



State Representative
MIKE STURLA

www.pahouse.com/Sturla

REPORT

to the 96th

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Working Hard for Lancaster

Dear neighbor,

We've had a beautiful spring in Lancaster, and I was fortunate enough to meet with a lot of you at events around the city. The last several months have also been busy at the Capitol. The budget season officially kicked off in February, but the Legislature has been working on other issues important to residents of the Commonwealth. Inside this newsletter you'll learn the details of a new commission that has been formed to examine and offer recommendations on how Pennsylvania funds special education, as well as some of the proposals I've introduced to make our state a better place to live, work and spend free time.

Make sure to save space on your calendar for some upcoming events I'm hosting to help out our neighbors and reinvigorate our community. To learn more about these events and other topics check inside this newsletter. As always if I can be of assistance with any state-related matter, please do not hesitate to contact my office at 717-295-3157.

Sincerely,

Mike Sturla

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Back-to-School Day On Saturday, August 24 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Lancaster Rec Center (525 Fairview Avenue), Rep. Sturla will host his second annual Back-to-School Day to ensure Lancaster students have the tools they need to succeed. Students grades K – 5 will receive backpacks and school supplies, as well as lunch and get a chance to meet Rep. Sturla.

If you or your business are interested in donating supplies, backpacks or food for the event, contact Emily in Rep. Sturla's office at 295-3157.

Conestoga River Cleanup Rep. Sturla will once again team up with the United Way of Lancaster from 8:30 a.m. to noon on Saturday, September 7 to offer a cleanup of Lancaster's Conestoga River as a service project on the Annual Day of Caring. Last year there were a record number of volunteers on the project and more are always welcome. To sign up, call 295-3157.

Sturla plan would recoup state funds for transportation projects

Currently, hundreds of millions of tax dollars paid into the state's Motor License Fund (MLF) by all Pennsylvania drivers are being used to pay for State Police patrols in municipalities which do not have their own local police departments. This is inherently unfair to residents in cities and towns which fund their own departments through local taxes and do not receive the State Police patrols they are paying the bill for.

This happens because every year funds are transferred from the MLF to the State Police for safety on public highways. For fiscal year 2013-14, Gov. Corbett proposed a transfer of over \$619 million from the MLF. An additional \$400 million in funding comes from other sources including the General Fund and is used to provide services like background checks and crime labs for all Pennsylvania residents. The State Police use a majority of the funds to offer primary police coverage and services for the 21 percent of residents who live in municipalities without locally funded police departments.

While that 21 percent does pay a portion of the tax dollars going to those services, so do the remaining 79 percent who aren't receiving the patrols. If every municipality opted to rely

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Sturla plan would recoup state funds for transportation projects *(continued from page 1)*

on the State Police for coverage it would cost the state an additional \$1.5 billion to \$1.8 billion annually, which wouldn't include costs for other services like investigating child predators, operating the forensic services unit or the Special Emergency Response Team.

Recently, Rep. Sturla introduced a bill to help correct this inequity and distribute more funds for transportation projects. Under his legislation (HB 1143), Rep. Sturla said the state would offset the liquid fuels tax allocation to municipalities without local police departments and those funds would be put toward projects like road and bridge repair, which the Commonwealth sorely needs.

This plan would allow those municipalities to decide if they'd prefer to have the state pay for their police coverage or transportation funding.

Rep. Sturla's bill, which has both Democratic and Republican co-sponsors, has received support from newspaper editorial boards, residents and law enforcement officers from all over Pennsylvania. It is currently in the House Transportation Committee for consideration.



Rep. Sturla speaks at a Capitol news conference about his legislation (HB 1143) that would recoup some state funds paying for State Police patrols in municipalities without local police departments to be put toward their intended use: transportation projects.

Sturla named to commission to study special education funding equity

Pennsylvania recently enacted a law establishing a bipartisan commission to study the way Pennsylvania allocates special education funding. This law is very similar to legislation Rep. Sturla has introduced and passed in previous legislative sessions. Rep. Sturla was instrumental in the fight for the state's special education students and school districts.

Because of his strong advocacy and expertise in this area, the House Democratic Leader selected Rep. Sturla to serve as one of the two House Democratic appointments to the commission.

The Special Education Funding Commission is tasked with identifying the most effective and equitable factors to use when determining the distribution of special education funding to Pennsylvania schools.

Under the current system, which has been in place since 1991, the state erroneously assumes a 16 percent special education population for every district across the state. Further, spending on special education has failed to keep pace with inflation, and without corrections to the funding system there is pressure on school districts to increase property taxes to meet local need.

Pennsylvania has not had a fair and adequate formula in place for distributing funds for special education since changes occurred in 1990. The commission is currently required to report its findings by Sept. 30, 2013, but the deadline may be extended to Nov. 30, 2013.

Rep. Sturla welcomes special guests to PA Capitol



Rep. Sturla is joined by House Speaker Sam Smith, R-Jefferson (on left), and Rep. Ron Miller, R-York (on right) in welcoming representatives from the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators, Mary Margaret Whipple and J. R. Tolbert, to the state House.



Rep. Sturla welcomes some important visitors to his office who were visiting the Capitol to show support for increased funding for children with disabilities.



Sturla presented with award from Pennsylvania's State Food Purchase program

In January, Rep. Sturla was one of four members of the state legislature given special recognition for being an original sponsor of the State Food Purchase Program in 1993. Among the program's aims is to fight hunger in the Commonwealth.



