



State Senator **Pat Vance** Legislative Report

Or Current Resident



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Information on bills, committee meetings, sessions and background on individual members can be found on the Internet at www.legis.state.pa.us

Compromise Budget Restrains Spending

The 2008-09 state budget limits expenditures for new proposals and existing programs, while still ensuring the continuation of essential services. A sluggish economy and weak revenues highlight the need for a guarded spending plan.

Despite calls by some to tap the Rainy Day Fund to hike spending, the increases in expenditures are limited. Many agencies, along with the legislative and judicial branches, received cuts from the Governor's initial budget proposal.

Budget-in-Brief

- Increase of 3.98 percent over last year, which is slightly below inflation and less than the 4.2 percent

increase proposed by the Governor in February.

- No new taxes or fees. The scheduled phase-out of the Capital Stock and Franchise Tax is maintained.
- Basic education funding is increased by \$274.7 million, or 5.5 percent.

Funding for individual school districts is based on a formula proposed by the

Governor, with each district receiving at least 3 percent more than the prior year.

Tax Credit Approved for Volunteer Responders

Individuals serving their communities through volunteer ambulance services, volunteer fire companies and volunteer rescue companies are eligible for

Continued on page 3

**More budget information:
www.senatorvance.com**



There is an effort currently underway to improve access to the Audubon Hawk Watch at Waggoner's Gap by creating the Cliff Jones Field Station. The addition will be named in honor of the former DEP Secretary and area leader who died in May. This area adjacent to Route 74 is one of the finest hawk watching opportunities in Pennsylvania. Sen. Vance's June cable television show discussed this treasure in depth and can be viewed on her Web site. Pictured during the taping are, from left, David Grove, site compiler; Vance; and Kim Van Fleet, Important Bird Area Coordinator.



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Updates, Additional Information Available Online

Vance Legislation

A complete list of legislation I have sponsored is available on my Web site. The list will be updated periodically and includes a brief description and status of each bill.

Highway Construction Updates

You can find links relating to highway and bridge projects on my Web site. You also can access information about the regional transportation plans affecting Cumberland and York counties. These are long-range plans that identify future projects in the planning stages.



Wellsville Borough held its second annual Fall Parade in October. Sen. Pat Vance and Rep. Bev Mackereth rode along the route in a Stanley Steamer owned and driven by Charles Johnson.

Alternative Energy Investment Legislation Enacted

The General Assembly approved a measure to increase the development and use of alternative and renewable energy, improve energy efficiency and reduce energy consumption.

Consumer Highlights

- \$100 million for solar energy projects. Loans, grants or reimbursements shall not exceed 35 percent of the purchase and installation price.
- \$10 million annually for low-income home energy assistance to supplement federal home energy assistance funds.
- \$92.5 million for a variety of energy conservation projects. Loans, grants or reimbursements shall not exceed 25 percent of the purchase and installation price.

The legislation also dedicates significant resources for businesses, nonprofit economic development organizations and local governments for projects relating to clean energy, alternative energy production, solar energy, renewable energy and pollution control.

Energy Saving Tips Plentiful

As energy prices continue to climb there are many steps that can be taken to lower one's bill.

- Customers of PPL, Med-Ed and Adams Electric Cooperative can go to their respective company's Web site to complete a questionnaire that gives an estimate of where the most money is spent and receive tips on how to decrease the cost. For PPL visit www.pplelectric.com. Met-Ed's Web site is www.firstenergycorp.com/Met-Ed. For Adams Electric Cooperative, Inc visit www.adamsec.com.
- Keep drapes and shades closed to reduce the cost of cooling a home in the summer.
- Use clothes dryers and dishwashers in the early morning or late evening since they produce heat.

- Use a microwave oven to cook food. They are 75 percent faster than conventional ovens thus reducing energy use.
- Use a programmable thermostat.
- Replace filters monthly and keep air vents clean of dust and lint.
- Reduce air leaks by using caulk and weather stripping.
- Turn down the temperature on the hot water tank.
- Turn down the thermostat in the winter and turn it up in the summer. By adjusting the thermostat 10 to 15 degrees for eight hours each day, consumers can realize a 10 percent savings each year, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.



