

COMMITTEES

AGRICULTURE & RURAL AFFAIRS
 MILITARY & VETERANS AFFAIRS
 GAME & FISHERIES
 LIQUOR CONTROL



House of Representatives
 COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
 HARRISBURG

January 24, 1991

The Honorable Robert P. Casey
 Governor of the Commonwealth
 of Pennsylvania
 225 Main Capitol Building
 Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Casey:

As you know, I have been quite supportive of the idea of constructing a new state prison in northwest Pennsylvania, and joined with my colleagues in the Erie County House of Representatives delegation in recommending consideration of a site in Conneaut Township.

I am now requesting you also consider plans to locate such a facility in Columbus Township, Warren County. While neither the Albion nor the Columbus Township site is in my legislative district, both sites offer significant community support and are in real need of both the direct employment and spin-off jobs that would result from this project.

Although I am supportive of either site, the Columbus Township location is preferred. I am entirely convinced that this site is an appropriate one, and will fulfill a serious need for economic development opportunities for the community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tom Scrimenti
 State Representative

TJS/kb

THOMAS J. SCRIMENTI
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

April 13, 1992

COMMITTEES

PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE
SECRETARY
AGING & YOUTH
INSURANCE
POLICY

Mr. Michael Bokoch

[REDACTED]
Erie, Pennsylvania 16510

Dear Mr. Bokoch: - Mike


Thank you very much for your recent letter regarding property taxes levied on senior citizens.

As you may know, I am an avid supporter of legitimate efforts to stabilize property taxes for those individuals on a fixed income. Unfortunately, the State Constitution of Pennsylvania prohibits graduated tax levies and mandates uniformity among all taxes, including property taxes. A copy of that section of the Constitution is enclosed for your review.

In addition, I have included a copy of House Bill 1535 which would create the Seniors Citizens' Property Tax Freeze Act. This bill is currently under study in the House Local Government Committee. I believe the question of constitutionality would no doubt pay a key factor in the non-passage of this legislation.

I hope this information proves useful to your inquiry and, again, thank you for alerting me of your concerns. If I may be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,


Thomas J. Scrimenti
State Representative

/js
enclosures

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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES

PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE
AGING AND YOUTH
INSURANCE
FEDERAL-STATE RELATIONS

June 9, 1993

Mr. John A. Davison

[REDACTED]
Erie, PA 16511-1347

Dear Mr. Davison:

I want to thank you for writing me with your ideas about tax reform. It is important for me to know of your opinions on this important issue and on other matters of interest to you for me to vote in a truly representative way. With that in mind, I appreciate you writing and hope that your letter represents the beginning of a communication between us that keeps me informed and up-to-date on your thoughts and concerns.

As you may know, my entire public career has been based upon the effective and efficient collection and expenditure of public funds. With that in mind, I can certainly share your frustration over the methods of tax collection that our local communities now use. Your comments about the inequities of our present property tax system were right on the mark. I join in your call for real reform in the way taxable value is derived and how each of us pay our fair share in support of local and statewide programs. I agree that change is needed now to fix the antiquated system that unfairly burdens the elderly and does not take the proper portions of the wealthy. As you know, efforts were made in the past to institute a new system in the place of our present problem filled tax structure; they failed. However, I am confident that the people of this state and their General Assembly are ready for far reaching and lasting action and reform. I know I am.

Throughout that upcoming process, I hope that you continue your participation, writing and calling with your comments and questions. The article you sent presents one of the several ideas being considered within the General Assembly. Compromises and deliberations will undoubtedly take place in this historic consideration. I look forward to hearing from you during those developments.

Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,


Thomas J. Scrimenti
State Representative

/js

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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES

PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE
AGING AND YOUTH
INSURANCE
FEDERAL-STATE RELATIONS

January 12, 1994

Mr. Ronald J. Booser

Wattsburg, PA 16442

Dear Mr. Booser:

Thank you for your recent letter and newspaper article concerning proposed local tax reform efforts. I certainly understand and share your concern about the possible detrimental impact of any changes in the structure of our local tax system. However, I also believe that we must begin moving away from the current property tax-based system with its seemingly endless number of millage increases.

You are correct, of course, in your assertion that the article did not discuss all the pertinent facts in the Allegheny County legislation (Act 77 of 1993). I believe that does qualify as a tax reform measure because in exchange for the one percent increase in the sales tax Allegheny County had to eliminate the personal property tax and permanently freeze property assessments for low-income senior citizens, while local municipalities had to reduce their property taxes. Thus, although Act 77 was not completely revenue-neutral, a vast majority of the sales tax revenue went directly toward tax relief. Thus, this legislation marks the first step in the move toward a fairer tax system which is based on ability to pay, not on property ownership.

