

ITALO S. CAPPABIANCA, MEMBER

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COMMITTEES

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS, CHAIRMAN



House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

**Cappabianca Release Health Statistics that Show that 30.7%
of Working Pennsylvanians Who earn at or below the Poverty Line rely on
Medicaid for Health Insurance: For Part Time Workers this number is 56%**

State Representative Italo S. Cappabianca released an August 1994 Penn State study that shows that 30.7% of working Pennsylvanians who income is at or below the poverty line rely on Medicaid to provide health care. According to Representative Cappabianca, many if not most of these people would be cut off from this program if Governor' Ridge's Medicaid reform proposal passes next week.

If these cuts take place, Cappabianca stated, the percentage of full time Pennsylvania workers at or below the poverty who don't have insurance may double from the current 33%. And for part time workers at or below the poverty line, the percentage of people without insurance could significantly climb from the current 25%.

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COMMITTEES
FEDERAL-STATE RELATIONS, CHAIRMAN

House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

**CAPPABIANCA CLAIMS A PARTIAL VICTORY FOR CONSUMERS
IN GASOLINE PRICE CLAIM:
ERIE PRICE GAP DROPS 50% IN THREE MONTHS**

**CONSUMERS SEE PRICE DROP IN ERIE OF OVER 2 CENTS
WHILE PRICES AROUND THE STATE GO UP:
SOME STATIONS HAVE LOWEST PRICES SINCE FEBRUARY 1992**

State Representative Italo S. Cappabianca today released Pennsylvania Energy Office statistics that show Erie gasoline prices have dropped more than any other city in the state since he asked for an investigation of high gas prices this past January. Moreover the price gap between Erie Gasoline Prices and the gasoline prices in the rest of the state has dropped by 50% or 4.5 cents in just three months. [SEE CHART ON PAGE 2]

"Statistics show that prices are going down the fastest in Erie; that has not happened before over any extended period of time," Cappabianca stated. **"While some people claim that low prices are being caused by an abundance of of gasoline that doesn't meet summer EPA specifications, why are gas prices outside of around the state still going up while Erie's prices are going down."** Cappabianca challenged. Some stations now have prices under a dollar, the lowest since February 1992. Cappabianca pointed out that during 1993 the gap between Erie gas prices and the prices outside of Erie steadily increased to a nine cent gap.

Since Cappabianca's claims, this gap has fallen by one half, or 4.5 cents. Cappabianca called on the local media to continue to monitor gas prices and he has also requested organizations like the Erie Motor club to regularly monitor gas prices.

GASOLINE PRICES BEFORE AND AFTER REP. CAPPABIANCA'S CLAIMS ON GAS PRICING

	ERIE	AVERAGE PRICE OUTSIDE OF ERIE	PRICE GAP	Philadelphia	Pittsburgh	Harrisburg
1/11/94	108.9	99.9	9 cents	105	99.5	95.2
3/22/94	107	101.3	5.7 cents	103.9	101.8	98.1
Change from 1/11/94 to 3/22/94	-1.9	+1.4	-3.3 cents	-1.1	+2.3	+2.9

SOURCE: PENNSYLVANIA ENERGY OFFICE DATA

OTHER FACTS

- ERIE PRICES HAVE FALLEN MORE THAN IN THE LAST TWO MONTHS THAN ANY OTHER MAJOR CITY IN PENNSYLVANIA AND WHILE OTHER CITIES GASOLINE PRICES HAVE INCREASED.
- ERIE PRICES HAVE FALLEN EVEN WHILE THERE HAS BEEN AN IMPOSITION OF AN ADDITIONAL 2 CENTS A GALLON FEE FOR UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK INSURANCE WHICH LED TO GAS PRICE INCREASES IN PITTSBURGH & HARRISBURG
- ACCORDING TO MONTHLY GAS PRICE REPORTS, ERIE PRICES HAVE NOT BEEN LOWER SINCE APRIL OF 1992.
- THE GAP BETWEEN ERIE PRICES AND OTHER CITIES HAS FALLEN BY OVER 33% JUST IN THE PAST TWO MONTHS.

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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES
FEDERAL-STATE RELATIONS, CHAIRMAN

August 30, 1995

Cappabianca Announces that First Statewide Free Internet Job Bank
Open for Business: <http://moose.erie.net/~italo/pajobs.html>

Finding a job or hiring a new worker in Pennsylvania may be as easy as sending an e-mail message on the internet; State Representative Italo Cappabianca today announced two electronic addresses where people and businesses can send help wanted ads or position wanted requests without any charge. Cappabianca also noted that the PAJOBS home page also contains the first online list of Pennsylvania companies and institutions like Mellon Bank and University of Pennsylvania that are hiring over the net.

