



Don White

STATE SENATOR



Reports to the People

41ST SENATORIAL DISTRICT • SPRING 2005

Dear Friend,

With the 2005-06 Legislative Session now underway, I felt this would be an appropriate time to update you on events in Harrisburg and around the 41st Senatorial District.

The General Assembly faces many critical issues this year, and I remain committed to serving the best interests of all residents of the 41st Senatorial District. If you have any questions or comments about anything in this newsletter or any state-related matter, call my Indiana Office at **724-357-0151/toll free 866-357-0151**, my Kittanning Office at **724-543-3026/toll-free 866-366-9448 (1-866-DON-WHITE)**, or my Murrysville Office at **724-327-2422/toll-free 866-736-9448 (1-866-SEN-WHITE)**.

Regards,



State Senator Don White

Senator White Begins Second Term

Just after noon on Tuesday, January 4, 2005, Don White was sworn into office, beginning his second term as the official advocate for the residents of the 41st Senatorial District.

Swearing-In Day is traditionally filled with pomp and ceremony in Harrisburg, but Senator White was already gearing up for the legislative work ahead during the 2005-06 Legislative Session. His goals for the Session are based on what he learned during his first four-year term, Senator White said.

"We must continue to do the people's work here at home. During my first term, it became clear to me that the most important and rewarding part of a legislator's job is working to improve the district which he or she represents," Senator White said. Specifically, Senator White cited property tax relief and health care issues as top priorities for his legislative agenda.

"In addition, we must maintain fiscal discipline in Harrisburg. It's no secret that the key to a thriving economy is to encourage private investment and spending," Senator White said.

Senator White will continue to serve as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Military and Veterans

Affairs and as Vice Chairman of the Community and Economic Development Committee during the 2005-06 Legislative Session. He is also a member of three other Senate Committees: Banking and Insurance; Environmental Resources and Energy; and Transportation.

Senate President Pro Tempore Robert C. Jubelirer, left, celebrates with the White family, Anne, Abby and Don after the formal ceremonies on Swearing-In Day in Harrisburg.



Senate Receives Report on Status of Emergency Services



During a recent press conference in Harrisburg, Senator Don White details plans to help Pennsylvania's fire departments and ambulance squads.

measure co-sponsored by Senator White.

"The Commission had a daunting task in attempting to compile a report that comprehensively detailed the issues facing emergency services providers across the Commonwealth," Senator White said. "Recognizing that, the Commission wisely focused on specific concerns such as recruitment and delivery of services – issues that seemed to be most common among fire departments and ambulance corps across the state. Through that focus, the Commission developed a set of recommendations that will serve us well as the first step toward providing needed assistance to Pennsylvania's emergency service providers."

Recognizing the major issues facing Pennsylvania's firefighters and ambulance services, the Senate is poised to consider recommendations made by a bi-partisan commission established last year to study emergency services across the

Commonwealth, according to Senator Don White, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness

The 25-member Commission was established under the provisions of Senate Resolution 60 of 2003, a

New Health Center Opens

On December 1, Senator Don White (center) had the honor of cutting the ribbon opening the Old Schoolhouse Health Center.

The opening was especially gratifying since Senator White worked to promote community health systems in Pennsylvania.

"One of the first bills I introduced as a state Senator was Senate Bill 507, the Pennsylvania Community-based Health Care Assistance Act, which was intended to provide grants to health care providers and health clinics to expand and improve the delivery and quality of health care in their communities," Senator White said.

On December 1, Senator Don White (center) had the honor of cutting the ribbon opening the Old Schoolhouse Health Center.



Senator White to Serve on PENNVEST Board

Working on behalf of the people of the 41st District, Senator Don White received extensive experience in securing PENNVEST financing for important local water and sewer projects.

Now, Senator White will be on the other side of the application process with his recent appointment to serve as one of the state Senate's two representatives on the PENNVEST Board of Directors.

"I am honored to have the opportunity to serve on the PENNVEST Board," Senator White said. "PENNVEST financing has been a key catalyst in promoting several major water and sewer projects in the 41st District which, when completed, are expected to boost our local economy and create job opportunities."

PENNVEST provides grants and low-interest loans to fund sewer, storm water and drinking water projects throughout the Commonwealth. These projects not only contribute to improving Pennsylvania's environment and the health of its people, they also provide opportunities for economic growth and jobs for Pennsylvania's workers.

