



STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Marcia M. Hahn

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Fall 2011

Dear Friends,

I hope this newsletter finds you enjoying the final days of summer and preparing for fall in the beautiful Lehigh Valley.

Thank you for taking time to read my newsletter. In it you'll find a preview of two interesting events we have planned, as well as a brief review of the budget and a look ahead to what figures to be a busy next few months.

I need to also thank you for sending me to Harrisburg as your state representative. Serving as your voice in the General Assembly is a responsibility I find humbling and never take for granted.

Sincerely,

Marcia M. Hahn


State Representative
Marcia Hahn
138th Legislative District

Mark Your Calendars! **ATTENTION SENIORS**

My staff and I are looking forward to hosting our senior expo, which will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., on Friday, Oct. 7, at the Bushkill Township Volunteer Fire Company, 155 Firehouse Lane, Nazareth.

I know how helpful and informative these events can be. In addition to the local vendors scheduled to appear, my office staff and I will be on hand to show you the various legislative services we can provide.

Flu shots will also be available at no cost. Please remember to bring your Medicare card if you plan to be vaccinated.



I recently helped Robert A. and Wilma H. (Kroboth) Vargo, Sr. celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. The Vargo's were married in 1960 at Holy Family Catholic Church in Nazareth.



Responsible Budget Bill Gains My Support

On June 29, I was among General Assembly members to vote in favor of the proposed spending plan for the 2011-12 fiscal year. Tough times call for difficult decisions...as well as wise ones. In crafting a spending plan for Fiscal Year 2011-12, the General Assembly sent to the governor's desk a budget that makes hard choices in a trying economic climate, while supporting programs that need to be maintained in order to prepare for better days that are undoubtedly ahead.

The most important of these programs is basic education. Our children are our future, and basic education receives a \$5.354 billion funding subsidy, the largest investment of state dollars ever.

I know this may be contrary to reports in the media. In fact, Gov. Ed Rendell significantly cut state spending for K-12 education in each of the last two years and used federal stimulus dollars to close the gap. The use of these one-time funds, which no longer exist, artificially inflated support for education, as schools were told to not use stimulus money for programs that would later need to be supported.

This funding chart for schools in the 138th District shows how state support has returned to pre-stimulus (2008-09) levels:

<u>State funding</u>	<u>2008-09</u>	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>	<u>2011-12</u>
Bethlehem Area SD	\$23,923,933	\$22,982,639	\$24,204,718	\$27,035,855
Nazareth Area SD	\$7,760,238	\$7,361,069	\$7,293,351	\$8,103,003
Northampton Area SD	\$12,591,452	\$11,624,481	\$11,427,039	\$12,635,198
Pen Argyl Area SD	\$4,322,886	\$4,056,176	\$4,014,580	\$4,454,413

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www.RepHahn.com

continued... **Responsible Budget Bill Gains My Support**

Rebounding from this economic downturn will mean preparing a workforce to compete nationally and globally. This measure of support for K-12 education is historic and essential.

This budget tightens our collective belts by reining in spending. A collective budget cut of \$1.77 billion means a reduction for only the third time in four decades. At \$27.145 billion, this budget is based on realistic and sustainable revenues and will not create a deficit by spending beyond our means.

We are also taking into account outstanding obligations, much like a responsible family prioritizes what it owes before going on a wild shopping spree. Pennsylvania is in debt to the tune of \$50.5 billion. We owe \$4 billion related to our unemployment fund. We face a likely court decision that will require the state to repay \$716 million that was inappropriately taken by the Rendell administration from a medical provider's insurance fund. Ignoring these figures takes us back to the spend-thrift days that contributed to the economic situation in which we find ourselves.

Couple these facts with a budget that was on time and includes no new taxes or new borrowing and we have a spending plan I could easily support. Those of us in the General Assembly are charged with being responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars, and this budget mirrors the responsible households of the 138th Legislative District.



Property Tax Relief

Forms for the state's Property Tax/Rent Rebate program for 2010 are now available in my district office. Eligible participants can receive a rebate of up to \$650 based on their rent or property taxes paid in 2010. The program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians who are 65 years or older, widows and widowers 50 years or older, and those 18 years or older with disabilities.

Eligibility income limits for homeowners are set at the following levels, excluding 50 percent of Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, and Railroad Retirement Tier 1 benefits:

- \$0 to \$8,000, maximum \$650 rebate (Homeowners and renters)
- \$8,001 to \$15,000, maximum \$500 rebate (Homeowners and renters)
- \$15,001 to \$18,000, maximum \$300 rebate (Homeowners only)
- \$18,001 to \$35,000, maximum \$250 rebate (Homeowners only)

In addition, you may be eligible for additional relief through programs run by the Nazareth Area, Northampton Area or Pen Argyl school districts. The guidelines and appropriate forms are available on my website or by contacting the school district in which you live.

