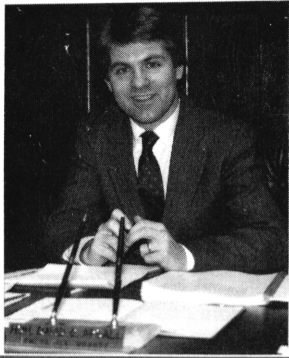


Rep. Paul Semmel



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Rep. David Argall

FEBRUARY 1992

SPECIAL FOCUS: PROPOSED HERITAGE PARKS

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

This newsletter will focus on a number of issues, but as indicated above the prime focus will be the progress of the state's Heritage Park program. Of particular interest to our area are the Schuylkill River/Heritage Park study and the Delaware and Lehigh Canal National Heritage Corridor. On pages two and three, we will explain these Heritage Park programs in detail and provide updates on their progress. Each contains a number of unique elements which offer great promise for the economic and recreational potential for our area.

In addition, we wish to discuss a number of other important topics. We share the view that reform of the budget-making process and many other aspects of Pennsylvania's legislative process is of vital importance. This is especially true given the disastrous budget and tax package - the largest tax increase in Pennsylvania history - **which we all strongly opposed** last year and which was signed into law by Gov. Casey in August. On page 4 you will find information on our participation in a special Legislative Reform Task Force, which is working toward the goal that such a fiasco never occurs again.

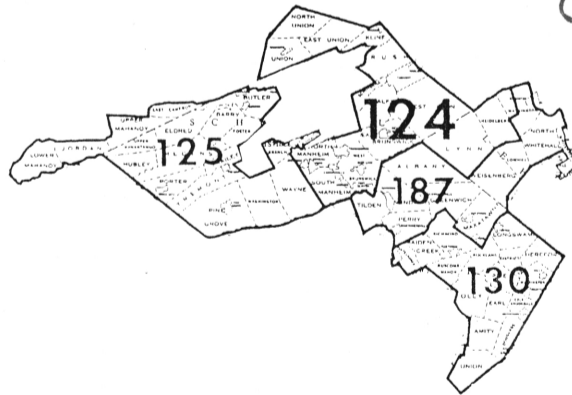
Preserving and protecting the environment is another major concern. Several of our House members have formed an Environmental Task Force to speak to citizens and organizations across the state, receive testimony and formulate proposals to improve Pennsylvania's environment. More on our involvement in that effort on page four.

A final topic which affects the citizens of our districts is that of legislative reapportionment or redistricting. It means significant changes for a number of citizens, and we wish to make you as informed as possible about the changes. It is our goal to continue the spirit of regional and issue-oriented cooperation we have always enjoyed to better serve our constituents. The maps below depict the new district configurations.

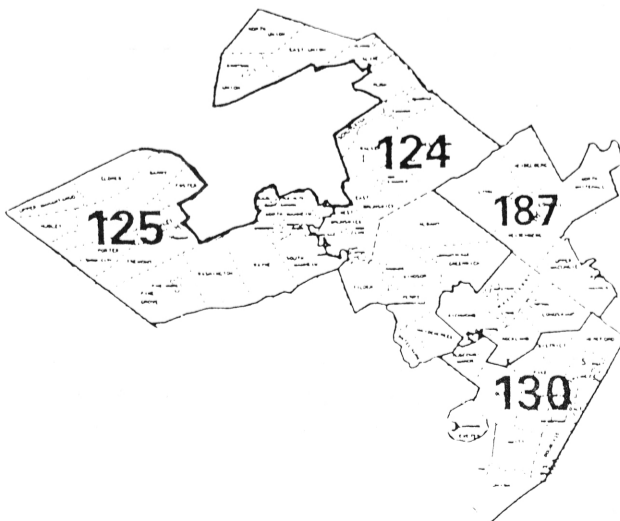
As always, should you or your family need help with a state-related problem, please contact our district offices for assistance.

Sincerely,

Paul Semmel *Dave Argall*



Present Configuration of the 124th, 125th, 130th, 187th Districts



New configuration (effective 12-92) of 124th, 125th, 130th, 187th Districts



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

HERITAGE CORRIDORS

THE HERITAGE PARK/CORRIDOR CONCEPT

The concept of heritage parks represents a new approach to the normal perception of either history or parks. The heritage park is regional in nature and may cover hundreds of miles in many different communities, like the 128 mile proposed Schuylkill River Corridor Heritage Park running from Schuylkill County to Philadelphia and the 150 mile Delaware and Lehigh Canal Heritage Corridor. They are not owned by the government but reflect a complex partnership between community groups, business and industry, private landowners and state and local government.

A heritage park combines the past with the present. The stated objectives of the program are five in number: economic development; intergovernmental cooperation; cultural conservation; recreation; and education. The goal is to protect and nurture a region's historic resources to build a better economy today. The concept combines social, industrial and natural history to form a unique blend of education, preservation, development, interpretation, recreation and tourism.