You also point out that approximately forty percent (40%) of the current Erie County sales tax comes from people living outside the County, which means, of course, that sixty percent (60%) of these revenues come from residents of Erie County. While this means that a majority of the revenue generated by the proposed sales tax will come from Erie County residents, these residents currently pay one-hundred percent (100%) of the property taxes and personal property taxes in the County. Thus, the sales tax will succeed in shifting a portion of the tax burden to non-residents.

I certainly hope that this explanation clears up some of your questions about tax reform. Please be assured that I will work to ensure that any tax reform efforts are not large tax increases in disguise. If I can be of further assistance on this or any other issue in the future, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom Scrimenti".

Thomas J. Scrimenti
State Representative

COMMITTEES

PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE
AGING AND YOUTH
INSURANCE
FEDERAL-STATE RELATIONS



House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

March 15, 1994

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Mr. Daniel P. Reese

North East, PA 16428-1423

Dear Mr. Reese: - Dan,

Thank you for contacting me to express your views in support of a graduated income tax to replace the current property tax and to inquire about the eligibility requirements for receiving benefits from the state lottery.

As you may know, the House of Representatives recently debated the issue of Local Tax Reform and passed House Bill 2202. This bill provides for a "shift" away from the primary reliance upon property tax to more of a reliance upon either a personal income tax (PIT) or a sales tax. Counties are given the option of whether or not they wish to come under this new tax reform legislation; if not, counties may continue to operate under current law (Act 511).

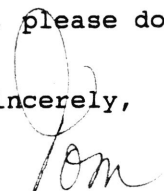
I am in full agreement with you about the need to create a greater degree of tax "fairness" by providing local government the option of shifting to an income tax. Property owners are simply carrying too much of the local tax burden under our current tax laws.

You have also inquired about when you will benefit from our state lottery. In response to this question, I contacted the State Lottery Commission to obtain the eligibility requirements for senior citizens to benefit from the lottery. They provided the enclosed information which details the "Lottery-Funded Benefit Programs" and also includes a "Pennsylvania Lottery Economic and Benefit Impact Report" for the 1992/93 fiscal year.

The first report explains how the state lottery has benefitted certain state programs for senior citizens and indicates which programs in particular are affected. The second report explains how the state lottery has economically impacted counties in the state. A copy of each of these reports is enclosed for your review and information.

If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,


Thomas J. Scrimenti
State Representative

/js
enclosures

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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG
April 27, 1998

COMMITTEES

AGING AND YOUTH
DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN OF THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AGING
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Larry A. Chace
Chace Farm

████████████████████
North East, PA 16428-3241

Dear Mr. Chace:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding House Bill 2450, which would authorize a "homestead" and "farmstead" property tax exemption. Your thoughts are welcomed and valued. I hope you will continue to contact me with your insights.

House Bill 2450 defines "farmstead" as all buildings/structures on a farm, not less than ten contiguous acres, which is the primary residence of the property owner(s). The bill would also appropriate \$6 million to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development for the purpose of making one time transition grants to counties for the costs of implementing this act. House Bill 2450 was referred to the House Finance Committee on March 18, 1998. The bill must be reported out of committee before any legislative action is initiated by the House.

Pennsylvania is built upon and strengthened by the many contributions provided to us by our farmers. The General Assembly must support measures that enable Pennsylvania farms to endure and prosper.

Please be assured that I will take your thoughts into account when and if House Bill 2450 or any other legislation regarding a "farmstead" property tax exemption is considered by the House. If you have questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom Scrimenti".

Thomas J. Scrimenti
State Representative

/dje

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COMMITTEES

AGING AND OLDER ADULT SERVICES
DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN OF THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CARE AND SERVICES
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

April 8, 2002

Ms. Dainia Adams

Waterford, PA 16441

Dear Ms. Adams:

Thank you for your regarding to your concerns with increasing property taxes. It is always a pleasure to be informed about issues that are of chief importance to the residents of my area.

As you are probably aware, increasing property taxes is an issue that has been at the center of much discussion and debate. I believe that while it is imperative that schools receive the funding they need, it is also essential that hard-earned tax dollars are put back into the pockets of taxpayers like yourself.

In response to this issue, the General Assembly has introduced numerous pieces of legislation that would reduce or eliminate school property taxes. One bill in particular, House Bill 418, would prohibit the increase of real property taxes by school districts. This bill would require school districts to reduce the base year amount of its taxes by one-third by the end of the current fiscal year and by two-thirds at the end of next year's fiscal year.