Senator White replaces Senator Hal Mowery of Cumberland County who retired last December. As the

representative of the Senate Republican Caucus on the PENNVEST Board, Senator White will review applications for funding.

"This financing is important and essential to municipalities and municipal authorities across the Commonwealth. It enables small communities like Glen Campbell Borough to build needed sewerage systems," Senator White said. "PENNVEST also helps promote infrastructure improvements that enhance a region's attractiveness for residential and commercial development, such as the area near the Kittanning A-15 Bypass."

Since Senator White took office in January 2001, PENNVEST has provided millions in financing for projects in the 41st District.

In Armstrong County, PENNVEST funding has included: \$4.17 million for Mahoning Township, \$2.9 million for Cadogan Township, \$2.8 million for Manor Township, and \$2.65 million to the Rayburn Township Joint Municipal Authority.

Westover Borough in Clearfield County received \$2.5 million from PENNVEST.

In addition to the \$1.4 million awarded to Glen Campbell, PENNVEST funding to Indiana County includes more than \$15.8 million to

the Indiana County Municipal Services Authority (ICMSA) for its on-going efforts to improve and expand water and sewerage systems around the county.

Constituent Service is Job Number 1

As your State Senator, my job has two very important roles. On one hand, I am your voice in Harrisburg, reviewing bills that come before the Senate and the various committees on which I serve.

On the other hand, I also have the duty of making state government more accessible to my constituents. My district offices are your one-stop shop for assistance with many state services and programs. A complete listing of the offices, with addresses and phone numbers, is included on this page.

Some of the services available include:

- Assistance with problems that you may encounter when dealing with state agencies
- Copies of bills before the General Assembly, new laws, and status reports on legislation
- Pennsylvania tax forms and assistance with state tax questions
- Informational brochures and forms such as . . .
 - Notary Public applications
 - PHEAA applications and information
 - Pennsylvania road maps
 - Property Tax and Rent Rebate Applications
 - PACE/PACENET Applications
 - Consumer Protection books
 - Senior citizen information

Renew 22 Improvements Roll On

Another milestone in the Renew 22 Project will be reached in April with the completion of Section B01 in Murrysville. After 2 years of work, at a cost of \$29.8 million, the 2.8-mile stretch from the Allegheny County line to the Cozy Inn Cut-off has been upgraded and improved.

Completion of B01 sets the stage for the start of work on the B02 stage (4.1 miles from the Cozy Inn Cut-Off to the Route 22/66 interchange) to begin later this spring, with an anticipated completion date of December 2007.

"The Renew 22 project is a comprehensive project to upgrade this important highway across the entire length of Westmoreland County," said Senator Don White. "The overall project, which is broken down into several phases, is expected to be completed by the end of the decade and will be an important component in the county's on-going efforts to promote economic development and job creation."

Fighting Breast and Cervical Cancer

According to state Health Department statistics, breast cancer produces more Pennsylvania female cancer cases than any other type of cancer. It is estimated that 10,570 new cases of breast cancer will have been diagnosed in Pennsylvania during 2003. The estimated number of deaths due to breast cancer in Pennsylvania for 2003 is 2,215.

Each year, 5,000 women die of cervical cancer. A yearly Pap test, beginning at age 18, can help detect cervical cancer in the early stages - or even prevent it.

Through its HealthyWoman Program, Pennsylvania offers free or reduced-fee mammograms and Pap tests for women age 50 or older who don't have insurance coverage and meet income eligibility requirements. For a family of two, the income limit is \$31,225; \$39,175 for a family of three; and \$47,125 for a family of four.

Services offered through the

screening include: clinical breast examination; mammogram; pelvic examination and Pap smear; education on breast self-exam; and follow-up diagnostic care when needed.

For further information about breast and cervical cancer screening services, call the Pennsylvania Department of Health at 1-800-215-7494.

FIGHTING TO BEAT CANCER



Senator Don White participated in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life in Harrisburg.



Through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit which allows corporations to donate scholarship money in lieu of taxes, Senator Don White helped secure \$40,000 to help families in his district send their children to Divine Redeemer in Ford City, Armstrong County and Calvary Baptist Academy in Indiana County.

State Services and Information Are Just a Click Away

Senator Don White's website www.senatordonwhite.com is a good way for people to access state services and information at their convenience. Constituents can also contact Senator White via e-mail at dwhite@pasen.gov.