To post an help wanted notice: send an e-mail message to:
pajobs@erie.net

To post a position wanted notice: send an e-mail message to:
paresume@erie.net

According to Representative Cappabianca, the only requirement is that people must start **the subject line of their e-mail message** with the country, state and city of the job listed or wanted. For example a sample subject line would be: USA, PA, ERIE Foundry Worker Needed. The details of the position should be listed in the body of the message.

Close to twenty states or regions have some type of free employment listings on-line. While Philadelphia and Pittsburgh have newsgroups that provide job

listings, no internet service gives Pennsylvanians the opportunity to list and/or look at state-wide job information without charging either the employer or the job seeker. Looking at who provides these internet job services today in Pennsylvania or around the country, many information providers are not State agencies, Cappabianca noted. But since no one is performing this service today, Cappabianca has started the PAJOBS program. In light of the numerous private job lists in other regions of the country, Cappabianca believes that his free service will compliment existing state programs. "This service should be on-line 24 hours a day and available to users of America On-Line(tm), Prodigy(tm), Compuserve(tm), or any other provider that has internet access," he noted.

Once E-mail messages are received, Rep. Cappabianca's office will converted them to electronic listings that will be accessible at the internet address of <http://moose.erie.net/~italo>. To get this job information to the people who need it, public libraries and Universities will be contacted about this service. Cappabianca also pledged to work to provide greater public access to the internet, as a way to allow substantial access to government and economic information at a low cost. State Representative Italo Cappabianca (D-Erie), the Democratic Chairman of the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee, is the sponsor of the first piece of legislation to bring State Government on-line and was the first state officeholder to go online and to put selected state laws, House legislation and a House voting calendar on the internet. Questions or comments about this new service can be sent to italo@moose.erie.net.

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INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS, CHAIRMAN

House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 26, 1995

**As US House votes for budget cuts...
Erie town meeting announced and witnesses sought**

**Impact on G.E. job training, health care
and other local programs to be investigated**

In response to today's U.S. House of Representatives vote on the Republican plan of budget cuts and tax breaks, State Representative Italo S. Cappabianca (Erie), Chairman of a Statewide Task Force on Federal Budget Cuts today announced a town meeting at Erie City Hall next Wednesday, November 1st at 1 p.m. to discuss the impact of Federal Budget Cuts on Erie and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Proposed federal cuts include the elimination of all federal low income heating assistance, significant reductions of aid to local schools and job training programs, complete elimination of the summer jobs program, and the removal of federal regulations on nursing homes.

Cappabianca expressed his concern about proposed cuts in worker retraining programs. The dislocated worker program, the main federal program that deals with major layoffs and plant closings is slated to be cut by approximately 34% under the U.S. House Republican Budget. The dislocated worker program is anticipated to be the main job training program that will be used by former GE workers. At the same as announcing these hearings, Cappabianca expressed his dismay that the local Republican Congressman voted for these budget cuts on job training. Cappabianca is interested in hearing from representatives from individual citizens, and representatives from local hospitals, schools, and government agencies. People who would like to testify should call his office at 814-453-7639.

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HARRISBURG

TOWN MEETING

ON

GOVERNOR RIDGE'S PROPOSED DISMANTLEMENT OF THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT THE DISMANTLEMENT OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS?

ARE YOU CONCERNED THAT YOUR MUNICIPALITY WILL HAVE TO
NAVIGATE A DECENTRALIZED SYSTEM?

ARE YOU CONCERNED THAT SERVICES PROVIDED TO LOCAL
GOVERNMENTS WILL BE LESS EFFECTIVE WITH A WORKFORCE
REDUCTION FROM 224 TO APPROXIMATELY 90 EMPLOYEES WHO ARE
FAMILIAR WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICE?

ARE YOU HAVING A DIFFICULT TIME UNDERSTANDING THE JUSTIFICATION
FOR THE ELIMINATION OF A GENERALLY EFFECTIVE, RESPONSIVE
AGENCY?

THIS MEETING WILL GIVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK THESE AND OTHER
QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS AND TO LET YOUR FEELINGS BE KNOWN. A
REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE GOVERNORS OFFICE WILL BE PRESENT.

