

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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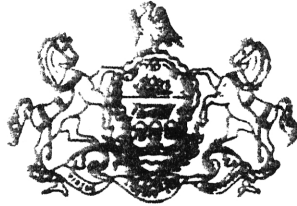
March 12, 1980

O'DONNELL LEADS FIGHT FOR BANKRUPTCY LAW CHANGES

State Representative Robert W. O'Donnell, D-Philadelphia, was the leading opponent of a bill in the House Judiciary Committee which would limit the property exemptions available to debtors in Pennsylvania.

Under current bankruptcy law, a debtor in Pennsylvania has an option as to which items of property he can exempt from a creditor's reach. The debtor can take advantage of the federal bankruptcy exemptions or the state exemptions. The Judiciary Committee bill would limit the debtor to using the state exemptions.

"I opposed the bill because the Pennsylvania exemptions are antiquated and are among the lowest in the nation," O'Donnell said. "We cannot force the individual into using only the Pennsylvania exemptions, as opposed to the higher federal exemptions, unless the state exemptions are updated."



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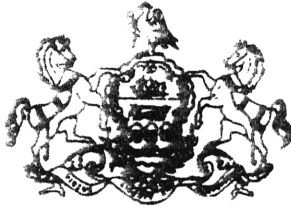
March 12, 1980

"If the bill is passed, it will work against the purpose behind having property exemptions. The purpose of the exemptions is to enable an individual debtor who has availed himself of the remedy of bankruptcy to have a 'fresh start' when the process is complete. The exemptions are designed to leave the individual with sufficient assets for this fresh start."

O'Donnell added, "if we allow the bill to limit a debtor to the outdated Pennsylvania exemptions, he will not have enough assets to make this start."

In addition, O'Donnell said that the bill would have a particularly harsh impact in Philadelphia.

"We have had a declining economic base in Philadelphia for the past few years," O'Donnell said. In addition, the national economic indicators which point to a recession mean that the economic problems of Philadelphia will intensify. As the city's economic problems worsen and people have mounting problems with the credit mechanism, the number of individual bankruptcies will increase. If these debtors have only a few assets when the bankruptcy process is complete, they will be unable to continue participation in



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the Philadelphia economic system. This will affect other sectors of the economy and the spiral downward will continue."

"If we can defeat this bill or update the current exemptions, a degree of stability will be insured in the Philadelphia economy," O'Donnell said. "There will be a level of assets beyond which no individual debtor can fall. This will enable the debtor to continue participating in the local economy."

O'Donnell's opposition to the bill resulted in the Judiciary Committee deciding to delay the bill pending further research into the problem by a special sub-committee. O'Donnell was appointed to this sub-committee.

ROBERT W. O'DONNELL
THE MAJORITY WHIP



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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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HARRISBURG

July 6, 1984

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: ROB DUNHAM, 843-1700

O'DONNELL BAD CHECK BILL BECOMES LAW

State Representative Robert W. O'Donnell's bill that would give consumers and small businesses greater protection against bad check writers was signed into law today by Governor Richard Thornburgh.

O'Donnell (D-Germantown), the House Majority Whip, who introduced the bill early this year, called the new law "a needed relief to people who have been defrauded by bad checks.

"The new law will require a person who has been convicted of passing a bad check to repay his victim the face value of the check plus interest and other charges," O'Donnell explained. "This will help bad check victims to get their money back, and it will stop other people from passing bad checks in the first place."

The Germantown legislator said he was "very pleased that my bill has become law. I think we can now deal much more effectively with the serious problems bad check writers cause for our community."

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Legislative Report

State Representative

Robert W. O'Donnell



December 9, 1985

The state legislature has given final approval to two bills which will provide millions of dollars to the City of Philadelphia without taxing local residents. The first bill would permit the City to refinance its municipal bonds. Since interest rates were significantly higher when the bonds were first issued, refinancing would save Philadelphia at least ten million dollars in interest payments to banks. The timing of this bill was crucial because Congress is considering legislation that could prohibit this kind of financing in the future.

The other bill would allow the City to continue to charge a three percent hotel tax. The revenues from this tax, which is paid largely by tourists and out-of-town businesses, are used to promote tourism in Philadelphia. The tax initially had been authorized for a three-year period which would have run out at the end of the year. This bill re-authorizes the tax for another three years.

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This is the last week the House will be in session in 1985. I will resume sending you "This Week in Harrisburg" when the legislature convenes again in late January.