The website provides information on a variety of topics organized in several easily accessible sections:

- Press releases and newsletters.
- Special sections on business, health, youth and senior citizen issues.
- Information on laws and pending legislation.
- Links to state, federal, and county agencies.

Income Tax, PACE, Rent Rebate Forms Now Available

Senator Don White, R-41st District, is reminding local residents that with the arrival of 2005, new state tax forms and applications for two popular senior citizens' programs are now available.

The PA-40 and other state tax forms, as well as applications for the PACE/PACENET and Property Tax/Rent Rebate programs, are available by calling or visiting one of Senator White's district offices listed on the back page of this newsletter.

The Pharmaceutical Assistance Contract for the Elderly (PACE) and a companion program, PACENET, help many senior citizens afford their prescription drugs, Senator White noted.

"This is one of the best benefits offered by the state to our older residents," said Senator White. "As prescription drug prices continue to increase, many seniors need PACE and PACENET to afford their required medications."

To participate in the PACE program, senior citizens must:

- be state residents age 65 or older;
- be ineligible for pharmaceutical benefits under Medical Assistance;
- if single, have a total income of \$14,500 or less; or,
- if married, have a total household income of \$17,700 or less.

PACE cardholders pay a \$6 co-payment per generic prescriptions or a \$9 co-pay for brand name prescriptions.

To qualify for PACENET, senior citizens must:

- be state residents age 65 or older;
- be ineligible for pharmaceutical benefits under Medical Assistance;
- if single, have a total income between \$14,500 and \$23,500; or,
- if married, have a total household income between \$17,700 and \$31,500.



PACENET cardholders must meet a \$40 monthly deductible, then they pay \$8 per generic prescription or a \$15 co-payment for each brand-name prescription.

Like PACE and PACENET, the Property Tax/Rent Rebate program is another important support program for older Pennsylvanians.

"I would strongly encourage all who are eligible to apply for these rebates," said Senator White.

"Property taxes and rent are among the two biggest expenses for many older Pennsylvanians. This rebate lets qualifying senior citizens recoup some of their money."

Under the program, a person living on a limited income may be eligible to receive a refund of some part of the money he or she paid for property taxes or rent during a calendar year. To qualify, an applicant must have an annual household income of less than \$15,000.

The program is open to state residents age 65 or older, widows and widowers age 50 or older, and permanently disabled persons age 18 and over who meet the Social Security disability requirements. Applications must be filed by June 30, with rebates being mailed out beginning on July 1 on a first-come, first-served basis.

During Fiscal Year 2003-04, the average rebate was \$376 per household, and 327,762 households received rebates.

Hearing from IUP



During a public hearing of the Senate Law and Justice Committee at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Senator Don White (right) and his colleagues Sean Logan, Joe Conti and Joe Scarnati heard from college officials and students on the issue of binge drinking.



CLIP AND SAVE



STATE SENATOR DON WHITE'S OFFICES TO SERVE YOU

District Offices

618 Philadelphia Street
Indiana, PA 15701

724-357-0151 • Fax 724-357-0148

Toll Free 866-357-0151

Fax 724-357-0148

101 Market Street, Suite 100
Kittanning, PA 16201

724-543-3026 • Fax 724-548-4856

Toll Free 866-DonWhite

(866-366-9448)

3950 William Penn Highway
Murrysville, PA 15668

724-327-2422 • Fax 724-327-2436

Toll Free 866-SenWhite

(866-736-9448)

Harrisburg Office

Senate Box 203041

Harrisburg, PA 17120-3041

Phone (717) 787-8724

Fax (717) 772-1589



Meeting the Legal Eagles

Senator Don White recognized the fifth grade teachers and representatives of the Legal Eagles 4 Program near their now famous "Wall of Fame" in the Curwensville Elementary School. Since 1991, the 5th Graders of the Legal Eagles Program in Curwensville have received over 40 awards and citations from federal, state, and local officers and agencies.

Keeping up With Senator White

Straight Talk with State Senator Don White is a half-hour program dedicated to keeping the people of the 41st District informed on state issues as well as events in Harrisburg and in their communities.

The show airs at various times, so check your local listings:

- AT&T Greensburg, Channel 8
- Family Life TV, Channel 23 (Adelphia/Kittanning)
- Municipality of Murrysville, Channel 18
- WIUP-TV, Indiana University TV, Channel 20