WHERE: ROOM 117, COUNTY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
ERIE COUNTY COURTHOUSE
140 WEST 6TH STREET
*USE 5TH STREET ENTRANCE
ERIE, PENNSYLVANIA 16501
(814) 451-6000

WHEN: THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 1996 (6:00 - 9:00 P.M.)

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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

PRESS RELEASE
February 6, 1996

State Representative Cappabianca Concerned that Ridge's Budget Doesn't Make Up for Education and Job Training Cuts

State Representative Italo S. Cappabianca today expressed concern about proposed state budget citing the combination of federal budget cuts and the freeze on basic education spending on the state level will mean reductions in education spending for Erie. Cappabianca, the Democratic Chairman of the House Committee that handles federal-state issues remarked, "this proposed state budget does not increase basic education funding to Erie one dime and it will not offset millions of dollars of federal spending cuts to Erie schools that will occur over the next few years."

Cappabianca, the first elected official in Pennsylvania to provide legislative information over the Internet, supports the Governor's proposal to spend \$40 million on computers statewide but he noted that new proposal would be significantly countered by federal education cuts of hundreds of millions of dollars across the state.

While the proposed budget declares that state spending will actually fall for the first time in more than twenty years, it accomplishes this by projecting \$600 million dollars in federal cuts without the state making any significant effort to restore these cuts.

For example, the proposed budget projects overall spending for job training development from \$371 million to \$253 million, a drop of \$118 million in just one year. These cuts are caused by projected federal budget cuts for job training of unemployed workers of close to \$118 million. Without state action, job training programs around the state may have 25 to 33% less funds to meet the needs of tens of thousands of Pennsylvanians affected by downsizing and corporate layoffs.

Ironically, this year's budget instead increases a separate job training program for people who already have jobs by \$7.5 million dollars for customized job training.

Cappabianca is concerned that these potential federal budget cuts and the unwillingness of the state to send any signal in the proposed budget that they would try to make up for these cuts.

"If job training is important, then we need to make up for these federal cuts," Cappabianca stated. In fact Cappabianca stated that job training programs in Pennsylvania

have already lost millions of dollars in federal funds in the last year, without any effort of state government so far to restore these cuts.

“Workers at GE that may lose their jobs or at any other company in Pennsylvania need to know that the Commonwealth will be there with effective job training programs,” Cappabianca explained. “If these federal cuts pass and we don’t respond in our state budget, there will not be job training available for every worker who needs it,” stated Cappabianca.

OFFICE OF DEMOCRATIC LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION

PA House of Representatives

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Jim Barnes (717) 787-7895

HARRISBURG, March 14 -- The state House unanimously has approved a resolution sponsored by Rep. Italo S. Cappabianca, D-Erie, urging the governor to extend a home heating assistance program for another 30 days past its scheduled expiration date March 15.

The resolution also urges Gov. Ridge to expend as much of the available Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program funds as necessary to meet the emergency needs of as many as 100,000 low-income households estimated to have fallen behind on their home heating bills during one of the worst winters in state history.

According to Cappabianca, many of the households with overdue bills could have their heating supplies legally terminated beginning April 1 unless they come up with the means to make payment.

Cappabianca, who has been warning against cutbacks in the LIHEAP program since before the winter's severity, said, "Surely, if there was ever a time when LIHEAP has proven to be necessary, it's now.

"Coming off the most severe winter in memory, and in the aftermath of devastating floods, many thousands of low-income Pennsylvanians are in dire need of its help. Cutting off LIHEAP now would not only be unwise. It would be cruelly negligent."

With as much as \$10 million to \$30 million remaining in the state's LIHEAP fund, much of it from federal sources, the governor is urged to continue the program past its scheduled March 15 expiration date for up to 30 additional days and to use the remaining funds as needed to meet the current emergency.

###jb/y

liheapad.002

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Jim Barnes (717) 787-7895

HARRISBURG, April 1 -- With the peak driving season just ahead, Rep. Italo S. Cappabianca wants to bring back a state program to monitor the price of gasoline in Pennsylvania and pass on the information to the public. Although the legislator claims the program has saved millions of dollars for consumers, it was abandoned a year ago as a budget-cutting measure.

Cappabianca, D-Erie, is preparing legislation authorizing the consumer advocate in the Attorney General's Office to collect and report gasoline and home heating oil prices on a weekly basis or at least twice a month on paper or via the Internet.

The legislator said the information helps to empower consumers by enabling them to determine if the price they pay for fuel is out of line with the rest of the state.

"People aren't going to drive to another region of the state for gasoline, but it gives them a factual basis to express their displeasure if their local prices are too high," said Cappabianca.

