

# WEEKLY SESSION NOTES

SENATE REPUBLICAN POLICY COMMITTEE – JOHN PIPPY, CHAIRMAN

**Monday, May 4, 2009**

[Senate Bill 54](#) (Piccola) would authorize the Department of General Services to convey a 6.44-acre pedestrian easement in Susquehanna Township, Dauphin County to Susquehanna Township for \$1. The deed of easement would have to contain a permanent restriction specifically limiting the use of the pedestrian easement for the Capital Area Greenbelt or it would revert to the Commonwealth. The costs and fees would be paid by the grantee. In the event the conveyance is not executed within 12 months of its effective date, the authorization would expire.

**Passed: 49-0.**

[Senate Bill 731](#) (Wonderling) would designate the section of Bushkill Drive, State Route 2019, in Northampton County from the intersection with State Route 1002, known as Tatamy Road to the intersection with 13<sup>th</sup> Street in the City of Easton, as the Victor W. Anckaitis Memorial Highway. Mr. Anckaitis was the first Commonwealth Secretary of Transportation.

**Passed: 49-0.**

[Senate Bill 817](#) (Vance) would authorize the Department of General Services to convey 51.04 acres of vacant land in East Pennsboro Township, Cumberland County to the township for \$2 million. No portion of the property conveyed could be used for a licensed gaming facility or it would revert to the Commonwealth. Further, nothing in the bill could be construed to authorize the conveyance of the approximately 3.5-acre portion of the property that is being used as a highway maintenance facility by the Department of Transportation. In the event an agreement of sale is not executed within 24 months, the property could be disposed of in accordance with the Administrative Code of 1929. The legislation would also authorize the removal of the residential and subdivision restrictions on 2.2357 acres in East Pennsboro Township for \$150,000. **Passed: 49-0.**

[Senate Resolution 109](#) (Tartaglione) honors Pennsylvania's senior citizens by designating the month of May 2009 as "Older Americans: Living Today for a Better Tomorrow Month" in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 110](#) (Orie) commemorates the eighth anniversary of the Educational Improvement Tax Credit. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 111](#) (Orie) recognizes and honors firefighters throughout the Commonwealth for their bravery, dedication and heroism and designates May 4, 2009 as "Firefighters Day" in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 112](#) (Hughes) recognizes May 2009 as "National High Blood Pressure Education Month" in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 113](#) (Hughes) designates May 2009 as “Mental Health Month” in Pennsylvania. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

**Tuesday, May 5, 2009**

[Senate Bill 33](#) (Pileggi) would amend the Pennsylvania Election Code to restrict the ability of counties and municipalities to establish, abolish, divide, consolidate or alter in any manner an election district during the period June 1, 2009 through November 30, 2012 or through resolution of all judicial appeals to the 2012 Congressional Redistricting Plan, whichever is later. Election districts could be divided or combined from June 1, 2009 through December 31, 2010, if certain criteria outlined in the bill are met. The bill would also require the Secretary of the Commonwealth, no later than August 15, 2009, to submit to the Census Bureau any corrections to municipal boundaries and election district boundaries as depicted on maps maintained by the Bureau which may be necessary to conform the boundaries to the official municipal boundaries and election district boundaries of the Commonwealth. If no corrections are necessary, the Secretary would be required to notify the Majority and Minority Leaders of the Senate and House of Representatives. [Passed: 50-0.](#)

[Senate Bill 446](#) (Tomlinson) would amend the Vital Statistics Law of 1953 to allow a death certificate to be filed with the State Registrar of Vital Statistics. The State Registrar of Vital Statistics would also be authorized to issue permits for disposal. An additional change would remove the current provision which requires local registrars to transmit a copy of the death certificate of individuals who were at least 18 years of age at the time of their death to the county board of elections of the county in which the person resided at the time of his or her death. The bill would add a provision to require the Pennsylvania Department of Health to transmit monthly to the Department of State an electronic file containing the information listed in the bill on all resident deaths for individuals who were at least 18 years of age at the time of their death for the preceding month. The Department of State would be required to enter the information in the SURE system, or a successor system, which would be used by county boards of elections for the purpose of removing deceased individuals from their voter registration rolls. [Passed: 50-0.](#)

[Senate Resolution 29](#) (Leach) commemorates the 61<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the birth of the State of Israel. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 90](#) (Tomlinson) designates May 16, 2009 as “Child Passenger Safety Day” in Pennsylvania. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 91](#) (Tomlinson) recognizes May 12, 2009 as “Colorectal Cancer Awareness Day” in Pennsylvania. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 114](#) (Ferlo) designates May 23, 2009 as “Deep Vein Thrombosis Awareness Day” in Pennsylvania. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 115](#) (Orie) recognizes May 5, 2009 as “World Asthma Day 2009” in Pennsylvania. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 116](#) (Tartaglione) designates the month of May 2009 as “Law Month” in Pennsylvania and urges lawmakers, lawyers, judges and schools to participate. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 117](#) (Hughes) designates May 18, 2009 as “HIV Vaccine Awareness Day” in Pennsylvania. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 118](#) (Alloway) designates May 15 through June 15, 2009 as “Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month” in Pennsylvania. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

### *Executive Session*

Nominations to Various Boards and Commissions. [Confirmed: 50-0.](#)

### **Wednesday, May 6, 2009**

[Senate Bill 59](#) (Piccola) would amend the Public Welfare Code to require applicants for a day care registration certificate (family day care home) to provide proof of a current general liability insurance policy that covers all persons who are on the premises of the facility. The legislation would also require that the family day care home post, in a conspicuous location used by parents, the facility’s current registration certificate, a copy of the applicable department regulations, a copy of the facility’s inspection summary and any other record required by the Department to be posted. A current copy of the family day care home’s insurance policy would also have to be on file at the facility.

