

Rep. Tangretti Remarks on Girl Scouts

March 2, 1991

5 minutes

(Usual Greetings and Acknowledgements)

It's quite an honor for me to participate in this discussion along with my fellow panel members who are recognized for their community leadership in education, religion, minority relations, business, government and human services.

It's an honor also to be able to contribute to the work of one of the finest volunteer organizations in the country -- the Girl Scouts.

Our government's approach to volunteerism and volunteer organizations has always seemed to me to be somewhat of a paradox.

From the sector of politics and government there seems to pour forth an endless stream of laudatory rhetoric for volunteerism, but little in the way of actual programs and direct government assistance.

In some ways that seems unfair. But then, perhaps that's because if government became too much involved in volunteerism it might defeat the whole purpose.

It would then no longer be a purely volunteer effort with all the good that means for personal involvement, flexibility and so forth.

Volunteerism might then easily slide into just another government program and lose the very personal spirit that is its unique contribution to our society.

I would like to see government do more to encourage and support volunteerism, but always with the understanding that there is a line that cannot be crossed without threatening the very spirit and vitality of that which we want to support and preserve.

One of the better things the legislature has done in recent years was the 1989 law that provided liability protection to volunteers in public service. Act 179 of 1989.

Under that measure, which was supported by the Girl Scout organization, volunteers are protected from civil liability unless their conduct was clearly negligent or they knew it would create a substantial risk of actual harm to property or to another person.

This is a prime example of how government can encourage volunteerism without becoming actively involved in the activities and operations of volunteer groups, and risk interfering in their affairs.

I think we need to look at more opportunities of this kind...legal protections, incentives of various kinds, but not direct involvement.

On women's and children's issues, you'll be happy to know that women's and children's programs are being substantially expanded while most other state programs are being capped and even cut in the budget recently proposed by the governor.

Fudning for county programs that serve abused, neglected and delinquent children would be increased by \$42 billion -- a 22 percent increase.

The funding request for county child welfare would total \$235 million -- a 96 percent increase over the past five years.

There's a proposed \$37.1 million in state funds to subsidize day care for 29,245 children.

There's \$39 million in federal funds to serve more disadvantaged children whose families are either impoverished or struggling on low incomes.

In addition, \$9.8 million in state funds will leverage \$12.8 million in federal funds for Pennsylvania's new At-Risk child Care program -- for children whose families are "at risk" of becoming dependent on public assistance.

The proposed budget also calls for a 13 percent increase to fund the Women's Infants and Children's Nutrition program at \$17 million for the coming year. The increase will allow an additional 3,500 women and children to receive services each month.

Also important to children, House Democrats have recently introduced legislation to counter a dramatic increase in childhood diseases, including measles, mumps and whooping cough.

The legislation would require all health insurance programs in Pennsylvania to cover childhood immunizations against the diseases, which have increased as much as ten-fold in the past five years.

While federal and state medical assistance programs already provide immunization services for the most needy children, many private health insurance plans do not cover immunization, leaving many children -- including those of working parents -- unprotected.

Finally, I have no specific legislative recommendations for the long-term goals of the Girl Scouts.

I can only make some general observations such as I did earlier in recommending further efforts to support and encourage volunteerism while avoiding direct government involvement.

The other thought I would offer to you involves fiscal and cost considerations.

As you know, this is a particularly tight budget situation we're facing in state government.

Not only is there a recession, but there is overwhelming public resistance to the T-word, and you know what that means.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Office of Democratic Legislative Information
G-05, South Office Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0028

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Timothy W. Potts (717) 787-7895

HARRISBURG, Feb. 12 -- House Majority Leader H. William DeWeese, D-Greene, today introduced legislation intended to counter a dramatic increase in childhood diseases including measles, mumps, and pertussis, also known as whooping cough.

The legislation would require all health insurance programs in Pennsylvania to cover childhood immunizations against the diseases, which have increased as much as ten-fold in the past five years.

DeWeese said that while federal and state medical assistance programs already provide immunization services for the most needy children, many private health insurance plans do not cover immunization, leaving the children of working parents unprotected.

"The House Democratic Caucus is concerned that the middle class and the working poor are finding it more and more difficult to afford proper health care generally and to afford immunizations in particular," DeWeese said.

He said that from 1982 to 1990, the wholesale cost to private physicians for the vaccines necessary for full child immunization have jumped from \$23 to at least \$123, an increase of 535 percent in eight years.

"As a result, families are overburdening public health facilities and are delaying immunizations, sometimes with tragic consequences," DeWeese said.

