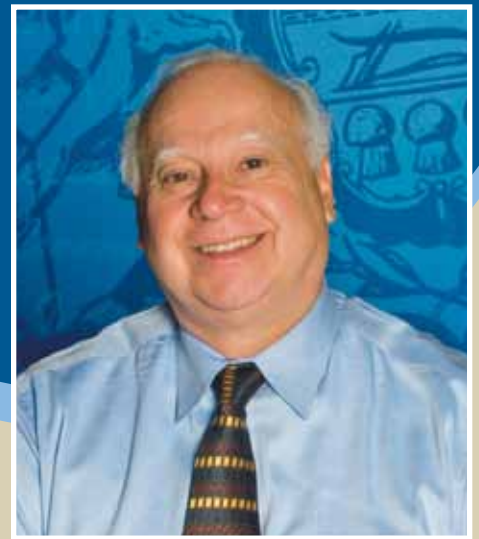


State Representative Peter J. Daley

Democratic Chairman, Consumer Affairs



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Summer 2014

Utility issues and answers



Utility forum in Bentleyville draws excellent response

An excellent turnout of residents with concerns about utility practices and billing marked the free Utility Forum that I sponsored at the Bentleyville Volunteer Fire Co. social hall in April. Useful information about utility bills and how to reduce them was available from utility experts, my staff and me. Meanwhile, the House Consumer Affairs Committee, on which I serve as Democratic chairman, has advanced major changes to the way variable-rate electric plans are marketed and regulated in Pennsylvania. **Please see story on Page 2.**

Budget destined to fail Pa.

Gov. Corbett and the GOP majorities in the state House and Senate continued Pennsylvania down the wrong path with their approval of a 2014-15 state budget.

I could not support it and its wrong-headed policies, which have sent Pennsylvania on a downward spiral on job creation, public education, health care and opportunities for our younger citizens.

It didn't have to be this way. House Democrats have been offering — for the last three years — solutions to improve opportunities for all Pennsylvanians.

But by doubling down on the same stale mix of more tax cuts for the rich, and more spending cuts and fewer services for the rest of Pennsylvania, Republicans ignored Democratic pleas to consider fairer plans, including:

- Raising \$2.1 billion the state has failed to collect because of corporate tax cuts we couldn't afford;
- Generating more than \$590 million in savings for Pennsylvania's 2014-15 budget by expanding Medicaid; and
- Recovering hundreds of millions of dollars lost through tax loopholes, such as the Delaware Loophole, benefitting large corporations.

The GOP budget has been labeled "The Big Gimmick" because of its reliance on more than \$1.75 billion in unsustainable, one-time revenue sources and trickery.

It's neither fair nor prudent for Pennsylvania to adopt a bogus budget that:

- Flat-funds local schools' basic education subsidies;
- Includes total education funding — excluding pensions — that remain less than what was approved in 2008-09, the fiscal year prior to federal stimulus funding;
- Diverts \$30 million from the Volunteer Fire Companies Loan Fund;
- Raids \$95 million from the Small Business First Fund;
- Cuts more than \$2 million from the state Department of Military and Veterans Affairs;
- Provides no new funding for county-run human service programs, retaining Gov. Corbett's 10-percent funding cut for a third year; and
- Continues the elimination of classroom funding for programs such as Dual Enrollment, Reimbursement of Charter Schools, Education Assistance Program, Science: It's Elementary, and School Improvement Grants.

Those policies and funding decisions are unfair to most Pennsylvanians — schoolchildren, middle-class families, workers, women, seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities.

Speculation has already begun on how soon the budget gimmickry will force Pennsylvania to freeze spending or cut programs. It's a safe bet that the next governor will be saddled with a huge headache because of the GOP failure to lead or to consider fresh ideas.

Pension penury: The governor's plan is WRONG!

Gov. Corbett is blaming pension costs for increased school property taxes. This blame game is incredibly misleading and false.

Property taxes have been rising throughout Gov. Corbett's tenure, driven by his \$3 billion in education funding cuts. With just months to go before an election, he's suddenly looking to deflect the blame elsewhere.

The author of the pension bill that Gov. Corbett supports admits it will not save money for the state or school districts in the near term. It's about gradually shifting young teachers and other public workers to a different kind of pension plan.