House Democrats blast plan to privatize PA Lottery

Rep. Sturla stands before the House Democratic Caucus at a press conference calling on the governor to abandon his ill-advised plan to privatize the state Lottery. House Democrats blasted the proposal to lease control of the lottery to a foreign company, which would eliminate jobs and cede decision making to a British company, Camelot LLC. Under the state Department of Revenue, the Lottery generated record profit last year – \$1.06 billion – all of which is earmarked for programs benefitting Pennsylvania seniors.

Sturla chairs public hearings on critical issues



In his role as House Democratic Policy Committee Chairman, Rep. Sturla holds public hearings around the Commonwealth to examine the top issues affecting Pennsylvanians. Here he is at a hearing focused on Gov. Corbett's proposal to change the state's liquor sales.

The governor's plan to privatize liquor sales puts local beer distributors at risk by placing them at a competitive disadvantage to big box retailers. It would also limit selection in many parts of the state and drive prices up, as the Commonwealth would lose its bulk purchasing power. Several experts have also indicated law enforcement and health care costs would escalate due to the increased consumption associated with privatized systems.



Rep. Sturla offers his remarks on the governor's transportation plan at a public hearing that featured testimony by PA Transportation Secretary Barry Schoch. Visit www.pahouse.com/PolicyCommittee for more details.

Groundbreaking of Lancaster's TecCentro Workforce Training Center

Rep. Sturla joins other local leaders at the official groundbreaking for the TecCentro Workforce Training Center. The Spanish American Civic Association is using state, federal, local and private grants to construct the training center, which will help prepare low-income and minority clients for jobs in high-demand fields like health care, manufacturing, construction and business administration.



Rep. Sturla accompanies two classes from Carter-Macrae Elementary on their field trip to see "Peter Pan" at the Hole In the Wall Puppet Theatre. The theatre matched a state grant it received to offer the show to the students.



Sturla's current legislation

Developing policy and introducing legislation are some of Rep. Sturla's most important duties in Harrisburg. Below is a compilation of the bills he has introduced so far this session.

HB 58 would impose an additional 1 percent sales tax on items currently taxed and dedicate every dollar generated (over \$1.35 billion) to fund the State System of Higher Education, State-Related Universities, Community Colleges, and the state-owned Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology.

HB 59 would create the "Adopt-A-River" program to allow volunteers to become responsible for removing litter from specific river or stream segments, similar to the current program for highways.

HB 62 would exempt local and county libraries from collecting the PA sales tax when they sell used books.

HB 64 would direct the PA Department of Education to conduct a comprehensive statewide costing-out study of charter schools and cyber charter schools.

HB 65 would designate the new Lititz Pike Bridge over the Amtrak rail lines in Lancaster City as the Thaddeus Stevens Bridge.

HB 66 would prohibit electric generation suppliers and natural gas suppliers licensed by the Public Utility Commission from charging upfront fees to potential employees/subcontractors that are hired to encourage consumers to switch their supplier.

HB 67 would require approval by the referring agency when a contracted private debt collection agency reaches a compromise with a debtor for less than the full amount.

HB 68 would require competitive bidding of contracts with private collection agencies.

HB 69 would provide counties with the option of levying a 1 percent sales tax and sharing it with municipalities, while using a majority of the revenue received for property tax relief and the elimination of nuisance taxes.

HB 70 would provide counties with the option of levying and sharing a 1 percent sales tax: 50 percent for school districts to reduce school property taxes, 25 percent for municipal governments for distressed pension system or core services and property tax relief, 25 percent to county for core services and property tax relief.

HR 169 recognizes April 4, 2013, as Thaddeus Stevens Day in PA, commemorating the 221st anniversary of the statesman, civil rights activist and

philanthropist.

HB 1038 would establish the Municipal Fire and Emergency Services Grant Fund to support Pennsylvania's municipal fire and emergency service organizations.

HB 1143 would allow the PA State Police to charge for routine patrols in municipalities without local police by reducing the share of the Liquid Fuels Tax Municipal Allocation for road and bridge funding received by those municipalities.

HB 1200 would require that those seeking preferential assessment in the Clean and Green Program have submitted an Agricultural Erosion and Sediment Control Plan.

HB 1428 would assess a 1/100 cent fee for water withdrawals from PA streams in excess of 10,000 gallons a day, excluding municipal water systems and agriculture. This plan would generate about \$750,000 a day to be used for clean water and environmental programs.



Rep. Sturla stands with hundreds of Pennsylvania social workers at a Capitol rally. Social workers serve in schools, hospitals, nursing homes and veteran's clinics improving the lives of millions of Pennsylvanians every day.

Check inside for info on:

- Upcoming local events
- Details on Rep. Sturla's legislative proposals
- Pictures from Lancaster and Harrisburg events

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LANCASTER COMMUNITY AWARDED GRANTS

County, city or community groups have been awarded a variety of grants in the past year.

PA Department of Environmental Protection Grants:

County Recycling Coordinator Grant Program for \$38,500 awarded to Lancaster County

County Household Hazardous Waste Grant for \$41,800 awarded to the Lancaster County SWMA

Recycling Performance Grant Program for \$93,400 awarded to Lancaster City

Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Grants:

Hole In the Wall Puppet Theatre, Inc.

Lancaster County Young Artists

Millersville University

Music for Everyone

OperaLancaster

The People's Shakespeare Project

Crispus Attucks Community Center

PRiMA Arts Inc.

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission Grants:

Certified Local Government Grant for \$15,000 awarded to Lancaster City

Keystone Historic Preservation Grant Program for \$13,200 awarded to Lancasterhistory.org/
Wheatland



Rep. Sturla speaks with Mr. Reese's U.S. Government class at McCaskey High. He spoke to students about how citizens can influence public policy at the local, state and national levels.



Lancaster students visited Rep. Sturla at the Capitol in May. Among the trip's highlights was being recognized on the House floor for their participation in the Race Against Racism.