Sen. Pat Vance recently participated in the West Shore Elks Club's Flag Day ceremony, which honored 43 World War II veterans who live in the area. The veterans are pictured with Vance, Rep. Glen Grell and Col. Dennis D. Tewksbury, chairman of the Department of Academic Affairs at the U.S. Army War College.

Budget Restrains Spending

Continued from page 1

a new tax credit. For 2008, an active volunteer is eligible for a \$100 credit, which may be claimed on the individual's personal income tax return.

Assistance with Chesapeake Bay Mandates Enacted

New state assistance may help local ratepayers with the burden of funding upgrades to wastewater treatment plants. This is especially important to communities that must make upgrades to comply with the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy.

Wastewater treatment plant funding is included within plans to borrow for dams and water and sewer projects. The debt service for a majority of this borrowing is covered through monies set aside in the Gaming Economic Development and Tourism Fund, without using tax revenues. The remainder would be subject to a voter referendum before the borrowing could occur.

Advance Directive, Living Will Information Available

No one likes to think about the kind of health care they would want should a catastrophic accident or illness make them unable to express their wishes to family, loved ones and doctors.

However, it is imperative to give these decisions thought before something occurs. It is estimated only about 15 percent of people have executed an advance directive. A significant reason for this low number is that there is considerable confusion among the public about advance directives.

The Hospital & Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania, a statewide organization that advocates for almost 250 hospitals, long-term care and home health and hospice providers, is working to clear up the confusion through a consumer brochure and sample advance health-care directive. The information is available at www.CareforPa.org. In addition, at most Pennsylvania hospitals, patients who enter the facility are given information on this topic.

Senate Advances Privacy, Reform Bills

Three pieces of legislation, which address security of personal information within a government agency, bring greater accountability to state advertising and restrict the usage of state vehicles, recently passed the Senate.

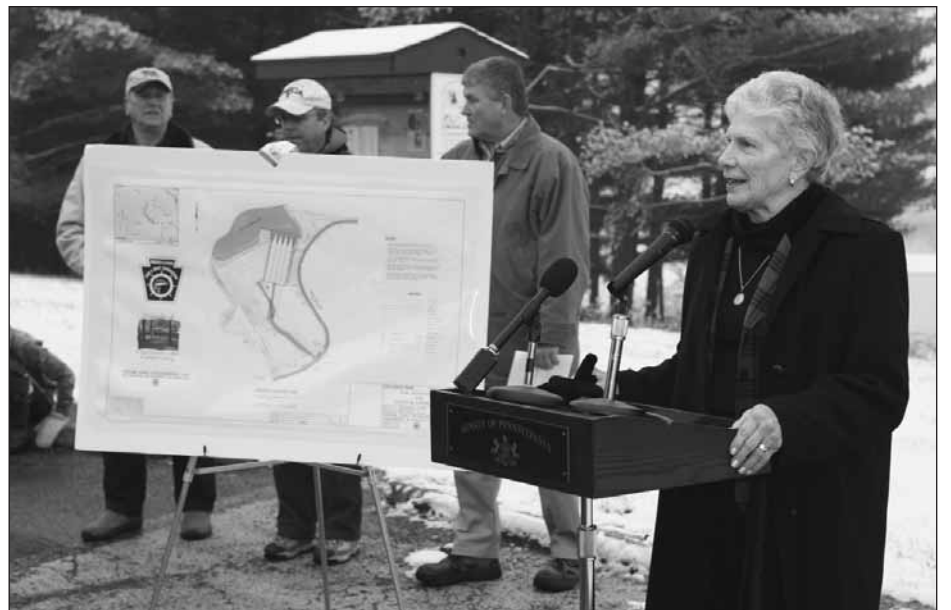
Senate Bill 1266 would require a state agency or local government to notify affected individuals of a data security breach within seven days of discovery. Current law requires affected individuals to be notified "without reasonable delay." In the past, delays have occurred beyond the definition of reasonable.

Senate Bill 1015 would require all paid advertising by state government to bear a disclaimer stating "Paid for

with Pennsylvania taxpayer dollars." It is estimated that state government spends tens of millions of taxpayer dollars annually advertising itself.