It has NOTHING to do with reducing today's school property taxes.

It's clearer than ever that Gov. Corbett sees public-sector workers as the enemy. But they are regular Pennsylvanians and they have earned the right to a secure retirement.

The pension plan sought by the governor would cut retirement benefits for many future employees by 40 percent or more! We need to boost household incomes, not slash them.

Since 2011, the governor has taken \$3 billion from our schools while giving \$2.1 billion in unaffordable and ineffective tax breaks to businesses. That's the real link between education costs and property taxes.

Gov. Corbett's argument is nothing but an election-year sound bite, and a desperate one at that.

Panel advances major fixes to variable-rate electric plans

As Democratic chairman of the House Consumer Affairs Committee, I'm pleased to report that the panel has OK'd major changes to the way variable-rate electric plans are marketed and regulated in Pennsylvania.

House Bill 2104 would overhaul the variable-rate electric plans and provide needed safeguards and changes to protect Pennsylvania ratepayers.

The legislation is comprehensive in its scope and would make many needed changes to variable-rate plans, whose rates skyrocketed this winter, leaving ratepayers battered and bruised.

House Bill 2104 awaits consideration by the full House.



Rep. Daley testifies during a House Consumer Affairs hearing in Pittsburgh regarding variable-rate electric plans. Consumers were socked last winter by skyrocketing electric rates, and the panel has approved legislation designed to make sure the debacle is not repeated.

H.B. 2104's provisions include:

- Prohibiting teaser rates of less than 60 days;
- Banning cancellation fees on variable-rate products;
- Forbidding the switching of a customer on an expired fixed-rate plan to a variable-rate plan;
- Specifying that variable rates for residential or small commercial customers may not increase more than 30 percent from the previous rate;
- Requiring clearer and more prominent information on rates, fees, formulas and terms in contracts and marketing material;
- Requiring electric distribution companies to switch a customer's service once during a billing cycle within five days of the request; and
- Directing the state Public Utility Commission to publicize licensed electric generation companies, services available to shopping customers and information about customer complaints.

2014 Kidz Fair!



My sixth annual Kidz Fair at the Center in the Woods in Brownsville was highlighted by a surplus of fun and smiles. The free event for children through age 14 who live in the 49th Legislative District continues to grow in popularity. My staff and I are already looking forward to the next one!

Changes loom for the 49th Legislative District

Dear Friend,

Soon, the 49th Legislative District, which I currently represent, will take on a new look and new municipalities.

The changes are coming because the state constitution requires that legislative districts be redrawn every 10 years to reflect population shifts and to ensure accurate distribution of state and federal money.

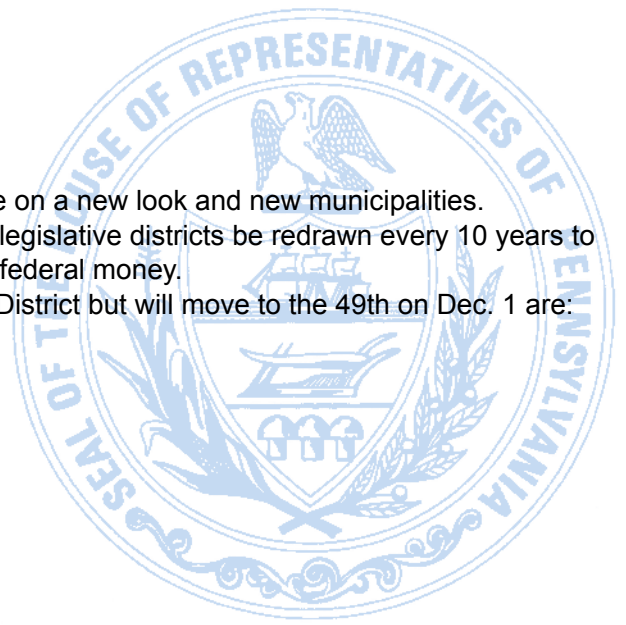
Municipalities that now are in districts other than the 49th Legislative District but will move to the 49th on Dec. 1 are:

