

ROBERT W. O'DONNELL
CHAIRMAN OF THE
DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS



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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

March 10, 1982

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: ROB DUNHAM, 843-1700

O'DONNELL JOBS PROPOSAL BECOMES LAW

A jobs proposal introduced by State Representative Robert W. O'Donnell, Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, was signed into law by Governor Thornburgh last Thursday.

O'Donnell first offered the proposal as an amendment to a senate bill on investment of state funds and annuities. The amendment requires that whenever possible state employee pension funds be used to promote employment for Pennsylvanians. Investment of these funds are regulated by state law.

"In a time when 59 counties in Pennsylvania are suffering from double-digit unemployment, and state-wide unemployment is the worst since the Depression, we have to make every effort to get people back to work," O'Donnell said. "New jobs require new capital investment in Pennsylvania. Pension funds are among the most important sources for such investment."

O'Donnell called the new law "a good example of making our state funds work for us. State pension investments will no longer just move to the Sunbelt. Now they'll be creating opportunities for Pennsylvania's unemployed."

Less than 10% of the more than \$3 billion pension fund is currently invested in ways that could create jobs for Pennsylvanians, O'Donnell said. The fund is one of the major investment funds in the state.

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 28, 1982

CONTACT: ROB DUNHAM, 843-1700

O'DONNELL URGES PRIORITY FOR JOBS PROGRAMS

State Representative Robert W. O'Donnell, D-Germantown, last weekend urged national leaders of the Democratic Party to make action on jobs their highest priority.

O'Donnell, who is Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, met with Democratic National Committee Chairman Chuck Manatt, and former Vice President Walter Mondale during the recent Democratic National Party Conference here in Philadelphia.

O'Donnell said he urged the action on jobs "because employment is the primary source of family security and social stability, and unemployment is the single worst threat to that security.

"At a time when joblessness in Pennsylvania is at Depression-era levels, and more Americans are jobless than at any other time since 1939, it is imperative that jobs programs be given the highest priority. Unemployment among Black teenagers is now 49% -- the worst in history," O'Donnell explained.

O'Donnell added that "the party mid-term conference provided an ideal opportunity to stress the importance of this issue to leading Democrats across the country."

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

February 2, 1983

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: ROB DUNHAM, 843-1700

O'DONNELL PROPOSES COMMUNITY CAPITALISM JOBS PLAN

House Majority Whip Robert W. O'Donnell (D-Germantown) and three other state representatives today proposed a "community capitalism" program to protect employees and communities from major business shutdowns.

The job-preservation program, sponsored by O'Donnell and Representatives David Sweet (D-Washington County), Joseph Hoeffel (D-Montgomery), and Thomas Michlovic (D-Allegheny), is designed to help workers and community investors purchase and operate facilities which face abandonment by their parent companies.

O'Donnell said "parent companies frequently close plants because they can earn greater profits with less effort from other investments. Our plan will support these marginal but high employment industries."

The community capitalism legislation, which will be introduced this week, will establish a system of capital formation and regulatory reform permitting employees and outside investors to purchase a facility, continue its operations, and preserve jobs.

"Community and employee ownership and management keep important local economic activity alive," O'Donnell said. "This new program offers communities and workers the tools to help themselves."

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O'DONNELL INTRODUCES THREE JOBS BILLS

1983

HARRISBURG, MARCH 21--State Representative Robert W. O'Donnell (D-Philadelphia), the House Majority Whip, today introduced legislation to spur the creation of jobs in Pennsylvania.

O'Donnell's three bill package, co-sponsored by 50 other House legislators, would employ more Pennsylvania citizens by changing the laws regulating state purchases and pension investments, and by directing the Department of Environmental Resources to devise and implement a State park and forest development plan.

"The state has the power and the responsibility to make a dent in this Depression," O'Donnell said. "We can no longer afford to wait for the federal government and the private sector to take decisive action.

"It has become self-defeating for the Commonwealth to purchase its goods and services from out-of-state vendors when the same products are available in-state, and for our state pension funds to invest in the Sunbelt when they can help rebuild Pennsylvania," he added. "It is essential that we promote and protect our own jobs.

"These bills require the state government to 'buy Pennsylvanian' unless a product is unavailable in-state or if its purchase here would be economically prohibitive," O'Donnell explained. "They further require that by the end of this year at least 10% of all state pension investments shall directly result in the employment of Pennsylvania residents."

O'Donnell said his third bill "would provide for new jobs in state parks and forests through the construction or expansion of recreational facilities and

JOBS BILLS INTRODUCED

ADD ONE

environmental centers on state grounds."

This construction would include, but not be limited to, camps, cabins, bike and ski trails, and boat launching and mooring areas, O'Donnell said.

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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HARRISBURG

May 2, 1983

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: ROB DUNHAM, 843-1700

O'DONNELL PROPOSES PENSION RECOVERY PLAN

State Representative Robert W. O'Donnell (D-198), the House Majority Whip, has introduced a bill creating a municipal pension recovery program to assist public pension funds in danger of going bankrupt.