At this writing, House Bill 418 is in the House Finance Committee where it is undergoing modification and review. While I am not a member of the House Finance Committee, I will certainly keep your views in mind when, and if this bill comes to the floor of the House of Representatives for a vote. Please be advised that I will continue to work with my fellow colleagues to bring about a decrease in property taxes for hard working taxpayers throughout the Commonwealth.

Again, thank you for apprising me of your concerns on this issue. If I may be of any further assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom Scrimenti".

Thomas J. Scrimenti
State Representative

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COMMITTEES

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DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN OF THE
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AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

July 11, 2002

Mike and Candice Kirik

██████████
Union City, PA 16438

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Kirik:

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks for your efforts to complete my legislative survey concerning property taxes. I appreciate the time taken to share your concerns and include me in your thoughts. Your opinions and guidance will certainly prove invaluable as I join my colleagues to debate the issues affecting the lives of Pennsylvania residents.

As I hope you know, it is truly an honor for me to serve the residents of the 4th Legislative District as a member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. I take this responsibility very seriously and look to my constituents to share their thoughts and concerns with me. Only through this dialogue and exchange of ideas can I serve your needs and make informed decisions on the issues that impact you and your families. To that end, I am pleased that you responded to my recent survey concerning property taxes. As a state legislator, I recognize the need to fight for meaningful tax reform to help those on fixed incomes. Meanwhile, I also recognize the need to ensure our schools are adequately funded and equipped with the resources needed to provide a quality education for our young people.

In reference to your thoughts on ultimately eliminating property taxes for seniors, I firmly believe it is a matter of sound public policy to provide seniors with much needed tax relief that would enable seniors to remain in peaceable possession of their homes, in addition to relieving their economic burden. As such, please be assured that I will remain mindful of your comments as I join my colleagues in efforts to advance proposals aimed at addressing the problem of rising property taxes in Pennsylvania.

Again, I thank you for the time you have taken to complete my recent survey. By responding, you are lending your voice and support to a critical issue that touches the lives of all Pennsylvanians. As always, I appreciate hearing your views and welcome your continued input as my colleagues and I continue to debate this important issue. If I can provide any future assistance to you or your family, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom'.

Thomas J. Scrimenti
State Representative
4th Legislative District

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AGING AND OLDER ADULT SERVICES
DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN OF THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CARE AND SERVICES
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

October 9, 2002

*Mailed from
NE office 10/15/02*

Mr. Clarence Stockton

████████████████████
Wattsburg, PA 16442

Dear Mr. Stockton:

Thank you for taking the time to contact me and share your concerns and thoughts regarding issues important to you. As Democratic Chairman of the Subcommittee on Care and Services for the House Aging and Older Adult Services Committee, I appreciate and share your interest in seniors' health care.

As you may know and as proven by my record of service, ensuring a high quality of life for Pennsylvania seniors is one of my top priorities. I recognize the contribution seniors have made to the strength of our Commonwealth and to the vitality of our communities. Because I believe that the current health care system often leaves behind those who need help the most, I will continue to work for a more effective and efficient health care delivery system.

In an effort to help older Pennsylvanians, I joined my colleagues in the current legislative session to aid seniors in affording prescription drugs. Specifically, I co-sponsored an amendment to the Tobacco Settlement Act allowing for a portion of the settlement funds to be allocated to the Pharmaceutical Assistance Contract to the Elderly (PACE) program. This act provided an important eligibility adjustment allowing for temporary re-enrollment, until December 31, 2002, of those who were bumped from PACE beginning December 31, 2000 due to social security adjustments for cost of living. In addition, I support newly introduced legislation that will enable seniors expecting a social security cost of living increase through 2003 to continue to benefit from the PACE program.

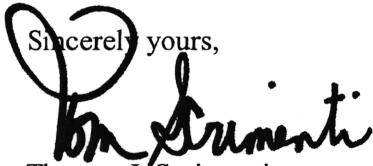
In regards to your thoughts on the need for property tax reform, I agree wholeheartedly with you about this. In particular, Florida's Homestead Act, which provides for a \$25,000.00 property tax exemption from a property's assessed value for purposes of real estate taxation, is certainly an idea worth considering for Pennsylvania. Indeed, every Florida resident is also entitled to have his interest in his homestead exempt from forced sale for the collection of money judgments. This is why I signed the petition that called for a special legislative session to address the problem of skyrocketing property taxes across the Commonwealth. This special session is designed to focus solely on providing property tax relief for every homeowner. The session officially began on September 4, 2002 and is scheduled to continue through November 30, 2002. I am hopeful that we will be able to make meaningful, effective and fair changes to our tax structure so that our elderly citizens and all Pennsylvanians will benefit.

