



THE TOM SCRIMENTI REPORT

May 1989

DISTRICT OFFICES: 9 West Main Street, North East, PA 16428
49 West Smith Street, Corry, PA 16407

725-8664
664-9126

CAPITOL OFFICE: Rm. 25B, East Wing, House P.O. Box 96, Harrisburg, PA 17120-0028 (717) 787-9475

Dear Neighbor:

In January I opened TWO-FULL-SERVICE DISTRICT OFFICES in North East and Corry. The 4th District is large and spread out and two offices are able to serve residents much better than one. I have included a list of basic services which are available through my offices, but there are many more.

The House of Representatives is in session Monday to Wednesday of most weeks, and I spend the other days of the week here in the 4th district. The drive back and forth to Harrisburg is a long commute, but it is worth it because of the interaction I have with my constituents when I am back in Erie County.

I look forward to hearing from you as often as possible. Please do not hesitate to contact my office when you have a question, concern, or problem with state government that I can be of help with.

Sincerely,
Tom Scrimenti
Tom Scrimenti
State Representative
4th Legislative District

District Offices Open for Business

As state representative, I am an intermediary between the people and what is sometimes perceived to be a cold, impersonal government. I invite you to familiarize yourself with the services available to you by visiting one of my two new district offices in the communities of North East and Corry.

My offices can assist you with a variety of state government services including applications for vehicle registrations and licenses, student grants and loans, and senior citizens' benefit programs.

My legislative assistants in the North East office are Rose Herring and Karen Bush. Mary Edwards is my legislative assistant in Corry. All three of them recently completed district office training at the state Capitol in Harrisburg, and they will be happy to help you solve any problems you may have with state government.

I am usually in one of these offices on Thursday and Friday of each week the state House is in session, and if there is any way I can be of assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me.

The North East office is located a 9 West Main Street, phone 725-8664. The Corry office is at 49 West Smith Street, phone 664-9126. Both offices are open from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 5 p.m. on weekdays.

Scrimenti Opens Community Account

In 1987 the General Assembly enacted a \$12,000 pay raise that many people, including myself, said was wrong. When I took office I pledged to return money from that raise to my district in order to help deserving organizations meet special needs. I fulfilled that pledge by creating a Community Account with the money from the pay raise. I have begun returning money to the district and will continue to do so. Contact my office if you know of any worthy groups which could benefit from this fund. *In the photo, right: Rep. Scrimenti presents a \$1,000 check from his community account to North East Fire Co. Chief Darrell Meyers.*



Local Tax Reform Package Explained to Voters

Tax reform is the new buzzword across the state. It's been debated for years, and now finally we have reached a point where it is in our grasp.

In late November, a victory came for all of us when the legislature agreed on a local tax reform package. Late in January, the House and the Senate approved measures that will let the people give the final OK through a constitutional amendment.

The proposed amendment will be on the May 16th ballot.

Understanding what the changes are is critical to you and your family. It's vital that all taxpayers understand what would happen under tax reform.

What tax reform attempts to do is remove the burden of paying for government from the property owner. People would be taxed on their ability to pay rather than on what the local tax assessor thinks their house is worth.

This helps all of us. Senior citizens living on fixed incomes but still living in their homes would pay less. Young couples just starting out and in their first home would pay less. The middle class could pay less.

Tax reform isn't necessarily tax reduction though; rather, people would pay based on their income. I believe it's a much fairer way to do things.

Here's basically what would happen under tax reform:

Real Estate Tax: retained, with lower rates, where school districts and municipalities adopt income taxes.

Earned Income Tax: replaced by a personal income tax, with a cap of 0.75 percent for municipalities and 1.5 percent for schools.

Occupation, Per Capita, and Residence Taxes: abolished.

County Personal Property Tax: abolished.

County Sales Tax: a local option of 0.5 percent.

Occupational Privilege Tax: converted to a Municipal Services Tax of \$20 per year.

School districts and municipalities that enact an income tax have to reduce the property tax by at least 25 percent.

My office can assist you with:

- Motor vehicle problems, special tags, permits, registrations.
- PHEAA — Applications for Higher Education Grants and Loans.
- Information regarding bills under consideration by the General Assembly.
- Obtaining copies of birth and death certificates.
- Senior citizens' information and applications for Property Tax/Rent Rebates and PACE Program.
- Community improvement programs through state assistance.
- Any problems you may have with state agencies.

People who rent will get a rent reduction, since landlords get a reduced property tax. If the landlord fails to do so, the renter can sue and get triple the damages.

Not taxable under the personal income tax is money from Social Security, pensions, public assistance or unemployment compensation.

Before any of this can be done though, local governments must create a Local Tax Study Commission. The commissions have to study the whole system and make a recommendation on the appropriate combination of taxes within certain guidelines. For instance, the property tax still must be lowered if an income tax is adopted.

I realize this is a very complicated issue that goes to the very core of how we live. And although the changes are sweeping, I believe it makes our local taxing system more fair and equitable. If it's adopted, everyone will be paying their fair share of government services, not just the homeowner. If you need more information, please contact my office.

Who is in favor of Tax Reform?