"The municipal pensions across Pennsylvania now have unfunded liabilities in excess of \$2½ billion, and the problem gets worse every day," O'Donnell said.

O'Donnell's proposal would establish uniform funding standards for municipal pension systems and require these plans to invest enough money each year to cover their future payment obligations. The bill also calls for the classification of municipal pensions according to their level of financial distress, and provide loans and other emergency services to the most seriously endangered funds.

"There are now some municipal pension funds in Pennsylvania that have virtually no assets," O'Donnell said. "The money current employees pay into these plans is already being paid out to retired workers. If the legislature doesn't act now to rescue these pension plans, we are going to be facing a major statewide financial crisis."

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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HARRISBURG

August 3, 1983

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: ROB DUNHAM, 843-1700

SOUTHWEST GERMANTOWN NAMED "ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT AREA"

State Representative Robert W. O'Donnell (D-Germantown) today announced that Southwest Germantown and Hunting Park West have been designated as part of a Philadelphia "enterprise development area" by the state Department of Community Affairs.

That designation, O'Donnell said, will make the area eligible for a share of a \$250,000 state economic development grant to the City and will give Southwest Germantown and Hunting Park West high priority status for other state human service and economic development subsidies. Also sharing in Philadelphia's enterprise zone status will be West Parkside and American Street.

O'Donnell, who was an early supporter of the revitalization proposal and lobbied city and state authorities for enterprise zone designation said "I am pleased that Southwest Germantown will be able to share in the City's designation, but it is a real disappointment that the Thornburgh administration has chosen to dilute the impact of the program by failing to commit itself to serious improvements in one community."

The Hunting Park West enterprise development area includes Southwest Germantown below Coulter Street, bordered by Germantown Avenue on the east and Wissahickon Avenue on the west. It also includes the Hunting Park and Wayne Junction industrial corridor and parts of Tioga-Nicetown.

O'Donnell credited strong community involvement with securing the enterprise zone designation. "We would never have gotten this far without hard work and close

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Enterprise Development Area

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co-operation between neighborhood businesses and community groups throughout Southwest Germantown and Hunting Park West," the legislator said. "I am hopeful that our neighborhood will be helped by this program."

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

March 26, 1984

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: ROB DUNHAM, 843-1700

O'DONNELL PROPOSALS PART OF STATE BALLOT QUESTION

A number of job creation and job preservation programs proposed by State Representative Robert O'Donnelli (D-East Falls) and other state Democratic leaders will be part of a state-wide ballot question submitted to Pennsylvania voters on April 10.

Included among the projects agreed to by the Governor and state legislative leaders to be funded by the \$190,000,000 Pennsylvania Economic Redevelopment Bond Plan are O'Donnell's Community Capitalism and Youth Conservation Corps programs.

Community Capitalism would preserve existing jobs and protect communities from business closings by helping employees and neighborhood investors purchase and operate facilities which are being abandoned by their parent companies.

The Youth Conservation Corps program would provide jobs for unemployed youths between the ages of 18 and 25 building camp grounds, bike trails and other recreational facilities in Pennsylvania's state parks.

O'Donnell called the proposals "the type of jobs programs the state should be implementing. Community Capitalism gives communities and workers the tools to keep important local businesses alive, and the parks construction

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program will create jobs that pay for themselves, because the improvements will attract more park visitors and increase state revenues."

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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June 20, 1984

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: ROB DUNHAM, 343-1700

O'DONNELL 'BUY PENNSYLVANIAN' PLAN PASSES HOUSE

The State House of Representatives today overwhelmingly approved a jobs bill by State Representative Robert W. O'Donnell (D-East Falls) that would require the state Department of General Services to develop a plan to employ more Pennsylvania residents.

O'Donnell's bill, which passed the House by a 190-5 vote, would require the Department to prepare a report by December 31 describing the effect of state purchases on jobs in Pennsylvania. The Department would also submit a plan to the legislature presenting ways in which buying Pennsylvania could increase employment in the state.

O'Donnell called Pennsylvania's out-of-state purchases "harmful to the state economy. Every out-of-Pennsylvania purchase costs the state through decreased tax revenues and increased unemployment compensation or public assistance payments.

"It doesn't make sense for the state to buy its goods and services elsewhere if we can get comparable prices from Pennsylvania-based companies," O'Donnell said. "We are in a position to make more jobs available by buying Pennsylvanian whenever possible, and we ought to take advantage of those opportunities."

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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December 18, 1984

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: ROB DUNHAM, 843-1700

O'DONNELL PENSION REFORM BILL BECOMES LAW

Governor Richard Thornburgh today signed into law State Representative Robert W. O'Donnell's plan to protect the pensions of Pennsylvania's retired municipal employees, police officers, and firefighters.

