able to attend the expo.

Yesterday, I heard from seniors on many issues, including support for advancing legislation to require school boards to ask for voter approval through voter referendum before they increase property taxes. I was also encouraged to continue my work to protect marriage between one man and one woman and to continue the fight to defend our right to bear arms.

What state government issues are you interested in? We are currently preparing for our final month of legislative debate before the state budget deadline. The annual budget is the document that prioritizes and funds state policy decisions. I believe that it is important for our state government to do all it can to offset the damage being done to our economy by the Obama administration's leftist policies. It is our prime time to advance policies that will encourage investment and job creation in our state economy.

Several issues brought into the budget debate by the Governor are liquor store privatization, transportation funding and pension reform. Unions, who are accomplices of the Obama administration's attempts to advance a leftist agenda, are opposed to liquor store privatization, opposed to pension reform and support a transportation funding scheme that takes more from taxpayers.

I support the privatization of the state liquor stores. I support real pension reform to protect taxpayers by changing our state and school employee pension systems from defined-benefit plans to defined-contribution plans.

I oppose the Governor's union-backed plan for transportation funding that could drive up the cost of gas at the pump by 28 cents per gallon of gas. We must reduce state government spending to help our state's economy. Pension reform will help to reduce spending, but the two main drivers of state spending are welfare and education. When combined, they consume 74 percent of the Governor's proposed state general fund budget! Welfare consumes 39 percent of the Governor's proposed budget; almost 11 billion dollars. Instead of raising taxes to fund our transportation needs, as proposed by the Governor and the State Senate Transportation committee, we should reduce welfare by at least 10 percent and use the 1.1 billion dollars to fund our road and bridge projects.

The proceeds from the sale of the liquor stores could also be used to fund our road and bridge projects, instead of using it for public education as proposed by the Governor, which would just fill the teacher union's pockets.

We should also pass a Right to Work law in Pennsylvania. It has proven to be a policy change that improves a state's economy and job creation environment at zero cost to the taxpayer. I will continue my fight to protect taxpayers.

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