- American Association of Retired Persons
- Citizens for Tax Justice
- League of Women Voters
- PA Federation of Teachers
- PA State Education Association
- PA Association of County Commissioners
- PA School Boards Association
- PA Farmers Association
- PA Association of Township Commissioners
- PA Public Interest Coalition
- PA Council of Churches
- PA League of Cities
- PA Association of Boroughs
- PA Association of School Retirees
- PA Builders Association
- PA Farmers Union
- PA Association of Realtors
- PA State Grange
- PA Food Merchants Association
- Retired Public Employees of Pennsylvania

Toll-Free Numbers

Auditor General Tip Line	1-800-922-8477
Child Abuse Hotline	1-800-932-0313
Drug & Alcohol Information	1-800-932-0912
Governor's Action Center	1-800-932-0784
Health Information	1-800-692-7254
Health TTY	
(for the hearing-impaired)	1-800-932-4639
Insurance Commissioner	1-800-222-1750
Motor Vehicle Information	1-800-932-4600
PACE	1-800-225-PACE
PA Higher Education Assistance Agency	1-800-233-0751
Veterans' Information	1-800-242-0233
Welfare Fraud Tip Line	1-800-932-0582
Workers' Compensation	1-800-482-2383

CLIP & SAVE

Your Opinion is Important!

Please complete the questionnaire below. Cut along dotted line and fold with my address showing. Postage is required.

1. In your opinion, what are the three most important issues facing Pennsylvania today?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

2. Insurance reforms have been suggested to lower premium costs. Who do you think is responsible for skyrocketing insurance premiums?

_____ Lawyers _____ Doctors

_____ Insurance companies _____ Fraudulent lawsuits

_____ Other _____

3. Prisons are overcrowded. Do we:

_____ Increase taxes to build new prisons?

_____ Release non-violent prisoners?

_____ Other _____

4. Many municipalities lose a great deal of revenue as a result of tax-exempt property. An idea being debated would require hospitals, churches and clubs to make payment in lieu of taxes, which would help to defray costs of local government such as police protection and garbage collection. Would you favor such a requirement for tax-exempt property?

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Undecided

5. Do you favor a mandatory AIDS test for all newborn babies and marriage license applicants?

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Undecided

6. Should we expand the use of lottery proceeds to other groups beyond senior citizens?

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Undecided

7. Medicare currently pays 80 percent of what the federal government says is a reasonable charge for health care services, and the patient pays the remaining 20 percent, plus any extra costs charged by the doctor. The state House is now considering a bill which would prevent doctors from billing patients for any amount over the "reasonable cost" set by Medicare. Do you favor passage of this bill?

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Undecided



COMMUNITY NEWS AND HAPPENINGS:

A special report from Rep. Tom Scrimenti about how state government affects you.

Rep. Tom Scrimenti reports:

MONEY MATTERS

Late one night in 1987, the General Assembly gave itself a \$12,000 pay raise which angered many working men and women in this state. When I took office as a first-term state representative last year, I pledged that I would put this excess portion of my legislator's salary to work for my constituents.

I created the Community Account as a way of counteracting the bad effects of the pay raise. With the Community Account, I have put the money I received from the pay raise to work for groups and individuals here in the 4th District. We have been able to help some truly worthy causes in this manner.

The Community Account was a huge success and I am continuing it this year. My only regret is that we received some very good requests for money that we could not meet with the Community Account. I am looking for other sources of state funding that might help in some of these cases.

Each year, many companies issue an annual report to their stockholders. In a sense, each of you who live in my district are stockholders in the Community Account, so I am offering the following list as my first annual report to you to let you know where this money was directed.

1989 COMMUNITY ACCOUNT DONATIONS

- | | | | |
|--|----------------|--|-----------------|
| North East Volunteer Fire Department | \$1,000 | Conelway Elementary School Nature Ctr. | \$650 |
| Corry High School | \$250 | North East Senior Center | \$381.60 |
| (St. Patrick's Day Festival benefitting Corry Hospital) | | Gifts for Kids program | \$250 |
| Karen Stauffer, UCHS cheerleader | \$200 | Brookside Fire Department Auxiliary | \$500 |
| (to offset cost of transportation to national competition) | | North East Food Pantry | \$700 |
| Jenny Cochran Fund | \$700 | (purchase of freezer and food) | |
| Corry Unemployed Council | \$250 | St. Boniface Church food pantry | \$750 |
| Eric Danowski Fund | \$500 | Union City Senior Center | \$200 |
| Loblaws Softball Team, North East | \$500 | (for shuffleboard equipment) | |
| (to offset transportation cost to national tournament) | | Times-Leader "Say Merry Christmas" Fund | \$250 |
| Harborcreek Chamber of Commerce | \$500 | Millcreek-Erie County Advocates, (MECA) | \$500 |
| Union City Fire Department | \$500 | (outreach program for eastern Erie County) | |
| North East Sports Boosters | \$500 | | |
| (for Bobby Triana Memorial Trophy Case) | | | |
| Wattsburg Youth Center | \$500 | | |
| (for VCR and cabinet) | | | |
| Corry Communications C.B. Radio Club | \$300 | | |
| (benefitting Brock Cline Fund) | | | |
| Harborcreek AARP | \$500 | | |
| Union City Alumni Association | \$500 | | |
| (to help finance class reunion) | | | |



Rep. Scrimenti is helping Charles Smith, Tom Feeney and Dick Sandle with the St. Boniface Food Pantry Christmas distribution.

Rep. Tom Scrimenti reports:

JOB MATTERS

For two long years, people from the Corry region seeking employment or more information about jobs had to travel 35 miles or more to Erie or Warren to get the help they needed.

This was really an unreasonable, costly burden on those who were unemployed and least able to access the services. I knew something had to be done to bring the services to the people, instead of requiring them to go far out of their way to get help.

I took this matter directly to Harrisburg and worked with Gov. Casey to ensure that he and other administration officials knew how important this issue was to the people in the Corry area. Through my work, I was able to solve the problem and help the Corry region enjoy accessible employment services.