At the time of a child’s application, a facility operator would be required to review with the parent, or other responsible person, the facility’s registration certificate, inspection summary, insurance policy, emergency plan, general daily schedule, hours in which care is provided, fees, responsibilities for meals, clothing, health policies, supervision policies, night care policies, dismissal policies, transportation, pickup arrangements, and any other policy as required by the Department. The facility operator would also be required to provide to the parents or other responsible party, instructions on how to obtain information on the facility’s registration and compliance history, as well as instructions for contacting the Department to file a complaint or to make inquiries regarding the facility.

The legislation also would allow the Department of Public Welfare to take immediate action to close the family day care home and remove the children if the Department finds evidence of gross incompetence, negligence, misconduct in operating the home, or mistreatment or abuse of children likely to constitute an immediate and serious danger to the life or health of the children. If physical obstruction is offered to prevent removal of the children, the Department would be required to request law enforcement assistance in closing the home and removing the children. The Department would be responsible for informing the parent, or other person responsible for each child present in the home, of the emergency closure and removal. Departmental staff would remain at the home until each child is picked up by his or her parent or taken to another safe location. [Passed: 50-0.](#)

[Senate Bill 142](#) (Tomlinson) would amend Act 48 of 1993, which provides disciplinary powers to the 27 licensing boards and commissions within the Department of State's Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs. Senate Bill 147 would:

- Require a person found in violation, pursuant to a formal disciplinary hearing of a licensing act or regulation, to pay costs associated with investigating the violation except those costs incurred by the board or commission after the filing of formal actions or disciplinary charges against the respondent;
- Clarify that penalties imposed by the Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs or by the individual licensing boards are per violation; and
- Increase the maximum penalty for certain specific violations from \$1,000 per violation to \$10,000 per violation.

The bill would also provide for the confidentiality of documents used in an investigation undertaken by the Bureau of Enforcement and Investigation and the prosecution division on behalf of a licensing board or concerning a license-related complaint. Employees and agents of the Department of State involved in the investigations would be required to execute a confidentiality affidavit that provides that the documents obtained are considered confidential and could be disclosed only as permitted in the bill. Further, a licensing board or commission could not require an applicant to waive confidentiality as a condition for approval of a license or any other action by the board. **Passed: 49-1.**

[Senate Bill 850](#) (Corman) would create the General Appropriation Act of 2009, containing the Senate Republican-proposed state spending plan for the 2009-2010 Fiscal Year. The measure proposes spending \$27.3 billion, which includes \$24.6 billion in state funds plus \$2.7 billion in federal stimulus funds. (The 2008-09 spending level, after freezes and lapses, was \$27.7 billion.) Among other highlights, basic education funding would be maintained at the 2008-09 level by using a combination of state funds and federal stimulus funds. Special education funding would also be maintained. Funding for the State System of Higher Education schools, state-related universities and community colleges would be set at levels required to access available federal stimulus funds for higher education. Many of the cuts in the Department of Public Welfare budget would also be offset by federal stimulus funds. Appropriations for the legislature and legislative agencies would be cut by approximately 10 percent from the 2008-09 budget, with \$100 million from legislative reserves used to balance this budget. The proposed spending plan would not require any tax increases and would maintain the \$750 million balance in the Rainy Day Fund. **Passed: 30-20.**

[Senate Resolution 32](#) (Farnese) urges the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee to recommend and the United State Postal Service to issue a stamp honoring recipients of the Purple Heart as a "Forever," or perpetual, stamp. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 78](#) (Gordner) recognizes May 7, 2009 as the "National Day of Prayer" in Pennsylvania and encourages the celebration of religious freedom. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 108](#) (Baker) designates the week of May 17 through 23, 2009 as “Emergency Medical Services Week” and May 20, 2009 as “Emergency Medical Services Day for Children” in Pennsylvania. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 119](#) (Costa) honors the life and work of Chief Justice Ralph J. Cappy for his great and illustrious service to the Commonwealth and contributions to law. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 120](#) (Hughes) recognizes May 10 through 16, 2009 as “National Women’s Health Week” in Pennsylvania. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 121](#) (Costa) designates the week of May 10 through 16, 2009 as “Juror Appreciation Week” in Pennsylvania. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 122](#) (Dinniman) commemorates the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 123](#) (Orie) remembers the sacrifice of the brave men and women in our armed forces as Memorial Day approaches. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 124](#) (Kitchen) designates May 9 through 16, 2009 as “AmeriCorps Getting Things Done Week” in Pennsylvania. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 125](#) (Browne) recognizes the month of May 2009 as “Melanoma and Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month” in Pennsylvania. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 126](#) (Hughes) designates May 6 through 12, 2009 as “Mental Health Counseling Week” in Pennsylvania. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)