"And it makes it possible for public officials and the media to engage in a little 'jawboning' in support of consumers. The corporations that control the price and movement of these essential commodities don't like to be caught in a situation of overpricing or the appearance of it."

Gasoline and heating oil prices were collected in Pennsylvania from 1990 to 1995 by the state Energy Office, and the information was widely distributed throughout the Commonwealth. Now that the price data no longer is available, most consumers have no knowledge of what is being charged for the same product in other areas of the state, Cappabianca observed.

In the months before the data was eliminated, Cappabianca used it to document a pattern of excessive gas prices in Erie ranging from 7 cents to 10 cents a gallon more than the state average. After the legislator asked the state to investigate the matter, the price in Erie dropped to the lowest level in the state and remained there for 16 consecutive weeks.

"Neither I nor anyone else could raise this question again without the necessary information. Not having this policing mechanism means consumers are in the dark and suppliers can pretty much charge whatever the market will bear." ###jb/k w:\releases\prices.002

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Contact: Jim Barnes (717) 787-7895

Harrisburg, April 3 -- In response to local concerns expressed at a Public Utility Commission hearing on natural gas prices in Erie last week, Rep. Italo S. Cappabianca will ask the legislature to examine whether the state's utilities should be providing more Pennsylvania-produced gas to their customers.

"In the course of last week's hearing on NFG's requested energy cost rate increase, an important question was raised concerning the use of locally produced, Pennsylvania natural gas as a cost-saving measure for Erie homeowners and businesses," Cappabianca said.

"This is a very good suggestion indeed, and one that deserves closer examination than it received at the hearing. As a follow-up to the suggestion, I am preparing a resolution asking the House Consumer Affairs Committee to hold a hearing or hearings on the use of local natural gas supplies by Pennsylvania's public utilities."

The resolution will be introduced on the day the House returns from its primary election recess, said Cappabianca. It proposes that the committee hold hearings on the desirability of increasing the use of state-produced natural gas in terms of its cost, capability and reliability and that the committee take testimony from the public utility industry, natural gas producers, the PUC, consumer representatives, government officials, organizations and the general public. A report would be required within 120 days after the hearings begin.

"Upon initial consideration, it would appear that the use of this valuable resource would benefit the northwest region's economy by increasing competition and promoting jobs. There may be sound and sensible reasons why it cannot be done, but let's not ignore the suggestion. Let's find out and resolve the question to the satisfaction of business and consumers alike," Cappabianca concluded.

###jb/b

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Jim Barnes (717) 787-7895

HARRISBURG, April 16 -- State Rep. Italo S. Cappabianca today announced Pennsylvania will receive some \$12.3 million in federal home heating funds released from Washington on Friday and urged that the funds be used immediately to help low-income families recover financially from the recent severe winter.

Cappabianca, D-Erie, said the funds represent Pennsylvania's share of a \$180 million federal allocation announced by President Clinton late last week. The state concluded its heating assistance program in mid-March, and utilities were permitted to terminate service to households in arrears on their payments beginning April 1.

After New York state, Pennsylvania will receive the second-largest portion of this new round of federal funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program with a requirement that the funds must be used before Sept. 30.

At Cappabianca's urging, the state House last month passed a unanimous resolution (H.R. 303) prior to the shutdown calling on the Commonwealth to continue the program until April 15.

"Had my resolution been implemented, the program would still be in operation, and these additional federal funds could be channeled immediately to those in need," Cappabianca said while estimating that as many as 100,000 households in the state are behind in payments after one of the most severe winters in state history.

"Regrettably, the resolution was ignored, and I am now asking for the program to be reinstated so that people are not needlessly subjected to further anguish and indignities."

Some utilities, including major suppliers in the Erie area, have delayed service terminations until this week, Cappabianca said adding, "We must encourage the governor now to act quickly."

Among the state's 67 counties, Erie experienced one of the largest cutbacks in home heating assistance from last year -- a 46 percent reduction, according to Department of Public Welfare statistics released on March 29.

###jb/k

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Jim Barnes (717) 787-7895

HARRISBURG, May 9 -- Three lawmakers from Erie County plan to introduce a bill to correct what they call "a major oversight" in a newly enacted anti-crime bill scheduled to take effect next month.

The need for a correction was brought to the attention of Reps. Italo S. Cappabianca, Linda Bebko-Jones and Tom Scrimenti during a recent public hearing they held in Erie focusing on the legislature's special session on crime.

The new law (Act 11 of 1995) mandates that juvenile hearings must be open to the public starting June 6. The representatives point out that the law requires consent of the alleged perpetrator for a hearing to be closed.