A large crowd turned out last September for the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the ***new State Job Center in Corry***. The good news is that an even larger number of people have been using the office regularly to help them get training, meet employers and find jobs. In fact, the response has been phenomenal.

The Job Center provides a location and support services so that workers who are looking for jobs, and employers who are looking for workers, can come together and get the most out of each other.

Job Centers represent a unique concept in employment services because a special element is critical to their success — ***local awareness and support***. It's very important that the people who need the services offered here be aware that the Job Center exists. It will only succeed and grow if it is used. The people who use it will make the Job Center even better, by speaking up about what services they need.

It is this flexible approach that is so new and unique. As a result, each Job Center quickly takes on the character of the community where it is located and the people whom it serves.

A wise man once said that the way to succeed in business is to give the customers what they want. This is the simple logic behind the Job Center concept, and it is why the new Job Center in Corry has been so successful. Already, ***more than 40 people who were out of work have been placed in new jobs***.

The Job Center is a one-stop education, training and placement center. It is open every Thursday, from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Counseling Services Center on North Center Street. There is a wide range of services and information offered at the Job Center, including general aptitude tests, job and worker classification, tax credits for employers hiring eligible workers, labor market information and employee screening.

Many people worked together to make this place a reality, and if we continue working together in the weeks and months to come, we will make our Job Center the best one in the state of Pennsylvania.



Rep. Scrimenti joins local and state officials in cutting the ribbon to open the Corry Job Center.



HELP FOR HOMEOWNERS

Questionnaire results

In my 1989 newsletter, I asked for your opinions on a variety of issues now facing us in the General Assembly. Hundreds of you took the time to fill out and return the questionnaire and I appreciate your responses very much. The results of the survey were of great interest to me. Here is a brief summary.

There was a variety of ideas on the question of what are the most important issues facing the state. The three most-mentioned issues were, in order, high taxes, economic development and environmental concerns. Other concerns of many people included drugs and crime, roads and bridges, education, legislative salaries, insurance, health care and unemployment.

On the question of who is to blame for skyrocketing insurance rates, lawyers and fraudulent lawsuits got the most mentions, with insurance companies and doctors not far behind.

On how to relieve prison overcrowding, 26 percent said we should raise taxes to increase prison capacity, 20 percent said we should release certain non-violent prisoners, and the rest said that some other solution must be found.

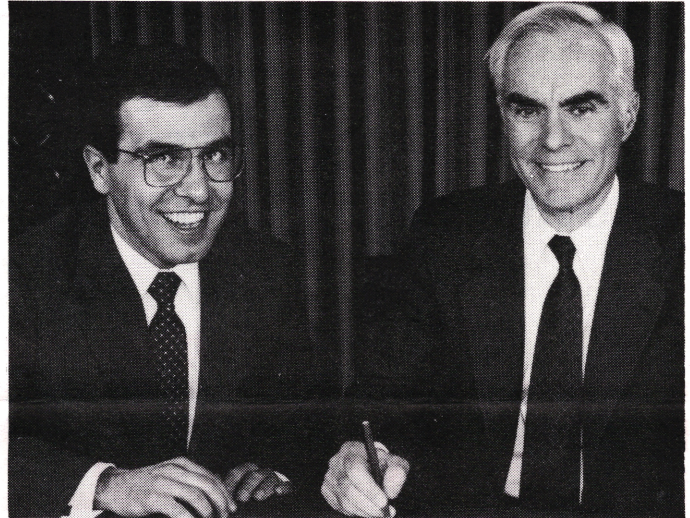
A total of 67 percent said they favored some payment by owners of tax-exempt property (hospitals, churches, etc.) to help offset the cost to local government of providing services. A total of 22 percent were opposed to this.

A mandatory AIDS test for newborn babies and marriage license applicants was favored by 75 percent while 13 percent were opposed.

A full 63 percent were against using state lottery funds for programs that do not directly benefit senior citizens, while 26 percent said we should consider the idea.

Finally, an overwhelming 83 percent of you favored passage of a House bill that I co-sponsored which is now before the state Senate. It would prevent doctors from charging patients anything more than the "reasonable rate" set by Medicare for health care services. Only 8 percent were opposed to this idea.

I want to express my thanks to those who took part in this survey and I encourage all of you to feel free to contact me anytime with your views on any issue.



Tom Scrimenti worked hard to get House Bill 540 passed into law. The legislation extends the Homeowner's Emergency Assistance Program until 1992.

I worked to have a bill I wrote signed into law to help low- and middle-income homeowners in Erie County and the rest of the state who are having trouble meeting their mortgage payments.

The Homeowner's Emergency Assistance Program, which provides this help, was scheduled to go out of existence at the end of 1989. My legislation extended the program until 1992.

Erie County has received tremendous benefits from this program and I knew it was important that I take action to continue helping our homeowners. Since 1983, the program has provided 222 loans to Erie County residents, pumping a total of \$2.93 million into the county. Figures like that showed me the program was far too important to our district to let it expire.

The program helps those who are having trouble meeting home mortgage payments due to factors beyond their control, such as a job loss or dislocation, and helps delay foreclosures on their property. The aid takes the form of a loan to cover past-due mortgage payments. It also can assist people with ongoing payments either in full or partial amounts for up to three years.

Anyone who is in trouble with mortgage payments can apply for help. Selection is based on a variety of factors, including the person's ability to pay and the quality of the property.

For more information on the program, please contact one of my district offices.

**"800" number
available
to constituents**

Because of the area covered by the 4th Legislative District, some constituents could not call either of my district offices without being billed long-distance charges. That directly opposes the purpose of my office, which is to help reduce the expense and problems of dealing with state government.

