



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Scott Boyd

Serving the 43rd Legislative District



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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

Dear Neighbor,

I hope you and yours are enjoying your summer! Before we know it, school buses will be trundling across the district again and we'll be enjoying milkshakes and funnel cakes at the local fairs.

Before autumn arrives, I did want to take an opportunity to bring you up to date on just a few of the important accomplishments that the Pennsylvania Legislature and Gov. Tom Corbett have been able to complete in recent months.

There's a lot to list – a no-tax-increase, on-time state budget that actually cut state spending, lawsuit abuse reform, a big government transparency initiative, welfare reform, and much more. I'm happy we've finally gotten to an era in Harrisburg where the taxpayer comes first. In these trying economic times, it's of utmost importance for all to realize that Pennsylvania's citizens simply can't and won't foot the bill for more and more government.

When the Legislature returns to session in September, plenty of other issues await. As a member of the House Finance Committee, much of my fall will be filled with hearings examining impact fees, taxes and related questions regarding the Marcellus Shale. Discussion of privatizing the liquor system and state stores, as well as how to best fund construction and repair of roads and bridges will loom large on the agenda.

On the homefront, I continue to meet with constituents and attend local events. My office is always busy helping those with state-government related needs. You can follow what's happening on Facebook if you're on: I'm at **Facebook.com/RepBoyd**.

If there's any way that I or my staff can be of service, don't hesitate to call at 464-5285 or stop by my office in the West Lampeter Municipal Building, 852 Village Road in Lampeter. We're here to help.

It remains my privilege to represent you in the House of Representatives. Thank you for the opportunity to do so.

Respectfully,

Scott W. Boyd
43rd Legislative District
Pennsylvania House of Representatives

Jobs, Jobs, Jobs **Fair Share Act is Big Win for** **Pennsylvania Employers**

Pennsylvania's business and medical communities now enjoy a greater protection from frivolous lawsuits.

A core element of this achievement was passage of the Fair Share Act, which reforms the state's joint and several liability law by ensuring that defendants found negligent or liable for an injury are responsible for only their share of the damages.

Prior to the Fair Share Act passage, Pennsylvania had one of the most litigious business environments in the country. Two-thirds of small business owners say they make business decisions to avoid lawsuits, 23 percent say those decisions have forced them to cut employee benefits, and 11 percent say those decisions have forced them to lay off employees.

Up until the new law, Pennsylvania still retained what lawyers call full "joint liability" along with eight other states and the District of Columbia. This meant that if a lawsuit named multiple defendants, the one with the deepest pockets can then be held liable for **ALL** of the plaintiff's damages, even if this defendant's actions had little to do with the injuries alleged.

Under the Fair Share Act, a defendant will be held responsible only for his or her proportionate share of the total damages awarded to compensate a plaintiff.

A state's civil liability laws are almost always considered by business executives who make expansion and relocation decisions. It's simple: legal liability costs can scare job creators away. However, it's important to stress that these reforms do

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New Law Requires Voter Approval for School Property Tax Increases

School property taxes remain a vexing issue for a statewide solution; however, the Legislature is taking steps that can help the overall problem. Act 1 of 2006 was passed to require school districts to gain voter approval for tax increases above the rate of inflation. However, Act 1 provides for 10 exceptions. Some school districts have used the exceptions to circumvent the referendum process and increase property taxes.

In June, the Legislature was successful in approving legislation to amend Act 1 by eliminating every exception by which school districts can currently increase property taxes beyond the state inflation index except special education costs, pension obligations, and grandfathered/electoral debt. I supported this effort to hold school districts to property tax increases within the index and require voter approval for any increase above and beyond the index.

I have heard from residents who are concerned about ever-increasing property taxes and who feel powerless to stop them. With passage of this legislation, we are helping Pennsylvania's property owners by giving them a voice as voters in how they are taxed and by requiring school districts to control their spending.

Property tax relief will continue to be a major issue of discussion when the Legislature reconvenes in the fall.

Attention Seniors
The deadline to file for the state's Property Tax/Rent Rebate program has been extended to Dec. 31, 2011. Claim forms and qualifying information are available by contacting my district office or online at RepBoyd.com

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not deny anyone with a legitimate claim the right to seek compensation.

I'm pleased that lawsuit abuse reform of this magnitude will help employers to feel more confident in doing business in Pennsylvania. This new law is crucial in ensuring access to quality health care and helping to maintain and add family sustaining jobs.