Three dozen medical and child welfare organizations are supporting

(MORE)

the proposal, including ten groups whose leaders attended the press conference.

Dr. Alan Kohrt, a pediatrician in rural northeastern Pennsylvania and immediate past president of the Pennsylvania Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics, described the decrease in the number of children immunized against childhood diseases as "a bomb waiting to go off."

Kohrt said that waiting lists at public health clinics where he practices are three months long, and between one-fourth and one-half of all Pennsylvania children under age two are not fully immunized. He said that DeWeese's legislation would relieve the burden on public health facilities, enabling them to treat children sooner who are not covered by private insurance or medical assistance.

"With the increasing numbers of children in child care, epidemics can spread rapidly in the preschool age group," Kohrt said.

"In Philadelphia and other areas of the state, the bomb has already exploded. The epidemics are here."

Kohrt said that the statewide number of measles cases rose from three in 1983 to 552 in 1990. Philadelphia alone had 258 cases in 1990 including one death, the first deaths from measles in Philadelphia since 1970. There have been three more deaths since January 1 of this year.

Other statistics presented at the press conference showed that cases of mumps increased from a low of 56 in 1984 to 142 in 1990. Cases of pertussis increased from a low of 35 in 1981 to 210 in 1990.

In 1989 in Pennsylvania, the three diseases totaled 278 cases which required hospital treatment for children. Based on average costs

This is not only in Pennsylvania, but nationwide. People just don't want to hear the word taxes.

As you develop your goals for the near term, you'd be wise to keep that in mind.

Any proposals that bear substantial costs are going to face rough going in the state legislature, or anywhere else for that matter.

Any proposals that can accomplish a useful purpose with minimal costs, or a very modest price tag, are much more likely to be embraced and acted upon.

And with that bit of advice, I'll close my remarks.

Education Goals by Year 2000

- Readiness ~~to~~ come to school
- School completion - should increase by 90% -
- Student achievement & citizenship - (Penn Serue)
- Math & Science - U.S. should lead world
- Adult literacy & life long learners - eliminate illiteracy
- Self-discipline and drug-free schools -

Youth Services - brought together groups all involved with youth -

- need for more communication
- help to identify children "at risk"

Winning should be less emphasized in scholastic sports - perhaps

"at Risk Families" -
parenting skills

NEWS RELEASE

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
Office of the Governor
Commonwealth News Bureau
Room 603, Capitol
Harrisburg, PA 17120

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE AT
11:30 A.M. WEDNESDAY, FEB. 6

CONTACT: Frank Lynch
Deputy Press Secretary
(717) 783-1116

GOV. CASEY PROPOSES CHILD WELFARE REFORM PLAN, INCREASED AID
FOR DAY CARE, ABUSED CHILDREN AND LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

HARRISBURG (Feb. 6) -- Gov. Robert P. Casey today proposed increased state investment in programs for children, saying "the wisest investment we can make in our future is in caring for our children from the very dawn of life."

The governor proposed a \$41.8 million -- or 22 percent -- increase in funding for county programs that serve abused, neglected and delinquent children. The funding is tied to a new "needs based" payment system that makes sure every child projected to need services receives them as long as care is consistent with state standards.

Gov. Casey also proposed increases in other programs, including Healthy Beginnings, which provides prenatal and preventive health care to low-income families; the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition program and day care services.

Meanwhile, he detailed stringent measures to contain costs in medical assistance programs. The governor's plan will save the Commonwealth at least \$216 million next fiscal year.

"If we don't put the brakes on now, the cost of medical assistance will jeopardize the financial stability of the Commonwealth," Gov. Casey said. "Without your action, next year's medical assistance price tag will soar to almost

\$2 billion -- consuming nearly one-fifth of the entire budget that's on your desks this morning."

CHILD WELFARE NEEDS-BASED BUDGET

Gov. Casey's funding request for county child welfare brings the state's commitment to \$235 million. This represents a 96 percent increase during the five years of his administration, compared with a 10 percent reduction in funding during the three preceding years.

The proposal put forth by the governor begins to emphasize greater use of services that support families and reunification and less dependency on services outside the home that tend to keep families apart. At the same time it works to contain costs.

The needs-based budgeting system is tied to the estimated number of abused, neglected and delinquent children the counties will serve in the upcoming year.

The plan establishes a maximum expenditure the state will pay per child by category of service. Currently the state reimburses without regard to cost per child.

As an incentive to have more children placed in permanent homes, the budget calls for the state to pay counties the full cost of adoption services. Currently, the state pays 80 percent and the counties pay 20 percent.