I have opened a toll-free phone line so no one has to pay for the call. Persons who call my "800" number will be connected with my North East district office, which is staffed Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

This will bring state government within closer reach of every resident of the 4th District, and will save everyone some burdensome phone charges. The number is:

1-800-962-2304

REP. TOM SCRIMENTI
P.O. Box 96
Main Capitol Bldg.
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0028
(717) 787-9475

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LOCAL OFFICES:

- **9 West Main Street**
North East, PA 16428
(814) 725-8664
(800) 962-2304 Toll-Free
- **9 West Washington Street**
Corry, PA 16407
(814) 664-9126

1990



INVESTING IN THE 4TH DISTRICT

FROM STATE REPRESENTATIVE TOM SCRIMENTI



Dear Friend,

Creating a healthy economy for the people of the 4th District has been one of my top priorities during the past two years.

As your state representative, I am familiar with numerous state grant and loan programs which can benefit our area, and I have worked to connect the right program with the right local government or business. I have been most interested in projects that will help create good, long-term, decent-paying jobs, and in programs which will help improve the infrastructure of our area so that we can continue to attract the best kind of businesses.

Whether it is a loan for infrastructure improvements or a grant to expand a local business, the state can play a vital role in developing a stable and productive economy for Northwestern Pennsylvania, and the information contained in this newsletter highlights just how the state has fulfilled that function so far.

Please take a few moments to look over this information. If there are any programs you would like to know more about, do not hesitate to contact me at one of my district offices listed inside.

Sincerely,

Tom Scrimenti

STATE INVESTMENT CREATES JOBS

Through the use of a variety of state programs that benefit and promote business, the state has helped create more than 160 jobs and helped retain more than 525 jobs during the 1989-90 session of the General Assembly.

Through the Economic Development Partnership programs, Pennsylvania has invested nearly \$6 million in projects in our area that may have directly benefited you. The following list of low-interest state loans and grants will help you understand the role the state has had in creating jobs for our area.

Corry Industries, Inc.....	\$500,000
Corry Laser Technologies, Inc.....	\$605,000
Corry Laser Technologies, Inc.	\$450,000
Greenfield Township	\$24,000
Iroquois Tool Systems, Inc.	\$150,000
North East Coatings, Inc.	\$100,000

Port Erie Plastics, Inc.	\$3,600,000
Corry Redevelopment Authority	\$85,000
Bayside Precision Plastics	\$88,000

In addition, I am currently working with officials from the state Department of Commerce to obtain approval on four projects for our area.

Both Union City and North East Twp. have applied for funding under the state's Community Facilities Program for sewerage system projects. The grants are for \$75,000 and \$50,000 respectively.

Both the City of Corry and the Harborcreek Twp. Water Authority have applied for grants under the state's Site Development Program. Corry has requested a \$100,000 grant for an access road project, and Harbor Creek has applied for a \$50,000 grant for a water improvement project. I expect an announcement to be made on these requests within the next six weeks.

HELPING THE GRAPE INDUSTRY

One of the economic efforts I worked on this year was assisting Pennsylvania's grape industry.

With the fourth highest grape production in the country, and with an annual economic value of more than \$100 million, this business is of great importance to our state. It is of particular importance to our district, which is the home of the largest Concord grape juice plant in the world, and is the site of the highest population of grapevines in the eastern United States.

In June I obtained a \$20,000 state grant for the Pennsylvania Grape Industry Association to help promote the industry and to help fund research

to improve grape production.

I also sponsored a bill that would create a Pennsylvania Grape Development and Promotion Committee to promote the sale of wines, grapes and grape products and to work to improve grape production statewide. This bill is now in the House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee.

Grape production is an important part of our overall farm product and it is of increasing value each year. The state must nurture this industry and assist in expanding the market, and I intend to push for this development.

Rep. Scrimenti's District Offices

NORTH EAST	9 West Main Street North East, PA 16428 (814) 725-8664 Toll-Free (800) 962-2304
CORRY	9 West Washington Street Corry, PA 16407 (814) 664-9126
HARBOR CREEK	Satellite Office Giant Eagle supermarket lobby 4400 Buffalo Road Harborcreek, PA Fridays only 7 to 9 p.m.



Rep. Scrimenti, at right, presents a \$20,000 grant he obtained to members of the Pennsylvania Grape Industry Association. The money will be used to help fund research to improve grape production and to promote the industry.

SCRIMENTI OBTAINS \$40,000 IN GRANTS

During the past year, I have requested and obtained legislative initiative grants totaling \$40,000 for my district.

These grants are made available to legislators to help fund small, one-time projects at the local level. They are projects that deserve state assistance, but cannot be included as a regular state budget item.

The following list shows the 4th District organizations which will benefit from these grants this year.

- ◆ \$5,300 for the Corry Police Department for bullet proof vests
- ◆ \$3,000 for the North East Fire Department for a public safety and fire prevention program
- ◆ \$975 for the Kuhl Hose Co. for buying a jet-syphon hose attachment
- ◆ \$2,000 for the Elgin-Beaverdam Vol. Hose Co. to buy a hose nozzle attachment

- ◆ \$2,800 for Greene Twp. to buy a personal computer system for the township
- ◆ \$900 for the Corry Area Hospice Inc. for the purchase of office equipment
- ◆ \$4,500 for the Wattsburg Fair Association toward rebuilding damaged fair property
- ◆ \$5,000 for the Wattsburg School District for renovation of the Seneca High School football field
- ◆ \$4,500 for Harborcreek Youth Services to buy a range hood and vent system
- ◆ \$1,000 for the McCord Memorial Library for purchase of a printer and tapes
- ◆ \$10,000 for the Corry Redevelopment Authority to help implement an economic development study, specifically recruitment efforts