FAYETTE COUNTY

- All of Washington Township
- Franklin Township
- Jefferson Township
- Belle Vernon Borough
- Fayette City Borough
- Newell Borough

WASHINGTON COUNTY

- All of Carroll Township
- North Bethlehem Township
- Bentleyville Borough
- Cokeburg Borough
- Ellsworth Borough
- New Eagle Borough



Much of the current 49th Legislative District will not be affected by the changes, including the City of Monongahela; Fallowfield, West Bethlehem and West Pike Run townships; and Allenport, Beallsville, California, Charleroi, Coal Center, Deemston, Donora, Dunlevy, Elco, Long Branch, Marianna, North Charleroi, Roscoe, Speers, Stockdale, Twilight and West Brownsville boroughs.

My legislative website, www.pahouse.com/Daley, features information about me and the district, as well as news releases, links to an employment center and a variety of key state resources.

My district offices are available for any questions you may have:

Donora office

657 McKean Avenue
Donora, PA 15033-1002
Phone: (724) 379-5540
Phone: (724) 938-5736
Phone: 1-800-467-9486

California office

c/o Center in the Woods
130 Woodland Court
Brownsville, PA 15417
Phone: (724) 938-6800/6801

The New 49th Legislative District



Brownsville office

113A Thornton Road
Brownsville, PA 15417
Phone: (724) 785-1201
Phone: (724) 785-1202

Claysville office

117 Main Street
Claysville, PA 15323
Phone: (724) 663-4727

I'm here to serve, and I remain committed to providing the best of service to ALL citizens. All the best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Daley".

My effort to thwart home-improvement fraud advances to Senate

The state House of Representatives has approved my legislation that would bolster the fight against home-improvement fraud and protect legitimate contractors.

House Bill 1543 includes my amendment that would enable the state Attorney General's Office to bolster needed enforcement and oversight of fraud involving shady home-improvement contractors.

Specifically, the measure guarantees that the fees paid by contractors registering with the state, as well as any fines and any interest, go toward protecting consumers and contractors.

Under the Home Improvement Consumer Protection

Act, contractors performing any home improvement work in excess of \$5,000 annually must register with the Attorney General's Office and pay a \$50 fee that must be renewed every two years.

It was always the intent to dedicate the funding derived from registrants back into the program. My language specifies that the fees and fines, and the interest they accrue, would be used to protect more consumers and law-abiding contractors.

House Bill 1543 with my amendment is now before the state Senate for consideration.



Peter J. Daley

Democratic Chairman, Consumer Affairs

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Sign up for email updates

I want to alert you of House rules that prohibit when I can contact you leading up to an election. **Unless you specifically opt in to continue receiving my emails**, I'm prohibited from sending you legislative email updates for 60 days before elections.

Opting in will allow you to continue to receive notices about important issues that matter to you, including:

- Updates on legislation
- News and events in the district
- Other relevant government-related information

You can sign up to receive my email alerts — and opt in to continue to receive them around elections — by visiting my website at www.pahouse.com/Daley, clicking “E-MAIL ALERTS” and filling out the form. **You can also stay updated by “Liking” my Facebook page:** www.facebook.com/RepDaley.



Let's put labels on genetically engineered foods

I'm pushing for prompt consideration of my House Bill 1770, which would require the labeling of genetically engineered foods. People have the right to know what they are eating.

As science investigates the pros and cons of genetically engineered foods, my legislation basically calls for four simple words on such items: **“Produced with Genetic Engineering.”**

More than 60 countries require labeling genetically engineered food, and consumers deserve to know how the foods they ingest are produced.

If there is no harm in genetically modified foods then there should not be resistance to labeling the foods as such. Consumers should have the facts beyond just the ingredients and nutritional information.

House Bill 1770 would direct the state Department of Agriculture to establish the ground rules for labeling requirements, including exemptions. Exceptions could be provided for those not knowingly violating the labeling requirement, and the department could issue simple warnings for lesser violations.

The legislation is neither vindictive nor meant to alarm. It simply provides transparency and important tools for consumers. H.B. 1770 has garnered bipartisan support and was sent to the House Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee for consideration.



Rep. Pete Daley introduces his House Bill 1770, which would require the labeling of genetically engineered foods, during a rally in June in the Capitol Rotunda.