In addition, the budget proposes a pilot program, funded at \$500,000 next year, to speed the placement of children in permanent homes. That program will be operated in several counties, and the counties will be determined by a bid process.

Under the proposed budget, the Department of Public Welfare will develop and implement a common, automated data reporting

system to meet the needs of the revised funding mechanism. The department also will tighten fiscal regulations and audit standards to improve accountability and assist counties in the development of their service plans.

CHILD CARE

Over the past four years, Pennsylvania has increased its funding for day care services by more than 51 percent.

In the new budget, Gov. Casey proposed \$37.1 million in state funds to subsidize day care for 29,245 children. He also proposed to boost Pennsylvania's commitment even further with \$39 million in federal funds to serve more disadvantaged children whose families are either impoverished or struggling on low incomes.

Of the \$39 million, \$26.2 million in federal block funds will help Pennsylvania expand its comprehensive child care system. The funds will increase the number of children able to have access to quality child care by 3,480.

In addition, \$9.8 million in state funds will leverage \$12.8 million in federal funds for Pennsylvania's new At-Risk Child Care program. It will provide child care services to more than 3,416 children whose families are "at risk" of becoming dependent on public assistance.

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE COST CONTAINMENT

Gov. Casey said his proposals to "rein in medical assistance costs" will save Pennsylvania at least \$216 million next fiscal year.

The governor noted that skyrocketing medical assistance costs have been fueled by several factors. The federal

government has expanded eligibility requirements for programs the state is required to pay for, without a corresponding increase in federal funds. Also, the national recession has caused an increase in the demand for services funded by medical assistance, and health care costs have soared.

Two weeks ago, Gov. Casey announced an agreement with hospitals on a pooled reimbursement system that will save Pennsylvania \$110 million this fiscal year and \$100 million in 1991-92. The state is currently negotiating with nursing homes on a similar agreement that will save the state \$35 million.

Other examples of medical assistance cost-containment measures, and the amount they will save next fiscal year, include:

Requiring drug companies to remit a rebate for drugs purchased through the program (\$19.3 million); increasing the amount medical assistance clients must pay for prescriptions -- recipient co-pay -- from 50 cents to \$1 (\$1.6 million); paying private psychiatric hospitals and units according to established group ceilings similar to the current nursing home payment system (\$7.8 million); limiting certain nursing home ceilings to a fixed percentile (\$8.1 million).

OTHER PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

"We'll also continue to expand our historic investment in the programs which help our children grow up healthy and strong, well-nourished and well-educated," Gov. Casey said.

Noting that he was the first Pennsylvania governor to put state dollars into the Women, Infant and Children (WIC) nutrition program, Gov. Casey proposed a 13 percent increase to fund the

program at \$17 million in 1991-92. The increase will allow an additional 3,500 women and children to receive services each month.

Other programs include:

-- An additional \$6.6 million in the Healthy Beginnings program and increasing the age limit for eligible children from age 6 to age 8. The funding increase will open the door to medical care for 32,000 additional poor, pregnant women and young children -- bringing the program to a total of 150,000 people across the state.

-- More than \$54 million, a 21 percent increase, for early intervention programs operated by the departments of Public Welfare and Education. The programs will help 22,000 young children who have developmental problems, so that their chances of living independent and productive lives is enhanced.

-- \$11.9 million for food services in elementary and secondary schools. These funds will offset the cost of nearly 14 million breakfasts and more than 175 million lunches to be served by schools during 1991-92.

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1991



State Representative

Bob Flick



A Report to the People of the 167th Legislative District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 18, 1989

HARRISBURG -- With a stroke of his pen, Gov. Robert P. Casey has signed into law Rep. Bob Flick's legislation to provide increased liability protection to volunteers in public service.

In ceremonies at the Capitol, Casey put his signature on Senate Bill 1304, which Flick had successfully amended on the House floor to include his volunteer proposal. It became Act 179 of 1988.

"The new act would aid all those volunteers who perform public services for all Pennsylvanians without pay, and often without thanks," Flick said. "Together they represent the spirit of America, people helping people for the good of our society and not for any personal gain."

Flick noted that there had been a real need to protect volunteers from frivolous lawsuits in order to avoid a curtailment of volunteer participation and public service programs.

That concern was expressed in a letter from the United Way of Pennsylvania to the governor, urging him to sign SB 1304 into law. In the letter, United Way President Juliet C. Rowland wrote, "In recent years, volunteers have become increasingly worried about the potential for lawsuits. That concern coupled with the rising cost of liability insurance has become a deterrent to volunteer service."