STATE HELPS 4TH DISTRICT

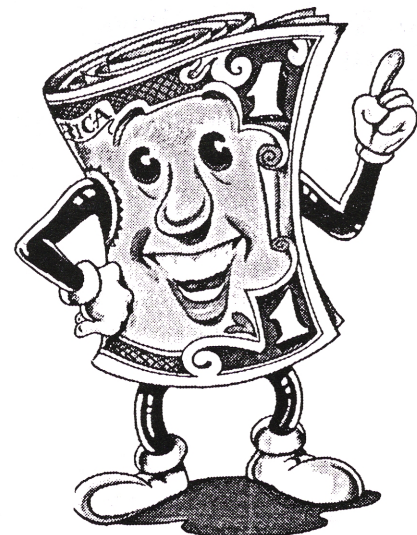
The Department of Community Affairs administers a number of state and federal funding programs which are designed to assist local communities in areas such as housing, emergency communications, economic development projects, infrastructure improvement projects and many others.

As a state representative, it is my duty to make sure that communities throughout the 4th Legislative District get their fair share of this funding and I will continue to work with the Casey administration to see that they do.

Following are projects in our area which were funded through DCA so far during the 1989-90 session.

- ◆ \$344,104 for Erie County home weatherization project in 1989-90
- ◆ \$61,500 for the East Erie Emergency Communications, including Wesleyville Borough and townships of Harborcreek and Lawrence Park
- ◆ \$136,000 for beautification of downtown Wesleyville
- ◆ \$123,921 for improvements to parking facilities in Wesleyville
- ◆ \$170,538 for improvements to parking facilities, sewerlines, streets and housing in North East

- ◆ \$11,700 for renovation of the Municipal Park in Elgin
- ◆ \$302,255 to Corry for improvements to five recreational areas and three public buildings
- ◆ \$130,000 to Harborcreek Twp. for installation of an industrial park sewer pipeline
- ◆ \$252,423 for Erie Co. home weatherization in 1990-91
- ◆ \$121,177 for Erie Co. for Department of Energy weatherization project



SOLID INFRASTRUCTURE – SOLID ECONOMY

In March of 1988, Gov. Casey signed Act 16 and created a program that has greatly benefited our area -- the PENNVEST program.

Through this program, nearly \$1 billion has been distributed to help maintain, upgrade and install sewer and water facilities across the Commonwealth. In fact, it is the most ambitious fresh water infrastructure funding program in the country.

I have tried to make sure that 4th District communities have received their fair share of this state funding.

Since its inception, PENNVEST has provided \$3.37 million for projects in this district. These projects not only provide clean drinking water for the people of this area, they have enabled businesses to locate or expand plants here, thereby creating and maintaining jobs that would have been lost without quality water and sewage systems.



RECYCLING FOR THE FUTURE

To put the brakes on the creation of mountains of garbage in Pennsylvania, the General Assembly passed a law last year which mandates recycling programs in all cities with a population of 5,000 or more. More than 400 communities in the state are affected by this law.

In an effort to make the implementation of these programs as painless as possible, the state has also distributed almost \$30 million in start up grants. The grants are made possible by a \$2 fee paid for each ton of waste disposed at landfills and resource recovery facilities.

In the 4th District, two municipalities recently received recycling grants: Harborcreek -- \$96,492; and Wesleyville -- \$27,758. Harborcreek also received a \$10,080 grant in June of 1989 for the planning and development of its program.

In August, the state Department of Environmental Resources awarded grants for the development of leaf composting facilities. Harborcreek Township received a \$28,082 leaf composting grant, and Wesleyville Borough received a \$26,945 grant. Since leaves can comprise as much as 80 percent of the waste entering landfills in the fall, it makes good sense to take this natural resource and compost it to provide a nutrient-rich, and inexpensive plant mulch.

Through programs like this, we can reclaim a resource while significantly reducing the amount of waste entering landfills. I can think of no better gift to give our children and grandchildren than a clean environment.

Rep. Tom Scrimenti
House of Representatives
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0028

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Representative TOM SCRIMENTI Reports



MEDICAL OVERCHARGE LAW WILL HELP SENIORS

A proposal designed to control medical costs for senior citizens has been signed into law by Gov. Robert P. Casey.

The Medical Overcharge Measure (H.B. 700) — now known as the Health Care Practitioner Medicare Fee Control Act — will prohibit health care practitioners from charging more for medical services than the fee set by the federal government.

Most doctors had already accepted the federally set charges, but there were some senior citizens who were being charged much more than what the federal government considers to be reasonable.

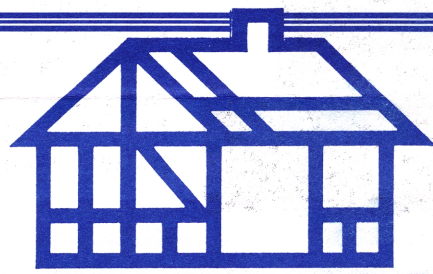
The new law will take care of this problem by requiring physicians to accept Medicare and the patient's 20 percent co-payment as payment in full.

I strongly supported this legislation, which addresses one of the biggest problems for senior citizens: living on a fixed income and facing rapidly rising health care costs. Many senior citizens groups lobbied for this law, and we in the legislature heard them and took action.

The new law applies to medical doctors as well as osteopathic physicians, chiropractors, dentists, optometrists, pharmacists, physical therapists, podiatrists, nurses and psychologists.