In Pennsylvania, state government is encouraging the development of heritage parks and corridors. The program began with the combined efforts of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and the departments of Environmental Resources and Community Affairs.

Nine heritage parks and corridors are under development in Pennsylvania. In addition to the Schuylkill River Corridor and the Delaware and Lehigh Canal Corridor, there are others: the Oil Region Heritage Park in northwest Pennsylvania; the Lackawanna Valley Heritage Park centered around Steamtown; the Lumber Region Heritage Park in northcentral Pennsylvania; the Mon Valley Heritage Park; National Road Heritage Park and Lincoln Highway Corridor in southwestern Pennsylvania; and the Allegheny Ridge Industrial Heritage Corridor near Altoona and Johnstown.

The Heritage Park concept provides a new way to bring private and public assets together for the benefit of all citizens.

“If we don't have history from Philadelphia to Valley Forge to the coal that fired the Industrial Revolution in Schuylkill County, then nobody has history.” - Victor Yarnell, Director, Schuylkill River Greenway Association

SCHUYLKILL RIVER HERITAGE PARK PROJECT

The Schuylkill River project formally began on March 28, 1990, when the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) approved a \$30,000 feasibility study grant to the Schuylkill River Greenway Association (SRGA). That grant has since been matched with \$10,000 in local funds from participating counties, local municipalities, businesses and private individuals. As proposed, the Schuylkill River corridor project would include parts of five counties: Schuylkill; Berks; Chester; Montgomery; and Philadelphia.

The SRGA hired a consulting firm to conduct the feasibility study. Local task forces were formed to provide assistance, help identify possible sites and generate local interest in the project.

The feasibility study was completed in January, and has embraced the theme of “River of Revolutions” for the Schuylkill corridor. It seems to be a natural one for the area, since the river was a major part of our history from the Revolutionary War sites in Philadelphia, Chester and Montgomery counties, to sites important in the Industrial Revolution including coal mining operations in Schuylkill County and railroads and such sites as Hopewell Furnace and the Gruber Wagonworks in Berks County. Perhaps the latest revolution is the rebirth of the Schuylkill, starting with its designation as the state's first Scenic River, to comprehensive clean-up efforts of acid mine drainage, litter and silt deposits.

It is the recommendation of the project's directors and the feasibility study that the next step be taken and that the corridor be accepted as a Heritage Park. Under this phase, the “blueprint” of the corridor would be laid out, to include determination of actual sites to be part of the park and to determine the park's boundaries.

The local task forces agree on a number of components for the park: a green walking path along the entire length of the river; restoration of historic landmarks; and establishment of picnic, camping and boat access areas. While it is too early to say which sites would be included, a number have been proposed. In Schuylkill County, the list includes: the nation's oldest brewery - the Yuengling Brewery in Pottsville; remnants of the Schuylkill Canal; the Port Clinton and Tamaqua museums; an anthracite deep mine in Ashland which remains open for tourists; other coal mines and breakers; and the New Ringgold gristmill.

Schuylkill shares a number of sites with its neighbors in Berks County: Hawk Mountain; the Blue Mountain and Reading Railroad lines; and the Appalachian Trail.

In Berks County, such sites as Albright's Mill, the Wanamaker, Kempton and Southern Steam railroad and the Farm Museum in Kempton seem natural. In addition, other sites may include: the Allegheny Aqueduct in Gibraltar between Reading and Birdsboro; Hamburg's Bicentennial Trail; Kaercher Creek Park; the Daniel Boone Homestead; the Leesport Lockhouse; the Old Dry Road Farm near Blue Marsh Lake; the Shoemakersville gristmill; and the Berks County Heritage Center. The center, located near the Reading Airport, features a canal museum and access to the towpath along the Union Canal as well as the Gruber Wagonworks.

The park would continue in Chester County with such attractions as old canal locks in North Coventry and Mont Clare, an abandoned canal village at Frick's Lock, covered bridges, the ironworks in Phoenixville, and remnants of a gunpowder mill commissioned by the Continental Congress.

Montgomery and Chester counties share the Valley Forge National Historic Park. Montgomery County is also the site of General George Washington's camps at Norristown and Swedesburg, several riverfront parks and portions of the canal.

Finally Philadelphia boasts Fairmount Park, the Manayunk Canal, Fort Mifflin and John Bartram's Gardens - the oldest botanical garden in the nation. Philadelphia and the other counties all possess a number of fine historical and natural museums.

DELAWARE AND LEHIGH CANAL NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR

The focal points of the Delaware and Lehigh Canal National Heritage Corridor are the old Lehigh Navigation Canal which parallels the Lehigh River from White Haven to Easton, and its sister waterway the Delaware Canal, running along the west bank of the Delaware River from Easton to Bristol. These two waterways and their associated railroads linked Wilkes-Barre and the anthracite coal fields with Pennsylvania's eastern ports. Built in the 1830s and 1840s, the canals were the backbone of a great transportation system.