State Budget Restores Fiscal Responsibility

State spending took a decidedly different direction in the 2011-12 fiscal year. For only the third time in 40 years, Pennsylvania will be spending less than the prior year.

Over the last eight years (since Ed Rendell was first elected governor), state spending increased 31 percent, while the rate of inflation grew only 21 percent. Frankly, spending was out of control and Pennsylvania was facing a \$4 billion dollar deficit.

This year's budget takes a decidedly different approach. It spends \$1 billion less than the previous year's budget. Although \$2.7 billion in federal stimulus funds have expired and were not available for inclusion, all critical state services were maintained. And all of this was done with no new borrowing and no tax increase on Pennsylvania families or job creators.

During the House debate over this budget, there was some discussion of the higher than expected revenue collections reported by the Department of Revenue. Estimates have put these additional revenues at around \$800 million. While that is good news, I do not agree with those who call those funds a "surplus" and see them as an opportunity for us to spend more. In reality, there is no surplus. Those additional revenues pale in comparison to Pennsylvania's \$50.5 billion in outstanding liabilities, which include \$12.9 billion in outstanding debt payments, \$29.4 billion in pension obligations, and \$4 billion owed to the federal government for borrowed unemployment compensation funds, among others. This budget had to end the trend of spending money that we simply do not have.

In short, I believe we've passed a realistic, responsible, and sustainable plan. It eliminates wasteful spending and closes a \$4 billion structural deficit while maintaining critical government services. After years of overspending, overtaxing and borrowing, state government has begun to live within its means.

Putting State Spending Online for Taxpayer Review

One of the new laws passed at the end of the spring legislative session will help make it easier for all taxpayers to find out information about state spending and revenue.

Act 18 of 2011 establishes an online, searchable database of all state government expenditures, known as Pennsylvania Web Accountability, Transparency and Contract Hub or PennWATCH. This is a huge step forward in promoting openness, transparency and accountability in state government.

By the end of 2012, PennWATCH must provide the following information regarding each funding action or expenditure paid to a Commonwealth agency or other entity from federal or state funds:

- The name and address of the agency or other entity receiving funding.
- The amount of the funding action or expenditure.
- The agency initiating the funding action or expenditure.
- The appropriation from which the funding action or expenditure is paid.
- A counter to show the number of visitors to the site.
- The funding source.

In addition, the website must show at the end of each month all federal and state revenue received and deposited in the State Treasury during the previous month. PennWATCH must also include a link to each agency's website, where available.

In years 2013 and 2014, additional detailed information about state expenditures will be available on the site.

This legislation was supported unanimously by both the House and Senate earlier this year and signed by Gov. Tom Corbett in late June.



Restoring Accountability and Integrity to Pennsylvania's Welfare System

Welfare spending consumes just about one-third of Pennsylvania's state spending. With costs of that magnitude, it's imperative that scrutiny be given to ensure that any waste, fraud and abuse within the welfare system be dealt with.

Some significant fixes to the welfare code were signed into law in June.

- **Drug Testing** -- Drug felons applying for welfare public assistance will be subjected to random drug testing before receiving benefits. Tests will also be applied to drug felons currently in the welfare system.
- **Anti-Benefit Shopping** -- Cash benefit levels differ from county to county, and welfare recipients were able to apply for benefits in counties other than their home county as "temporary" residents and receive that county's benefit level. Now, residents receiving public assistance benefits are only eligible for benefits based on the levels allowed in their county of legal residence, regardless of where benefit applications are made in the Commonwealth.
- **Income Eligibility Verification System** -- the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) will now be required to use an electronic cross-reference system to provide a 19-point check on applicants' eligibility and create a standard fraud detection system. This measure will help prevent welfare abuse before it can happen.
- **Reforming the Special Allowance Program** -- Audit reports have shown that the Special Allowance program was extensively abused, wasting millions of dollars. DPW must now look at ways to scale back this program. This measure requires reductions of up to 25 percent and provides leeway to eliminate allowances within the program.

I'm hopeful that the General Assembly can continue to assess methods to reign in any abuses of the system, while ensuring that Pennsylvanians who truly need assistance receive the help they need.

Sale of Concentrated Bath Salts and Synthetic Marijuana Now Banned

In June, Pennsylvania joined a growing list of states that have banned the sale of synthetic marijuana and bath salts marketed as synthetic cocaine. Act 7 of 2011 adds chemical compounds in these drugs to the state's list of controlled substances. The effects of these salts are comparable to methamphetamine abuse.