Violators will be publicly reprimanded and ordered to repay the victim for the amount overcharged, plus interest. Multiple violations could be punishable by fines ranging from \$2,000 to more than \$6,000.

Under the new law, physicians must post a sign in their offices listing the rights of Medicare patients and noting the procedure for filing a complaint.



HELP FOR HOMEOWNERS

The Homeowner's Emergency Assistance Program received \$7.5 million under the 1990-91 budget, thereby assuring help for low- and middle-income homeowners in Erie County and the rest of the state should they run into trouble meeting their mortgage payment this year.

The HEMAP program, which was extended through 1992 under a bill I sponsored, has made more than 200 loans to Erie County residents since 1983, pumping a total of about \$3 million into the county. I felt that these statistics made this program very important to our district, and worked hard to see that the program was continued.

HEMAP helps those who are having trouble meeting home mortgage payments because of factors beyond their control, such as job loss, and helps delay foreclosures on their property. The aid is given in the form of a loan to cover past-due mortgage payments. It also can assist people with ongoing payments either in full or partial amounts for up to three years.

Anyone who is in trouble with mortgage payments can apply for help.

For more information on the program, please contact one of my district offices:

**9 W. Main St.
North East, PA 16428
(814) 725-8664**

**9 W. Washington St.
Corry, PA 16407
(814) 664-9126**

TOLL-FREE: 1 (800) 962-2304

SCRIMENTI BILL WOULD HELP ENVIRONMENT



A bill (H.B. 2320) I sponsored which would reduce the levels of four toxic substances in the environment was approved by the House Conservation Committee and is now in the House Appropriations Committee.

This bill would phase out the use of lead, mercury, cadmium and hexavalent chromium used in the containers, dyes, paints and inks associated with the manufacture of packaging materials. The packaging materials then end up in landfills where the toxics can leach out and poison groundwater. If the packaging is burned in an incinerator, nearby residents could breathe in the poisonous fumes.

My bill would give companies that manufacture packaging material two years to discontinue using the hazardous substances. After that, only packages that must be produced using these substances for safety reasons — such lead used in X-ray products — could contain the banned substances.

The Japanese are currently having a problem with their rice crops because of high levels of cadmium in the soil. I will not allow this to happen to our farmland. I believe this bill is fair, in that it gives manufacturers sufficient time to make the necessary changes without losing profitability.

VETS ARE HONORED BY SCRIMENTI BILL

It was my great pleasure during this session to introduce and guide through the General Assembly legislation which designates the Erie County section of Interstate 90 as AMVETS Memorial Highway.

The governor signed the measure in July, making Pennsylvania the sixth state to join the effort to honor veterans of World War II, Korea Conflict and the Vietnam War. Ultimately,

AMVETS leaders want the entire length of I-90, from Boston to Seattle, to be designated in honor of the soldiers of those wars.

I have worked with state and national leaders of the AMVETS organization since last fall to rename the highway. It is my hope that this special designation will help to educate our young people and remind all of us of the bravery and sacrifice of our nation's soldiers.

EXPANDED SERVICES

1-800-962-2304

**TO CONTACT ME OR MY STAFF CALL THIS NUMBER,
FREE OF CHARGE, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY,
BETWEEN 9 A.M. AND NOON, AND 1 P.M. AND 5 P.M.**

In order to serve residents who work during the day or find it inconvenient to travel to my North East and Corry offices, I opened a satellite office in June in Harborcreek on a trial basis. Since I have found this to be a useful service for area residents, I have decided to continue the program.

The office is in the lobby of the Giant Eagle supermarket, 4400 Buffalo Road, Harborcreek. The hours are Fridays from

7 to 9 p.m. I will be available during that time to discuss problems with state services and concerns about state issues.

The satellite office is part of an outreach program I established to bring state government to the people at their convenience. Other features of this outreach effort include town meetings, speaking engagements before local organizations and satellite offices at fairs and festivals.

GIVING IT BACK TO ERIE COUNTY

As many of you are aware, during my first term in office, rather than take home the \$12,000 pay raise which legislators gave themselves in 1987, I decided to give this money to needy groups and individuals in the 4th District by setting up a Community Account.

I am very pleased with the success of this program during 1989 and 1990. So far I have disbursed \$14,660 through this fund. The only problem with the Community Account is that the requests have consistently exceeded the

available funds. Whenever possible, I have investigated alternative funding for those I could not help through the Community Account.

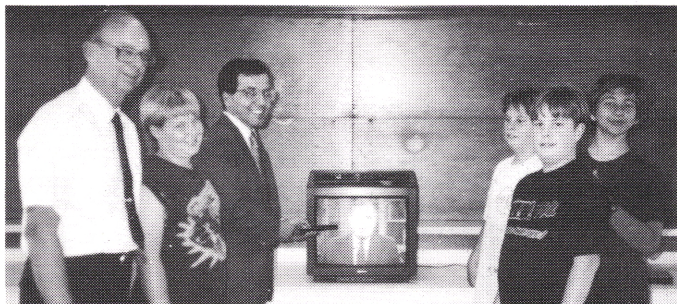
At the bottom of this page, you will find a questionnaire which asks for your input on the Community Account donations. Please fill it out, fold this page so my office address shows, and return it to me, so we can continue to connect the money with the most deserving recipients.

Following is an update on money disbursed from the Community Account during the last several months.