Clarence Stockton
Page 2
October 9, 2002

You have also expressed your opposition to Senate Bill 1158, which would exclude elk kept in livestock operations from the definition of game animals, thereby effectively eliminating Pennsylvania Game Commission oversight of captive elk farming, and placing it under the Pennsylvania Agriculture Department. I appreciate your serious concerns about this legislation, and about the devastating effect that Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) could have upon our deer and elk herds, as well as upon our livestock, if it were to be spread into Pennsylvania. Fortunately, although the threat of CWD is growing, there have been no confirmed or suspected cases of CWD in Pennsylvania's wild or captive deer or elk herds. Further, with Pennsylvania having recently banned the importation of live deer and elk, the Game Commission is being proactive in its attempts to prevent CWD from spreading to the Commonwealth. Please know that I will be sure to keep your views in mind should Senate Bill 1158 be brought before the full House of Representatives for debate and voting.

Again, I thank you for contacting my office and including me in your thoughts. I will certainly share your concerns with my colleagues in Harrisburg. In the meantime, if I may be of further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Scrimenti". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "T".

Thomas J. Scrimenti
State Representative
4th Legislative District

THOMAS J. SCRIMENTI
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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES

AGING AND OLDER ADULT SERVICES
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS
DEMOCRATIC VICE CHAIRMAN

July 7, 2003

Dean Warnken

████████████████████
Erie, PA 16510-4745

Dear Mr. Warnken:

I am writing in response to your letter regarding the Commonwealth Caucus' Tax Reform Plan. As you may know, I have been a strong supporter of property tax reform for many years. Although we have not been able to agree upon a plan that would provide meaningful reform, to date, I am optimistic that the will exists in the General Assembly to forge an effective solution to this complex problem.

The Commonwealth Caucus' recent proposal is found in House Bill 25, known as the Real Property Tax Elimination Act. This legislation is well intended in that it seeks to provide the tool for ensuring our school districts are equitably and efficiently funded with a measure of accountability. As you know, the plan decreases the rate of the state sales tax from six percent to four percent while repealing exemptions for food and clothing. School property taxes would be eliminated over two to three years, and local nuisance taxes used for school funding would also be eliminated.

Proponents of House Bill 25 point out that a four percent sales tax on all goods, including food and clothing, would generate \$15.4 billion, whereas the current six percent sales tax, including exemptions for food, clothing and a host of other items, has raised only \$7 billion. They also believe the plan would make Pennsylvania more competitive with neighboring states, many of whom tax retail transactions, including the purchase of food and clothing, at a rate much higher than four percent on average. However, others are concerned that House Bill 25 would hit low income people the hardest, with the sales tax already viewed as a regressive tax. Additionally, some believe that relying on sales taxes to fund schools is too risky, because revenue is subject to economic forces. For example, decreased retail sales of big-ticket items in bad economic times would result in a decrease in sales tax revenue.

Thank you for writing regarding this important issue. I assure you that I will continue to work with my colleagues to examine all proposals and find a solution that best fits the needs of the residents of our Commonwealth. If I may be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom Scrimenti".

Thomas J. Scrimenti
State Representative
4th Legislative District

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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES

AGING AND OLDER ADULT SERVICES
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS
DEMOCRATIC VICE CHAIRMAN

July 23, 2003

Mr. James M. Snyder
President
Snyder's Auto Parts
955 North Center Street
Corry, PA 16407

Dear Mr. Snyder:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding Governor Rendell's Plan for a New Pennsylvania and its Capital Stock and Franchise Tax component. As an avid supporter of small business and economic development, I appreciate your professional insights on this important matter.

The prospect for a budget agreement with minor tax increases, important education reforms, and lower property taxes appears more promising today than it did a few short days ago. Furthermore, Pennsylvania is slated to receive an extra \$900 million in federal funds due to the sweeping tax cuts recently enacted in Washington. That development has eased the strain on Pennsylvania's budget, thereby reducing the need to impose higher taxes.

Under the proposal now under discussion, local voters would be asked whether they want to increase local earned income taxes in return for a reduction in local property taxes. School districts that adopt such a tax shift would get \$5 more in gaming revenue from Harrisburg for every \$1 reduction in property taxes. Of course, this scenario relies heavily on the enactment of an expanded "slots at racetracks" bill, which many believe still faces an uphill battle. Moreover, it is unclear whether the governor's original tax-reform plan will be completely discarded or if certain aspects of it will remain in the final budget resolution.

In any event, please be certain that your urgent message will be remembered and respected as the budget and other vital matters are at last debated and resolved before the General Assembly adjourns for the summer. I will continue to do my best to protect the interests of the 4th Legislative District and our hard-working citizens. If I may be of further assistance with this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas J. Scrimenti".

Thomas J. Scrimenti
State Representative