Under the act, a volunteer in public service is defined as a person, who without compensation, renders public services for a non-profit organization as

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described in the Internal Revenue Code, Sections 501 (C) (3) or (4), or for a Commonwealth or local government agency conducting organized public service programs or projects.

Under Flick's measure, such volunteers are protected from civil liability unless their conduct "falls substantially below the standards generally practiced and accepted in like circumstances" and unless they knew or had reason to know that their conduct "created a substantial risk of actual harm to the person or property of another." The act also makes it clear that "it shall be insufficient to impose liability to establish only that the conduct of such person fell below ordinary standards of care."

Flick said the language in Act 179 tracks that of Act 57 of 1986. That was Flick's proposal which provided increased liability protection to volunteers in youth sports organizations.

"Act 179 fulfills the commitment I made to volunteers in 1986 when we worked together on Act 57. It became clear at that time that liability protection needed to be expanded beyond youth sports organizations and we have now succeeded in that endeavor," Flick said.

"The governor's signature is the culmination of two years of hard work by many people. I would like to publicly thank the many volunteers and the volunteer organizations who worked tirelessly to achieve passage of this legislation."

Flick said that group includes the United Way, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, Junior Leagues, and many local school districts and municipalities.

The enactment of SB 1304 was met with enthusiasm by volunteer organizations. In a letter to Flick, United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania President Raymond K.

Dentworth Jr. wrote: "Through your efforts in drafting and maneuvering House Bill 1405, and ultimately crafting the compromise language that enabled SB 1304 to pass both houses unanimously, you have once again proven yourself to be an able legislator and a true friend to the voluntary sector."

In a similar vein, Robert D. Griffith, executive director of the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society, Inc., wrote to Flick: "Your efforts have resulted in a significantly better liability situation for the many volunteers who support public service programs throughout the Commonwealth. I personally know recreation and park volunteers who have been anxiously awaiting the passage of this legislation.

"As we well know, getting liability-related legislation through the General Assembly is no small task. Your success with this legislation and the previous youth sports legislation attests to your persistence."

Flick commented, "Volunteers in public service, who make such a huge commitment to their fellow citizens, richly deserve the commitment we have made to them in Act 179. We could not have afforded to take the chance that the volunteer services which do so much for others would have been interrupted."

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*Accepted
2/20/91*

*To -
Make a copy for
me to take back to Harris
for research - please tell them
when they call ok if they really
wanted me -*

3/2/91



GIRL SCOUTS

**Westmoreland
Girl Scout Council Inc.**
329 West Otterman Street
Greensburg, PA. 15601
(412) 834-9450

February 13, 1991

Representative Thomas Tangretti
327 S. Main St.
Greensburg, PA 15601

Dear Representative Tangretti,

As part of its strategic planning for the future, Westmoreland Girl Scout Council is in the process of formulating its corporate goals. These goals will determine our direction for the next six years.

Guided by the democratic process, we are bringing together a task group of approximately fifty Girl Scout adults for a four session goal formulation conference. During the first two sessions participants will be introduced to the conference objectives, the group decision-making process, as well as internal and external data which has been compiled by our Executive Director, Douglas Trout.

To emphasize the importance of external data to this planning, for session three we are bringing together a panel of community leaders in the areas of education, religion, minority relations, business and industry, government, and human services.

We cordially invite you to be a member of this panel because of your prominence in the field of religion in our community. Session three will be held Saturday, March 2, 1991, at St. Joseph Hall, Route 30 East, Greensburg, Pa. The panel will present from 9:30-10:30 a.m. We would be happy to have you join us at 9:00 a.m. for coffee.

We are asking that each panel member plan to address the conference for approximately five minutes; the panel's presentations will then be followed by a question and answer period involving conference participants and panel members. Specifically, we would ask that you address the following issues:

1. How might legislation in the 90's help or hinder:
 - a. issues related to women and children, and
 - b. the status of nonprofit volunteer organizations?
2. What else would you have a group like the Girl Scouts consider as we develop long-term goals?

Our council would consider it a great honor if you can accept our invitation. You would be providing an invaluable service to the future of Girl Scouting in this area. If you are not able to attend the conference as a panel member, but could share your thinking with us in some other way, we would be honored to share your contribution with the conference participants.

May our executive director call you on Tuesday, February 19th, to confirm your intention and answer any questions?

Thank you for your consideration of this invitation, and for your continued leadership in the Westmoreland County area.

Sincerely,

Mary Colleen Grotzinger

Mary Colleen Grotzinger
President

MCG/dcm