"In the case of a juvenile victim of sexual assault, the victim would have to get the permission of his or her attacker to close the hearing to the public," said Cappabianca.

"It is our intention that corrective legislation should let the judge close the hearing without the defendant's consent, and that the legislation should be passed before June 6."

The legislators are proposing three additional crime bills as a result of their April 20 hearing, in which they received input on crime issues from local citizens, law enforcement officials and juvenile justice administrators.

-more-

One of the bills, sponsored by Bebko-Jones, would clarify a state law authorizing courts to issue protection from abuse orders. Such orders are routinely issued against adult offenders, but some courts have been reluctant to apply the orders against juveniles, claiming they are not covered by existing legislation.

"The bill would make it uniformly understood that juveniles can be barred from abusive actions, such as stalking a girlfriend or threatening family members, in the same manner as adults," said Bebko-Jones.

A bill sponsored by Scrimenti would extend the services of school-based probation officers to youngsters who are participating in juvenile diversion programs for first-time, non-violent offenders who have not been convicted of a serious juvenile offense. Currently, school-based probation officers work only with convicted juveniles.

"The juvenile diversion program was created to prevent young people from graduating to serious crime after they've committed anti-social acts," said Scrimenti. "That goal of prevention can be aided by the resources of school-based probation workers."

A fourth bill would allow the prosecution of 17-year-olds in adult court if they are charged with a felony and would help to reduce the growing number of inmates in juvenile detention facilities. Cappabianca said it would free up existing detention spaces for youngsters with a better chance of rehabilitation without expanding present juvenile facilities.

###jb/b

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HARRISBURG, May 14 -- In exchange for donating computer equipment to public and private schools and libraries, businesses would be eligible for up to \$800,000 in state tax credits, under a proposal to be presented to the House tomorrow by state Rep. Italo S. Cappabianca.

Cappabianca, D-Erie, will offer the plan in the form of an amendment to the state's Neighborhood Assistance Program which encourages business contributions to a variety of public service activities, including community housing, crime prevention and job training programs. A bill (H.B. 2117) to expand the Neighborhood Assistance Program and increase its funding is scheduled to be taken up by the House on Wednesday.

Because the tax credits are offered on the basis of a 50-cent credit for every dollar donated, by offering half a million dollars for computer donations Cappabianca's tax credit could put up to \$1 million of equipment in the state's classrooms. In addition to \$500,000 for school donations, the proposal provides \$200,000 of tax credits for computer donations to libraries and a financial incentive -- up to \$100,000 for contributions to a nonprofit agency that would develop and implement a statewide plan to encourage donations of computers to schools and libraries.

Cappabianca said his proposal would be especially attractive as a way for the state to help private and parochial schools obtain computer equipment for their students.

"Neither the private nor the parochial schools of the state could independently apply for aid under the governor's \$40 million 'Link-to-Learn' proposal for computer technology in education," said the Erie legislator. "My program would provide a start in that direction and a source of funds that could supplement private contributions from within the community."

Cappabianca said the tax credit could also be an incentive for businesses to donate to schools their used computer equipment which could be upgraded to standard performance levels at a cost of less than \$100 per unit.

"For a school that doesn't have the money for 'all the bells and whistles,' that could be a reasonable way to obtain equipment," he said.

Cappabianca said his proposal evolved from his recent experience encouraging local businesses to donate computer equipment to the Erie County library system.

"Having seen firsthand how useful this equipment can be to underfunded public service agencies and how rapidly it is replaced by companies trying to stay on the leading edge of information technology, it seemed like a natural winner," he added.

The first Pennsylvania legislator to establish a home page on the Internet, Cappabianca has been in the forefront of legislative efforts to promote public access to electronic information services. In the space of almost a year, he reports, users have downloaded more than 100,000 files from his website, including copies of legislation, schedules of House activities, copies of the state Constitution and other historic and legal documents, as well as state civil service job information.

###jb/k

computers.002

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HARRISBURG, Aug. 8 -- State Rep. Italo S. Cappabianca today praised the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development for awarding a \$208,000 low-interest loan to support a major expansion at an Erie company.

The loan, announced by Gov. Tom Ridge, will enable American Tinning and Galvanizing, 552 W. 12th St., to enlarge an existing building by 10,780 square feet.

The company specializes in metal finishing such as hot dip galvanizing, electroplating and aluminum anodizing. With an estimated total cost of \$520,000, the project is expected to retain 56 jobs and create 18 others.