What is Your Opinion of Sunday Hunting?

House Game and Fisheries Chairman State Rep. John Evans (R-Crawford/Erie) has authored House Bill 1760, which would allow for Sunday hunting. To offer Pennsylvanians a chance to hear varying viewpoints on the issue, a series of public hearings has been scheduled.

I will be hosting one of them on Thursday, Sept. 15 at 6:30 p.m., in the East Allen Township Municipal Building, 5344 Nor-Bath Blvd., Northampton. Various stakeholder organizations will offer testimony to me and my fellow members of the committee.

If you cannot attend, the hearing can be viewed live on my website, www.RepHahn.com.

Congratulations Eagle Scouts!

In recent months, I've had the pleasure of presenting House citations to the following Eagle Scouts:

- Keegan A. Boyle** – Hanover Township
- Andrew James Brockway** – Hanover Township
- Jack Cody Broniec** – Hanover Township
- John F.S. Buz** – East Allen Township
- Justin R. David** – Wind Gap
- Geoffrey A. Hart** – Bethlehem Township
- Alexander Michael Joyce** – Hanover Township
- Daniel J. Koch** – Plainfield Township
- Daniel R. Longacre** – Moore Township
- Scott Chris Mitman** – Lower Nazareth Township
- John Roland O'Brien** – Hanover Township
- Keith Alan Poff II** – Bushkill Township
- Alex Schuster** – Lower Nazareth Township
- Drew Michael Stasak** – Hanover Township
- Shane Tyler Sternberg** – Bethlehem Township
- Paul D. Thorley** – Hanover Township
- Jonathan Yu** – Bethlehem Township

Congratulations gentlemen! You have made your families and communities proud.

Coming in September...

The State House returns to session starting the final week of September. The fall calendar figures to be an active one, as we look forward to taking on the following issues:

Natural Gas – Gov. Tom Corbett's Marcellus Shale Commission has issued its findings. Corresponding legislation will no doubt be debated this fall. While there is much debate over further taxing this industry, we must remember that the priority of any tax revenue generated needs to be the municipalities impacted by drilling and not the state's General Fund.

Prevailing Wage and Right to Work – Hearings on these issues were held in August by the House Labor and Industry Committee. The accompanying pieces of legislation should come to the House floor in the coming months. The impact on Pennsylvania's business climate and the ability to create jobs will determine my vote on the legislation associated with these topics.

Privatization of state-run liquor stores – I am a co-sponsor of House Bill 11, introduced by Majority Leader Mike Turzai. Hearings on this legislation, which would privatize the state-run liquor stores, are being held this month.

Visit me online

Throughout the 138th District



Remembering the late Kenneth Longo for volunteerism at Point Phillips Rod and Gun Club and dedication to the Kids Fishing Contest



Attending the mini Relay for Life at Nazareth Area High School



Judging at the Plainfield Farmer's Fair



Our veterans town hall meeting at American Legion Post 470 in Bath



Reading to students at Sacred Heart School in Bath



National Night Out with Pen Argyl Police Chief Dave Strawn and officers from City of Bethlehem

Castle Doctrine Becomes Law

I am proud to have co-sponsored House Bill 40, the so-called Castle Doctrine legislation, which was signed into law June 28. While the media has focused on this bill as it relates to the use of firearms, I believe the focus should be on the right to use force in self-defense and, by extension, defend one's family.

While the legislation may certainly include the use of firearms, it may just as likely include the use of a baseball bat or mere fists. From the perspective of both current Pennsylvania law and House Bill 40, the method of force is immaterial. It is, rather, the existence of circumstances which lead to a reasonable belief in imminent death, serious bodily injury, kidnapping or rape which give rise to the authority to use deadly force in self-defense.

House Bill 40 does not seek to change that basic requirement. It does, however, create an initial presumption that an individual is justified in using any level of force to repel an intruder who has unlawfully and forcefully entered the home or occupied vehicle.



Lawsuit Abuse Reform Legislation Enacted

Senate Bill 1131 received my approval when it was voted on the House floor. State Rep. Doug Reichley (R-Berks/Lehigh) and I were on hand as this much-needed legislation was signed into law on June 28 by Gov. Tom Corbett.

Lawsuit abuse reform measures benefit both large and small businesses, taxpayers, consumers, doctors and health care professionals and insurance companies, as well as citizens with legitimate lawsuits by unclogging the court system of frivolous lawsuits. The bill, also known as the Fair Share Act, stabilizes liability insurance rates for health care providers and businesses by providing continuity and predictability. This, in turn, helps consumers by keeping costs down, preventing job losses and ensuring accessibility to health care providers.

State Representative Marcia Hahn 138th Legislative District

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SAVE THE DATE!!!

State Rep. Marcia Hahn's Senior Expo
Friday, Oct. 7, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Bushkill Township Volunteer Fire Company
155 Firehouse Lane, Nazareth

Flu shots will be available!