

STURLA

Report

From State Representative

MIKE STURLA

96th Legislative District

Spring 2016

WWW.PAHOUSE.COM/STURLA



STURLA HONORS NELSON M. POLITE SR.



On April 11, I honored the life of Lancaster icon Nelson M. Polite Sr. with a condolence resolution (H.R. 773) and I welcomed Mr. Polite's family members to the House chamber to see the resolution's adoption.

INSIDE:

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- How my staff can help you
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2016 Back-to-School Backpack Giveaway

Saturday, August 20 • 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Lancaster Rec Center • 525 Fairview Ave.



My 5th Annual Back-to-School Backpack Giveaway will again help prepare Lancaster City schoolchildren for a successful school year. The Lancaster Elks as well as other community groups will be helping, but we need YOUR help! If you would like to participate in this event by volunteering or donating school supplies, backpacks, food items or gift cards to help pay for these items, please contact Mena Rodriguez in my office at 717-295-3157 or mrodriguez@pahouse.net.



Help for Veterans and Their Families

An American Legion Department Service Officer accredited by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is available in my office on the second Wednesday of each month to provide assistance with veterans' benefits, scholarships, health benefits, survivor benefits and more. If you are a veteran, a member of a veteran's family or know veterans who need help, call my office at 717-295-3157 to schedule an appointment to meet with him at my Lancaster office located at 150 E. King St.



Sturla Holds Meeting with Gov. Wolf and Local Leaders on Heroin and Opioid Drug Crisis

On April 29, I hosted a roundtable with Gov. Tom Wolf at Lancaster General Health/Penn Medicine with the Lancaster County Anti-Heroin Task Force and other local leaders to discuss Lancaster County's heroin and opioid drug crisis. This crisis is affecting all areas of Pennsylvania and it will not simply fade away.

If you or someone you know needs help dealing with addiction, call the Lancaster County Drug and Alcohol Commission at 717-299-8023.



MY OFFICE CAN HELP YOU WITH:

- Property Tax/Rent Rebate problems or questions
- PACE prescription-drug cards for senior citizens
- Car registrations, special tags, handicap placards, titles and driver's license applications
- Information on financial assistance for higher education
- Assistance in obtaining and completing state forms of all kinds
- Voter registration and absentee ballot applications
- Unemployment compensation, disability and workers' compensation
- Birth and death certificates
- Issues with the Department of Human Services (food stamps, medical and income assistance)
- Retrieval of unclaimed property
- Requests for literature of all kinds – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information
- Inquiries about utilities and the Public Utility Commission
- Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding accomplishments and family milestones
- Issues with insurance companies
- Renewal of state-issued licenses or certifications
- Questions about the state lottery
- Consumer complaints
- Liquor Control Board concerns or questions
- Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups

Call 717-295-3157 for assistance with these or any other state-government related matters.

Rep. Sturla Online

Twitter: @RepMikeSturla

Facebook: www.facebook.com/RepMikeSturla

Legislative website: www.pahouse.com/Sturla

Committee website: www.pahouse.com/PolicyCommittee

Blog: www.policycommonwealthcommonsense.blogspot.com

Sturla Co-Chairs Bipartisan Hearing on 2-1-1



On April 13, I co-chaired a joint House Democratic and Republican Policy Committees hearing in the Capitol with my Republican counterpart Rep. Kerry Benninghoff on United Way's 2-1-1 system, which is a free service that connects people at any time to health and human services by calling 2-1-1. To read testimony from this and other hearings I have chaired, go to www.pahouse.com/PolicyCommittee.

DGS Saving Money for Local Government and Lancaster Nonprofits

The Pennsylvania Department of General Services (DGS) works hard to deliver cost savings to local governments and nonprofits through programs and grants. Its goal is to save local public procurement units money and give them the opportunity to buy from local providers, keeping local tax money in our local economy.

DGS has a cooperative purchasing program called COSTARS that utilizes Pennsylvania's combined

purchasing power to provide pre-established, competitively priced contracts. In 2015, an estimated \$1.9 million was saved in Lancaster County and more than \$220 million in procedural savings statewide through the COSTARS Program. If you have questions about how DGS's programs may be helpful to your nonprofit or local government, feel free to contact my office at 717-295-3157.