The loan was made through the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority under a program that dates back to the 1950s.

"PIDA was one of the pioneer industrial development programs in Pennsylvania and the model for many similar programs now operating in states throughout the nation," said Cappabianca. "It is still the state's primary economic development tool and one that has benefited Erie to the tune of millions of dollars in loans like the latest one made to American Tinning and Galvanizing Company."

###jb/b

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Jim Barnes (717) 787-7895

Ridge Asked to Convene Computers-in-Schools Summit,
Develop Statewide Volunteer Day to Wire Pennsylvania's Schools

HARRISBURG, Sept. 22 -- The first Pennsylvania legislator on the Internet, Rep. Italo S. Cappabianca requested Gov. Tom Ridge and Education Secretary Eugene Hickock today to convene a *Computer-in-Schools Summit* in the next 30 days.

The purpose of this summit would be to design and implement a statewide volunteer day that would combine private sector donations of supplies and technical assistance with volunteer labor to help wire Pennsylvania's 5,300 schools.

"Through their leadership on this idea, Governor Ridge and Secretary Hickock could help our local public and private schools move ahead with this new technology with little public cost," Cappabianca said.

"Fifty years ago, Pennsylvania was the home of the first electronic computer. Today we should act to ensure that our children can compete in the next century."

The statewide summit should include Pennsylvania's high-tech and telecommunication companies, statewide education organizations, local school district officials, parent-teacher groups, and union organizations, Cappabianca said.

His proposal was prompted by a recent volunteer initiative by labor unions and local companies in Erie that recently installed phone lines in Erie's Veterans Center, one of the first Veteran's Centers in the country where hospital patients now have their own bedside private phones.

Cappabianca has been developing this project since last June, but President Clinton's endorsement of a similar California project Thursday helped spur his request to Ridge. In the California initiative, eight to 10 volunteers are scheduled to arrive at each of California's 12,000 schools on March 9, 1996 to help lay high-speed telephone cable.

People who want to volunteer on this project should e-mail their interest to Cappabianca at italo@moose.erie.net.

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Office of Democratic Legislative Information
G-01, South Office Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0028

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Jim Barnes (717) 787-7895

HARRISBURG, Oct. 18 -- Stopping domestic abuse at its beginnings is the message sent through an amendment proposed by Erie Democrats and passed by the House. The proposal first surfaced at a hearing on crime in Erie and was brought back to the legislature by Reps. Italo S. Cappabianca, Linda Bebko-Jones and Tom Scrimenti.

Juveniles who violate protection from abuse orders would face adult courts and adult prisons for the first time under the proposal which was attached to a bill strengthening criminal penalties against violent crime.

To support their anti-crime initiative and prevent its being stripped from the bill by the state Senate, the Erie legislators are asking local citizens to report to them instances of assaults committed by teenagers against family members, girl friends or others that might be covered by domestic violence laws.

A major thrust of the Erie crime package authorizes courts to issue protection from abuse orders against juveniles for actions that injure or threaten a parent or other family member or a partner in a relationship such as a girlfriend. The idea was proposed last April during a public hearing the legislators held in Erie to assess the progress of the legislature's special session on crime.

The hearing also led to an amendment passed yesterday allowing juvenile hearings to be closed to the public if their subject matter would violate the privacy rights of innocent victims and another amendment to study expansion of the school-based probation officer program.

The bill containing the amendments (S.B. 100) is one that is intended to move dangerous juveniles, 15 years or older, into the adult criminal justice system.

Fearing that the Erie members' amendments might be deleted from the bill when it returns to the Senate, Cappabianca issued a public statement urging local residents to inform their legislators of instances of violent juvenile crime that might have been prevented by a court order prohibiting contact between the perpetrator and the victim.

"The opponents of this amendment have argued that violations of protection orders are not violent crimes," said Cappabianca. "We say domestic violence by juveniles is real, it was reported to us by juvenile authorities at our Erie crime hearing, and it needs to be included in any legislation that claims to address the growing problem of juvenile violence."

Reports of these incidents may be conveyed to the legislators at 453-7639, (Rep. Cappabianca), 459-1949 (Rep. Bebko-Jones) or 725-8664 (Rep. Scrimenti).
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HARRISBURG, Nov. 20 -- The city of Erie would get a financial booster shot for dog law enforcement under an amendment proposed by Rep. Italo S. Cappabianca and approved by the House on Tuesday.