The spread of concentrated bath salts has rapidly penetrated our communities, because many users believe that because the drugs are legal, they must be safe to use. That is far from the reality of the situation and why we needed to prohibit the sale of these chemicals and get them off store shelves.

Cases of smoking, injecting or inhaling bath salts are making headlines because users are getting high and turning violent. Some users have committed crimes while high and others have injured themselves to the point of emergency room visits. Several people throughout the state have died taking the drug.

Under the new law, the state's Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act is expanded to ban the sale of substances with chemicals known as salvia divinorum, salvinorin A, divinorin A, synthetic marijuana and synthetic cocaine, all of which have a high potential for abuse.

The bath salts that are now banned do not include those sold at specialty retailers or department stores. The bath salts with the chemical compound are traditionally found at hemp stores, tobacco shops and other outlets that sell brands like "Ivory Wave," "White Lightning" and "Hurricane Charlie."

The legislation takes effect in August.

Castle Doctrine Now Law in PA

Legislation that will further protect law-abiding citizens who use self-defense when faced with an imminent threat was signed into law on June 28.

Act 10 of 2011, known as the Castle Doctrine, clarifies state law so that legal protection is afforded to law-abiding citizens who use lethal force in protecting themselves, their families and their properties.

Under previous law, criminals had greater protection than law-abiding citizens, who had faced civil lawsuits from intruders or their families. Residents who are protecting themselves, their families and their homes should not have to fear criminal prosecution or a civil lawsuit if using force against an intruder is warranted.

If an attacker or intruder intends to inflict bodily harm, this measure creates the presumption that deadly force may be used to protect oneself, family and others while in their home, an occupied vehicle or anywhere they have a right to be.

That presumption also applies if a person is trying to unlawfully remove an occupant, against his or her will from a home or vehicle. The presumption would not apply if the person entering a home was another resident of the home; a law enforcement officer; or a parent, grandparent or other guardian removing a child from the home or vehicle. In addition, this legislation would not apply if a person was using his or her home or vehicle to engage in criminal activity.

It is important to emphasize that this legislation does not endorse unlawful aggression. It merely provides individuals with the necessary legal protection to respond to such aggression.

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Honoring Our Veterans

This November, I'm pleased to announce two local events to honor those who have served to protect and defend our country. If you or a loved one are a veteran, please note the details on these events. I hope you can come!

Veterans Day Breakfast

The Lancaster County Career and Technology Center (Willow Street) culinary students will put their skills on display and whip up a delicious breakfast to honor local veterans on Veterans Day.

WHEN: Friday, Nov. 11
TIME: 8 a.m.
LOCATION: War Memorial Building,
54 West Main Street in Leola

Local veterans are welcome to bring their families to enjoy a free breakfast and program. We just need to know if you plan to attend so the students can appropriately prepare – if attending, please contact my office at 464-5285 with your name, contact information, and number attending no later than Friday, Oct. 28.

Evening Program

Plans are starting to come together for a large program for veterans from the 43rd (Boyd), the 41st (Rep. Ryan Aument, R-Landisville) and, the 100th (Rep. Bryan Cutler, R-Peach Bottom) Legislative Districts. Reps. Cutler, Aument, and I are joining together for an event on Veterans Day, Friday, Nov. 11. It will be held at the Penn Manor High School in Millersville. Start time is 7 p.m.

We'd love to have all local veterans take part in this event. To R.S.V.P, please sign up at my website, RepBoyd.com, and we'll send you a confirmation letter with more details. You may also call my office at 464-5285 to sign up.

If you're a veteran, do you have a nice photo of yourself taken during your military service? For this event, we will be assembling a photo montage. If you'd like to submit a photo (make sure it's a copy - the photo will not be returned) to us at PO Box 268, Lampeter, PA 17537.

Serving the 43rd



It was my pleasure to present a House citation to Dave Martin in honor of his 21 years of service on the West Lampeter Township Planning Commission. His work and vision have left a lasting mark on our community. Joining me for the presentation was State Sen. Lloyd Smucker.



I joined with my competitors Rep. Eugene DePasquale (D-York) and Sen. Mike Brubaker (R-Warwick Twp.) in the recent Take a Swing Against Breast Cancer Home Run Derby. Here, we were talking up the event (sponsored by the PA Breast Cancer Coalition) to local media outlets.



I was glad to be on hand at the state Capitol when this good-looking group of Fritz Elementary students came to pay a visit.

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
SCOTT W. BOYD

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