O'Donnell (D-Germantown), the House Majority Whip, called the new law "tremendously important. Many of Pennsylvania's municipal pension systems are near bankruptcy, and Philadelphia's pension plan is deep in the red. Any delay in resolving this problem could have been catastrophic."

The Municipal Pension Recovery Act, which O'Donnell introduced in April 1983, authorizes the creation of a \$500 million emergency fund to rescue Pennsylvania's debt-ridden pension systems, and changes the formula by which the state allocates monies to local pensions. The new law also requires local governments to pay in enough money to pension programs to cover the costs of future payouts.

"The City will receive an extra \$4 million annually as a result of the formula change and \$330 million over a 15-year period from the emergency fund," O'Donnell explained.

"People approaching retirement have enough on their minds without having to worry about their pensions," the Germantown legislator said. "This law will help stabilize Philadelphia's municipal pension plan and protect City taxpayers and retired workers from the effects of our enormous pension debt."



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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DETAILS OF THE COMMUNITY CAPITALISM PROPOSAL:

The legislative program developed by Representatives Sweet, O'Donnell, Hoeffel, and Michlovic consists of the following items:

--A Distressed Communities Task Force will be created, composed of the secretaries of commerce, labor and industry, and community affairs.

The Task Force will mediate between parent companies and workers and communities when a shutdown is announced; make grants for feasibility studies of a facility's profitability; advocate emergency assistance in case of a shutdown affecting thousands of jobs; and certify a project as appropriate for assistance.

--A Pennsylvania Capital Finance Development Corporation and local community development corporations will be formed and given a \$10 million authorization.

These agencies will purchase equity in existing businesses where capital is needed to save jobs; provide low-interest loans as working capital in restructuring a fair business; and permit outside investors to purchase shares in these agencies as a secondary means of raising capital.

--Public pension funds will be permitted to invest in CFDC stock, with the full faith and credit of the Commonwealth pledged to insure the safety of the investment. Up to 10% of a pension fund's assets may be used.

Under limited circumstances, local and municipal authorities will be permitted to exercise eminent domain powers for the temporary acquisition of a plant or facility within its jurisdiction. This power will be allowed only for the purpose of preserving a facility and its assets in order to prevent their liquidation by a parent company.

DETAILS (CONT.)

The Pennsylvania Securities Commission recently adopted new regulations after consultation with the four legislators and careful study. The regulatory changes will allow existing businesses to receive indications of investor interest by means of non-binding subscription agreements; and ease burdensome filing requirements in cases of employee-community buy-out attempts.

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April 26, 1985

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Ben Schuster 843-1700

REP. O'DONNELL CITES BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS
AND THE CRIME PREVENTION ASSOCIATION OF PHILADELPHIA

State Representative Robert W. O'Donnell (D-Germantown) presented citations honoring the Boys and Girls Clubs of Metropolitan Philadelphia, Inc. and the Crime Prevention Association of Philadelphia at the Annual Youth Recognition Dinner of the two organizations on Wednesday, April 24, 1985.

The citations presented by Representative O'Donnell also congratulated the seventeen young people from the eight clubs and three centers who were named Outstanding Young People for their dedication to home, school, and church and for the leadership they have demonstrated in each of their respective communities.

Two of the honorees — Kia McClure and Steven Fortune — are members of the Wissahickon Boys and Girls Club located at Coulter and Morris Streets. Steven Fortune, a Senior at Saul High School was also honored at the ceremonies as the city-wide Outstanding Young Man of the Year. Kia McClure is a junior at Germantown High School.

Representative O'Donnell told the honorees and their families, "I am proud to be a graduate of the Germantown Boys and Girls Club. Your dedication and commitment to these important organizations will make sure they will be here to provide greater opportunities for the next generation of young people."

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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HARRISBURG

January 28, 1986

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: ROB DUNHAM, 843-1700

O'DONNELL ENDORSES WOMEN'S & CHILDREN'S BUDGET

State Representative Robert W. O'Donnell (D-Germantown), the House Majority Whip, today endorsed the "Women's and Children's Budget" for 1986

at a Harrisburg press conference convened by Women's Agenda, the non-partisan organization of individuals and groups supporting women's issues in Pennsylvania.

O'Donnell, who last year spearheaded the effort that increased state day care subsidies by \$6 million, represented the House Democratic leadership at the ceremony.

The Women's and Children's Budget calls for increased state funding for job training programs for women, child care, drug and alcohol abuse treatment, shelters for battered women and their children, community care for the elderly, and infant mortality prevention and maternal/infant care programs.

O'Donnell praised the Women's Agenda budget as "a really good way to organize and to generate support for these issues for which a number of us have been fighting for years."

The Germantown legislator said "I'm very pleased that the women's groups have established a set of legislative priorities and become actively involved in the state budget. As far as we are concerned, the budget process started here today. We have set the focus and will fight to obtain increased funding for these programs."