Cappabianca's proposal would permit Erie and other third-class cities in Pennsylvania to retain all of the revenues collected within their borders from dog license sales and apply the revenues to their own dog law enforcement programs. Under existing law, counties must remit all but 50 cents of each license fee to Harrisburg where the funds are used to operate a statewide dog law program.

The Erie legislator said his amendment responds to a request from Erie Mayor Joyce Savocchio for the same arrangement granted to the cities of Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Scranton, which are permitted to keep their license revenues to cover the cost of their own programs.

"This is not a criticism of the state, but the fact is the state dog law enforcement office has to handle a multicounty area in the northwest, and its resources are strained to the limit," said Cappabianca.

The city currently contracts with a private agency for certain services such as capturing stray dogs, but the revenue it derives from license sales within the city is not enough to cover the contract's costs.

"It's important to note that this legislation allows, but does not require, cities of the third class to adopt the proposed fee arrangement," Cappabianca said. "That will be a matter for each municipality to determine based on its own circumstances."

The amendment was approved to a measure (H.B. 2702) containing broad provisions affecting the state dog law enforcement program. It passed the House by a 135-63 vote and will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HARRISBURG, Dec. 6 -- State Rep. Italo Cappabianca, D-Erie, today announced that more people will be eligible to receive assistance with their home heating bills this winter.

Cappabianca said income guidelines have been raised in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, which helps pay winter heating bills and covers heating emergencies.

Income guidelines were raised from 130 percent of the federal poverty level to 150 percent. That means a one-person household could earn \$9,930 to be eligible for the program. For each additional person in the household, the income limit increases by \$3,390.

The expansion of the LIHEAP program will be funded by a \$26 million federal appropriation. The federally funded program is administered by the state Department of Public Welfare.

"Because of joblessness and other lingering effects of the national recession, more people are likely to be in need of home heating assistance this winter," said Cappabianca. "It's a timely and welcome development that the eligibility limits have been raised, especially if the weather suddenly turns harsh and people need emergency heating help."

Through the program, cash grants are usually paid directly to the recipient's utility or fuel company. The crisis payment portion of the program provides funds within 24 hours -- 18 hours if the condition is life threatening -- to resolve emergency situations, such as repairing furnaces or broken pipes.

Under the expanded eligibility, the Welfare Department expects to provide LIHEAP cash grants to about 394,000 households and crisis grants to 127,000 households.

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House of Representatives

December 16, 1996 COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
For Immediate Release HARRISBURG
717-787-4358

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Cappabianca Congratulates Ridge Administration for "Build PEN" Initiative

Fifteen months ago, State Representative Italo S. Cappabianca (D-Erie) asked the state government to organize a "summit" within 30 days to develop a public/private partnership to help wire Pennsylvania schools. (1995 letter, press release & response are attached) Today, State Representative Italo S. Cappabianca congratulated the Ridge Administration for developing the "Build PEN" project but asked the Administration to add three additional parts to their program.

Cappabianca suggests the following additions to the Build PEN plan:

- * Technology Open Houses at local schools in February so parents and businessmen can learn about existing computer technology before they start upgrading the wiring.

- * Four or five regional summits about the project to be held in January or February. Cappabianca believes that regional summits would allow small and medium size businesses to learn about the Build Pen plan and let them join AT&T, Bell Atlantic and AMP in supporting their local schools.

* Formation and development of used computer banks and state programs to pay for upgrading of donated computers. Cappabianca believes that schools don't just need wiring, they also need computers, citing one local private school that still uses Apple IIE computers, but has not apparently received any new state government technology funds. "As we go through this program, we should develop formal and informal relations to get used computers from the private sector to our local private and public schools" Cappabianca stated. Cappabianca organized the donation of several used computers from the local GE plant to the Erie County Public library system. These machines were upgraded with (donated) faster chips, (donated) modems and (donated) software. Cappabianca also paid for five libraries' Internet service from ErieNet, a local Internet provider who offered reduced prices.

State Representative Italo S. Cappabianca (D-Erie) was the first member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives to have a home page and the first member of the Pennsylvania House or Senate to post legislative calendars and bill texts on the Internet.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Cappabianca Praises Clinton for Releasing Heating Funds;
Urges Ridge to Expand Program**

HARRISBURG, Dec. 18 -- State Rep. Italo S. Cappabianca, who led Democrats' efforts in Harrisburg last week to begin state funding for winter heating assistance, today praised President Clinton for releasing \$578 million to the states on Sunday for low-income heating programs.

The effort to use state funds for heat assistance was blocked last week when Cappabianca's amendment to appropriate the aid was defeated in the House.