Community Account Update:

French Creek Council B.S.A.	\$575
Iroquois Just Say No Club	\$300
<i>Drug Education Program</i>	
St. Patrick's Day Festival Committee	\$300
Horizon House/Union City	\$599
<i>refrigerator</i>	
Greenfield Twp. Volunteer Fire Co.	\$479
<i>automatic nozzle</i>	

Corry Crop Walk Fund	\$300
<i>food pantry and soup kitchen</i>	
Union City Prom to Dawn	\$275
<i>compact disc player</i>	
Wattsburg Historical Society	\$700
<i>desk</i>	
Community Fireworks Committee - Lawrence Park	\$250



Rep. Scrimenti, third from left, surveys the video cassette system purchased for the French Creek Boy Scout Council using money he donated from his Community Account. With the state legislator are (from left) Earl Hansen, executive director of the district, and Scouts Jason Petak, Jason Bizzaro, Brian Conway and Bruce Conway, all of Troop 151, sponsored by Our Lady of Mercy Church.



Rep. Scrimenti joins Marty Lee, director of Horizon House, to look over a new refrigerator donated to the group by Western Auto in Union City and by Scrimenti, using money from his Community Account.

TELL ME WHAT YOU THINK. . .

PLEASE INDICATE WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING GROUPS YOU BELIEVE SHOULD BE FIRST PRIORITY IN RECEIVING COMMUNITY ACCOUNT DONATIONS. (PLEASE CHECK TWO.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> SENIOR CITIZENS GROUPS | <input type="checkbox"/> NEEDY INDIVIDUALS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS (such as Boy Scouts) | <input type="checkbox"/> SPORTS GROUPS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FOOD PANTRIES | <input type="checkbox"/> SCHOOLS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS AND CLUBS | <input type="checkbox"/> VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT, ETC. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____ | |

Rep. Tom Scrimenti
P.O. Box 96
Main Capitol Bldg.
Harrisburg, AP 17120-0028

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HERE

PLEASE FOLD WITH THIS ADDRESS SHOWING TO MAIL QUESTIONNAIRE BACK

EMERGENCY SERVICES REFERENDUM

VOTE

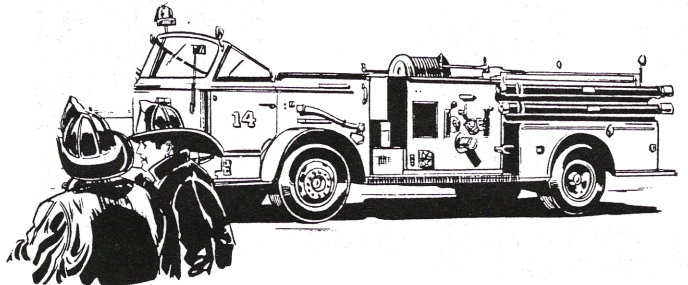


YES

On the November General Election ballot, you will be asked to vote for or against a \$25 million bond issue, which would be used for a loan program for volunteer firefighters and ambulance and rescue squads.

I believe this program would benefit a large number of Pennsylvania citizens, since it involves the protection of their lives and property. Under the existing loan program, the state has already loaned millions of dollars to fire companies at low interest rates, enabling them to purchase equipment and modernize their facilities, something they found virtually impossible prior to enactment of the law authorizing this program some years ago.

Because of the continuing demand for loans, the fund is rapidly being depleted. You can help the volunteers who serve you so well by voting "Yes" on the \$25 million bond issue question when you go to the polls on Election Day in November.



REP. TOM SCRIMENTI
House of Representatives
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0028

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Scrimenti Votes to Roll Back Taxes

Story on page 2



Report to the 4th Legislative District

From



State Representative Tom Scrimenti

Inside...

Protecting Seniors page 2

Lawmakers repealed a law which would have forced senior citizens living on fixed incomes to begin paying a state income tax for the first time. More than 400,000 seniors would have paid an average of \$201 if the law was not changed.

Affordable Health Care page 3

I have proposed legislation which would help small businesses provide affordable health insurance coverage for their employees by allowing them to "community rate." The proposal won't solve the whole health care problem but it will help some people. It is a concrete solution that can work now, rather than some pie-in-the-sky idea.

If your club or organization is looking for someone to talk to them about state-related issues and concerns, I would be happy to speak to your group. Contact my office at 725-8664 to schedule a time.

An Educational Trust for Our Children

Legislation that I have worked on this year would allow parents to set up a tax-free savings account for their children's college expenses.

Unlike other proposals, this plan would provide a direct tax benefit to parents and a benefit later to their children.

It also does not carry the financial risks other plans do. Several states have or are considering plans which require the states to become directly involved in educational funding programs.

For instance, Michigan has set up the Michigan Education Trust. Parents invest a standard amount of money (usually around \$8,000) based upon the age of the child and what Michigan college expenses are expected to be the year the child is ready for

college.

The state then invests that money until the child is ready for school. As part of the agreement though, the money must pay for all four years of school even if the investments did not do well over the years.

Many similar plans exist around the country and are being discussed in Pennsylvania. But I am concerned that these programs will be bankrupted and end up costing taxpayers too much. Some of these programs are being ended because of these very concerns. We certainly do not need another bailout program.

My plan provides an incentive to parents to save money, but also limits the state's liability in the program.

Some State Taxes Repealed

I supported a measure to repeal several state taxes this year that would have unfairly burdened people.

When the budget was passed in August, several new taxes were imposed. Many of them would have been extremely difficult for people, especially older Pennsylvanians, to handle.

In December, the legislature and Gov. Casey agreed to repeal some of those taxes. The repeal keeps in place the budget agreement.

One of the most important changes protects more than 400,000 older residents living on small fixed incomes from paying an average of \$201 in state income taxes for the first time since their retirement.