Finally, Senate Bill 1499 would restrict long-term, state-owned vehicle assignments to those employees who drive more than an average of 1,200 miles per month on official business. A detailed monthly mileage log would be posted on the Department of General Services' Web site and be accessible to the general public and news media, under the legislation.

All three bills have been assigned to the House State Government Committee for consideration.



In February Sen. Pat Vance announced that she had secured \$1.5 million in the state's Capital Budget to address safety concerns at the Opossum Lake Dam in Lower Frankford Township. The 59-acre lake was lowered 14 feet in the fall of 2005 after leaks were discovered in the dam's spillway. Construction is expected to begin in late 2009 or early 2010 with the lake ready for use again in 2011. Sen. Vance is pictured at the lake for the announcement.

Bill, Lobbying Information Available on Internet

Pennsylvania Senate votes and debates, along with bills and statutes, can now be accessed online via one Web site, the Citizen Access Page.

By visiting my Web site (www.senatorvance.com) and clicking on the "Citizen Access Page" box on the right side of the page, one can look up bills and amendments, review text of floor debates, and see how senators voted. Information is available regarding votes in committee and the full Senate.

The Citizen Access Page also helps

users track who is lobbying, who individual lobbyists are representing, and how they are spending their money. In addition, users can view the number of clients each lobbyist has and what each one is spending per client.

The site guides users through the process, under the headings "How to View Senate Votes and Debates," "How to Search Pennsylvania Statutes," and "How to View Lobbyist Disclosure Reports."

Need to Re-Register for Do Not Call List

Pennsylvania residents who signed up for the Do Not Call List when it initially began in 2002 need to re-register to keep unwanted telemarketing calls at bay.

In 2002 the General Assembly created a law that allowed telephone subscribers to register their telephone number on a list that prohibits telemarketers from contacting them and subjects telemarketers to fines if they fail to comply. The registration is valid for five years.

Legislation that passed the Senate in May (Senate Bill 1116) would

eliminate the need to re-register every five years. The bill is now in the House Appropriations Committee.

Residents can register their names, addresses and phone numbers – either landline or cell phone numbers – with the state list by calling 1-888-777-3406 or by visiting www.nocallsplease.com. Both the toll-free hotline and Web site are accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The law excludes those calls from telemarketers who have an existing business relationship with customers or who are calling on behalf of tax-

exempt charitable organizations, political parties and other groups not peddling goods or services.

The Senate also is working to eliminate the exemption for political parties. Senate Bill 820, which I cosponsored, would make it illegal for any political candidate or organization – including so-called 527 groups – to make automated political calls to any resident who signs up to be on the list. The bill passed the Senate in April and is now in the House State Government Committee.



Sen. Pat Vance participated in National Library Week in April by reading to third-grade students from Northside Elementary at the Joseph T. Simpson Public Library in Mechanicsburg. In addition, she answered questions from the students.



David Norton, a rising junior at Syracuse University, is interning in Sen. Pat Vance's district office this summer. The 2006 graduate of Trinity High School is studying political science, finance and accounting. He is the son of Alberta and James Norton of Camp Hill. Any college student residing in the 31st Senatorial District is welcome to apply for an internship. Please contact Li in the district office at 975-1985.

Pennsylvania Facts

Do you know?

1. What was the northernmost point Confederate troops reached during the Civil War?
2. What is the total area of Pennsylvania?
3. What Pennsylvania-born actress portrayed Jane Hathaway on the Beverly Hillbillies?
4. What Pennsylvania community maintains the largest historic district outside of Philadelphia?
5. Around 1797, Pennsylvanian William P. Eichbaum became the first person to construct what type of lighting fixture in America?
6. What percentage of school-aged children in Pennsylvania actually attended school in 1831?
7. Penn State defensive tackle Mike Reid received the 1986 Song of the Year award by the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers for what composition?
8. The Art Association of Harrisburg occupies what former Pennsylvania governor's home?
9. Glen Mills is noted for having the first manufacturing plant for what item?
10. What was Jim Thorpe's full name?

Answers

1. Lemoyne
2. 45,126 square miles
3. Nancy Kulp
4. York
5. A crystal chandelier
6. Approximately 37 percent
7. "Lost in the Fifties."
8. William Findlay
9. Roller skates
10. James Francis Thorpe