Cappabianca praised Clinton's leadership and courage for ordering that federal funds be made available to the states on an advanced schedule because of the earlier than anticipated onset of winter.

"Up to 200,000 Pennsylvania families will have a warm Christmas and holidays thanks to President Clinton," Cappabianca observed.

The Erie lawmaker called on Governor Ridge to immediately restart portions of the winter heating assistance program that were shut down because of the shortfall of federal funds. Before the government shutdown, Pennsylvania had about \$18 million of heating aid from this year's federal budget and from savings from last year's program. From this new allocation, Cappabianca expects that Pennsylvania will receive another \$30 to \$40 million.

Even with this new assistance, Cappabianca believes that Pennsylvania will fall at least one-third below last year's funding of \$88 million and 450,000 heating grants. That is why the ranking Democrat on the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee is continuing his fight for state funds for heating assistance.

The state currently has over \$100 million in a "rainy day" fund, another \$57 million that is scheduled to be put in the rainy day fund when the legislature returns in January, and \$40 to \$50 million put in the budget for the governor's proposed school voucher proposal that has not passed the legislature.

In appreciation for the president's action, Cappabianca invited Clinton to come to Pennsylvania and meet with the working families who receive this assistance and to visit Erie, a stop on then presidential-candidate Clinton's 1992 bus tour.

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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

DECEMBER 26, 1996

FOR MORE INFO CALL: 717-787-4358

With tax forms on the way State Rep. Cappabianca suggests how Pennsylvanians can help save on their federal taxes while helping their local schools or non-profits

Donate your used computer before December 31st

As Internal Revenue Service tax forms start to arrive in households across Pennsylvania, State Representative Italo S. Cappabianca (D-Erie) suggests one way to lower your taxes; donating your used computer to a local non-profit, school or library before December 31st. Cappabianca, the first State Representative on the Internet, has already coordinated the donation of several computers to libraries.

If a person itemizes their deductions, they may deduct the fair market value of the donated computer, monitor or printer from their taxable income on their federal income form. A receipt from the organization is required if the claimed value of the donation exceeds \$250. Businesses may also be able to take federal tax deductions for donations, though the amount varies if the company manufactures computers or just uses them in their offices. Furthermore,

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depreciation can also reduce the value of the deduction.

Cappabianca points out that while some used computers, like dedicated word processors or mainframe terminals may not be very useful for non-profits and schools, many PC's powered by 386 or 486 processors can be upgraded to faster chips. Donated Apple computers are also useful, Cappabianca stated, because of their widespread use in schools.

Finding a school or non-profit to take donations before December 31st may be somewhat difficult because of holiday vacations. However Representative Italo S. Cappabianca suggests four different ways to find a non-profit or a school. First, the representative suggested a national web site that lists different computer recyclers:

http://www.microweb.com/pepsite/Recycle/recycle_index.html

From this home page, you can select national groups that recycle computers or look at the Pennsylvania page to find a group in your area.

In different parts of Pennsylvania there are specific groups that may take equipment. Cappabianca suggested donating computers to your area's local Goodwill Industries

(MORE- PAGE 2 OF 4)

(locate their number in your phone book). Goodwill Industries in Harrisburg (717)232-1831 resells the equipment to support its important charity programs. Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh (412) 481-9049, also distributes them to non-profit organizations and low income families. In the Philadelphia area, you can call Nonprofit Technology Resources at 215-686-5923 and leave a message describing the equipment you wish to donate. Because of limited staff, many of these groups will ask you to drop off equipment. In State College, Penn State students have an organization called SCROUNGE (Student Computer Recycling Student Computer Recycling to Offer Underrepresented Groups in Education) that accepts computers and related equipment from companies and individuals in Pennsylvania and redistributes these to private and public schools ((814) 863-7688). However because of the winter break they may not be available before the end of the year.

A third way to find a group would be to go a local public, private or parochial school, library and/or church and synagogue. Unfortunately, some of these organizations may not be open or ready to accept donations, however they may suggest other non-profit charitable programs. Finally, you can email Representative Cappabianca's office at

(MORE- PAGE 3 OF 4)

italo@erie.net with your name, email address, city and type of computer you would like to donate and his office will attempt to match you with an organization.

Of course, with December 31st just days away, it may not be possible to make every electronic match before the end of the year, but computers donated on or after January 1st are still eligible for tax deductions against 1997 income. Further, Cappabianca pointed out the logic of donating a computer in January, because the earlier you donate a computer, the higher fair market value or value of the federal tax deduction it has (at least in the current era of falling computer prices.)