Had the change not been

made, many senior citizens would not have qualified for the special tax forgiveness program. The program allows seniors who earn less than \$6,300 a year to not pay any state income tax on that amount. The tax repeal returns the state's tax code to the way it was before it was altered in the 1991 budget agreement.



Also repealed was the state sales tax on:

- * baked goods;
- * some personal hygiene prod-

ucts, such as toothpaste, dental floss etc.;

- * commercial warehouses;
- * safe-deposit boxes;
- * wages, benefits and other payroll items for temporary employees;
- * at-home nursing and home care.

It is important to note that these tax repeals were made and the budget was still balanced. Still I believe we adequately balanced the needs of people against what funds we had available.

Finally, the income tax dropped Jan. 1 to 3.1 percent from 3.5 percent. It will drop again in July to 2.8 percent. These decreases demonstrate my commitment to you to ensure that the state only receive the money it absolutely needs.

Health Care Plan for Small Business

Recently, I introduced legislation which would allow insurance companies to provide affordable health coverage for employees of small business.

According to state statistics, Pennsylvania has 1 million uninsured people, two-thirds of whom are employed or a family member of a working person.

The working uninsured tend to be employed by small businesses that cannot afford to offer health insurance to their employees even if they wanted to.

My legislation would require insurance companies to "community rate" just as Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Pennsylvania does.

Community rating would require companies to put small businesses of a similar nature into one large group. By putting a number of companies into one group, the cost of the insurance would be lower than if the insurance was offered just to one business.

Large group health plans normally have low rates because their risk is spread out among so many employees. My goal is to create a similar pool for small businesses.

Community rating has worked well for Blue Cross/Blue Shield. This legislation would prompt other health insurers in Pennsylvania to do the same and it would create more competition between insur-

ers.

I realize this proposal is not the panacea to the growing problem of health care coverage, but it is a workable plan that would provide some immediate and real relief to people immediately.

Part of the problem for small businesses is that if one of their employees becomes extremely ill and incurs high medical bills, the insurance for the employer goes up in price astronomically.

We have many small businesses in this area that would immediately benefit if this bill would become law.

Scrimenti Donates Money to Community Groups

Many worthy community organizations need financial assistance to carry out the projects they offer to area residents.

As your state representative, I feel I have a responsibility to support these groups and their efforts in any way I can. Often times, it is with a donation of money. Other times though, and sometimes more importantly, it is with a donation of time.

The money comes from the community account I created when I was first elected in 1988. I donated the pay raise lawmakers voted themselves in 1987 to community groups.

Below is a listing of community groups I have donated time and/or money to in 1991. I encourage you, if you aren't already, to become involved in one of these or the many other activities in our area.

- Harborcreek Chapter of AARP #4434** \$400 - equipment purchase
- Corry Area High School** \$300 - St. Patrick's Day festival benefitting Corry Memorial Hospital
- Greene School Association** \$400 - playground equipment
- Eastlake Jaycees** \$500 - youth fishing program
- Wright Street Elementary School** \$250 - summer water safety program
- Erie County Fire Safety House** \$250 - equipment purchase
- Union City Area School District** \$100 - Students Against Drunk Driving program
- Corry CROP Walk** \$300 - fund drive to fight hunger
- Concerned Citizens Against Sour Gas Wells** \$300 - litigation costs
- Corry Manor Nursing Home** \$200 - National Nursing Home Week festivities
- Prom to Dawn Parent Committee** \$300 - Union City School District Prom program
- Lawrence Park Tri-Community** \$250 - July 4th celebration
- Lakeview Charity Pro-Am Tournament** \$150 - benefitting Make-A-Wish program
- Greater Erie Chapter of American Red Cross** \$250
- Boy Scouts of America - French Creek Council** \$200
- Mary B. Ripley Park Fund** \$200 - park benches
- Corry Communications C.B. Radio Club** \$500 - Lyle Hotchkiss Benefit
- Harborcreek Food Pantry** \$850 - Christmas food distribution
- Corry Food Pantry** \$850 - Christmas food distribution
- St. Boniface Food Pantry** \$400 - Christmas food distribution



Rep. Scrimenti lends a hand with the Harborcreek Food Pantry (right) and the Corry Food Pantry (left)

My Office Can Help You With . . .

- * Processing drivers' licenses and related forms with PennDOT
- * Handicapped plates and placards
- * PACE cards
- * Citations from the House of Representatives for outstanding local accomplishments or family milestones
- * Property tax/rent rebate applications, problems or questions
- * Copies of birth and death certificates
- * Problems with the Department of Public Welfare
- * Requests for literature
- * Complaints or questions about the utilities and the Public Utility Commission
- * Consumer complaints
- * Difficulties cutting through red tape with state agencies

Local Office Addresses:

Corry:
9 West Washington St.
664-9127

Northeast:
9 West Main St.
725-8664

Help me stay in touch on the issues that concern you most. Please read through this list, mark the appropriate subjects and drop this card in the mail. With your cooperation, I can update you on the legislative action in Harrisburg.

What State Issues Concern or Interest You?

- Arts and culture
- Small business
- Children and youth programs
- Economic development
- Basic Education
- Higher Education
- Environment/Ecology
- Illegal drugs
- Hunting
- Farming/agriculture
- Fishing
- Industry/manufacturing
- Insurance (auto)
- Insurance (health)
- Labor and unions
- Liquor control
- Mental Health/Mental Retardation
- Neighborhood/community development
- Programs for older Pennsylvanians (seniors)
- Property tax reform
- State tax reform
- Road and highway funding
- Mass transit
- Wetlands protection
- Women's issues
- Other _____

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ Zip _____
Telephone number _____

State Representative Tom Scrimenti
House of Representatives
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0028

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