2016-17 Budget Outlook

Work on the 2016-17 Fiscal Year Budget is currently underway, and we have a lot of work to do. The 2015-16 budget did not fix Pennsylvania's structural budget deficit nor did it address the education funding inequities in our state.

Pennsylvania cannot afford to keep going down this path. Independent credit rating agencies continue to warn that if Pennsylvania doesn't address its structural budget deficit, our credit rating again will

be downgraded. The state already saw five rating downgrades over the previous administration's reign. This costs the state hundreds of millions of dollars annually in interest costs that should be going to property tax relief and funding education.

I will continue to advocate for funding solutions that close the budget deficit and actually address the state's fiscal crisis, instead of kicking the can down the road.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Sturla Votes for Medical Marijuana Law

Act 16 of 2016 establishes the medical marijuana program providing for patient and caregiver certification, and for a medical marijuana registration in Pennsylvania. This bipartisan effort made Pennsylvania the 24th state in the country to legalize medical marijuana and bring relief for patients suffering from 17 diagnosed ailments. For more information about this program, visit my website, www.pahouse.com/Sturla.

Sturla Introduces Safe Passage to School Legislation

House Bill 1944 would reimburse school districts for their cost of providing crossing guards to ensure safe passage of school students who are required to walk or ride bikes to school. The PA Department of Education currently reimburses school districts for costs associated with providing bus transportation for children in public, charter and private schools. Those districts get no less than 50 percent of transportation costs for children living at least 1.5 miles from school.

My proposal would level the playing field for urban school districts by utilizing the same formula currently used for reimbursing districts for bus expenses to reimburse districts for school crossing guards. The safe passage of students who walk or bike to school is just as important as those who live farther away and require vehicle transit. Our law should reflect that while easing the cost burden on the school district and local municipalities that currently pay for crossing guards.

Sturla Reintroduces State Police Bill

House Bill 709 would establish a fee structure for municipalities to pay for the routine State Police patrol services that municipalities that have no local police department currently receive for free. This would restore an estimated \$450 million to the Motor License Fund to enable more maintenance on our roads, highways and bridges.

Each year, nearly \$750 million, or about 30 percent of the total funds available for roads and bridges, is transferred from the Motor License Fund to pay for the Pennsylvania State Police. At a time when our state is in drastic need of funds to repair our aging infrastructure, we need to spend every dollar effectively. Sacrificing vital transportation dollars while giving away free policing services doesn't make sense.

My proposal would implement a yearly fee of \$156 that would be assessed per capita that would be billed to municipalities who fully rely on State Police coverage. Municipalities with part-time local police and part-time State Police coverage would pay a discounted rate of \$52 per capita annually. Municipalities that employ a full-time local police force would not be charged a fee.

About 74 percent of the state's population pays for full-time local police coverage, and 6 percent is paying for part-time coverage through local tax efforts, while 20 percent of the population is getting 100 percent of their patrol coverage solely from the State Police with no accompanying local costs. Everyone should be paying their fair share for coverage.



On April 12, I joined state Rep. Bryan Cutler in commemorating Franklin and Marshall College men's basketball coach Glenn Robinson on 900 victories, with House Resolution 707 that the House adopted. Coach Robinson joins Duke's Mike Krzyzewski, Philadelphia University's Herb Magee and former Indiana coach Bob Knight as one of only four collegiate basketball coaches to achieve this milestone.



Mena Rodriguez



Greg Paulson

HERE TO SERVE YOU

Greg Paulson, my chief of staff, and Mena Rodriguez, my legislative assistant, are available to help you navigate state government programs and services. Call my office at 717-295-3157 or stop by the office at 150 E. King St. for free assistance.

Ayuda disponible en Espanol

Tengo la fortuna de tener personal bilingüe listo para ayudarle con cualquier problema relacionado con el estado. Puede llamar a la oficina al 717-295-3157 o pasar por la oficina localizada en el 150 E. King St., Lancaster. También puede contactar Mena Rodriguez al mrodriguez@pahouse.net.

Sign Up To Get Email Updates

If you would like to receive legislative email updates from me, please go to www.pahouse.com/Sturla and click on "Contact" tab, then click on "Sign Up for Emails" to register. You also can email me directly at RepMikeSturla@pahouse.net to express your thoughts on legislation or for assistance with any state-related matter.