As such, the corridor includes three distinct regions: the anthracite coal fields of the north; the industrial and religious centers of the Lehigh Valley; and colonial Bucks County to the south.

The canals, together with a broad expanse of land in Luzerne, Carbon, Northampton, Lehigh and Bucks counties, today comprise a National Heritage Corridor as designated by the U.S. Congress in 1988, and are part of the state Heritage Park study area. The heritage corridor effort is coordinated by the Delaware and Lehigh Canal National Heritage Corridor Commission, comprised of 21 persons representing municipalities, counties, historical, recreational, business and environmental concerns, state agencies and the National Park Service.

The planning process for the Heritage Park corridor is expected to be completed this summer. Tentative plans include a trail of more than 125 miles on the canal towpath from Bristol to White Haven and along a refurbished railroad bed trail 26 more miles to Wilkes-Barre.

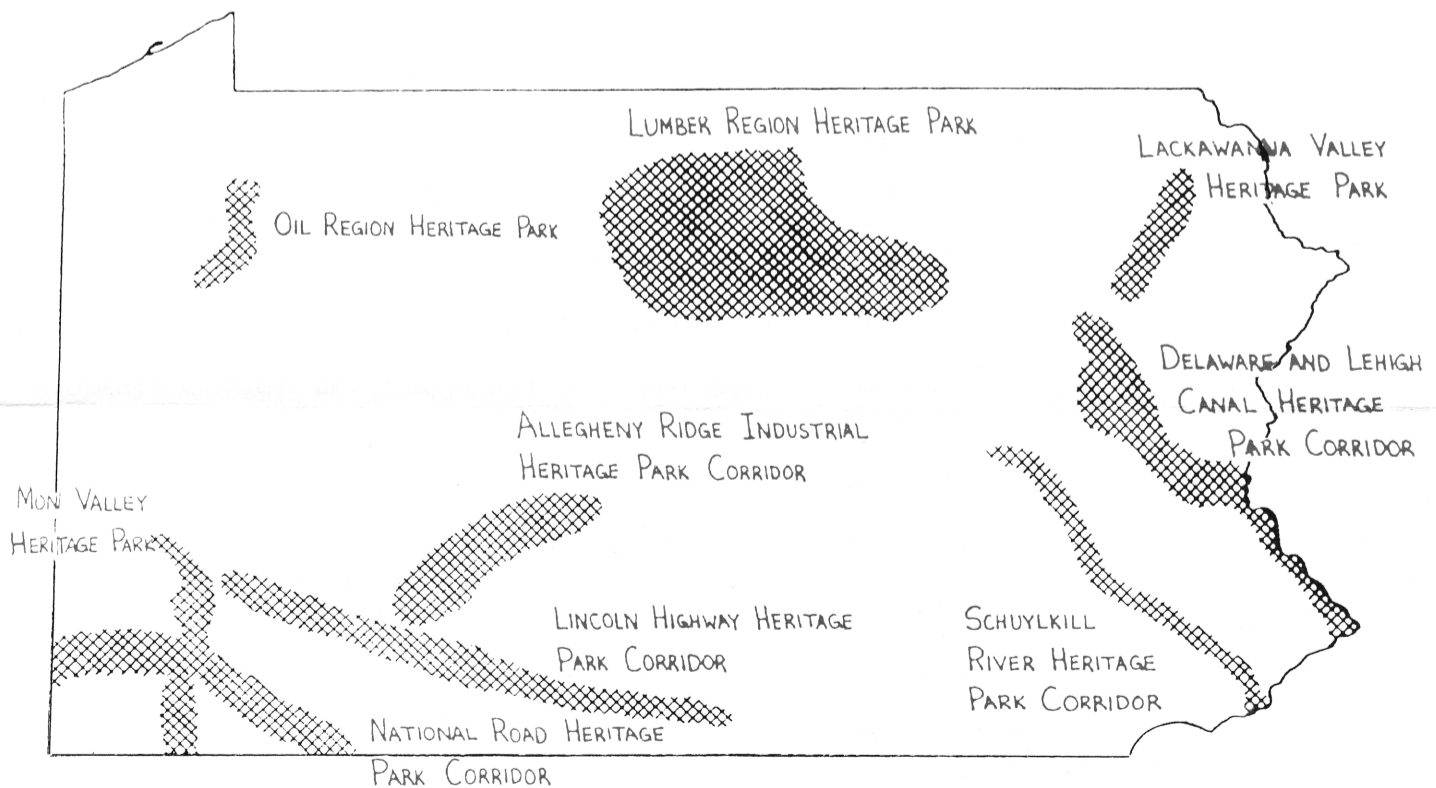
Other sites being studied are the Huber Breaker in Ashley, the now defunct Forge Division of Bethlehem Steel, the Lehigh Gorge, the Victorian mansions of Jim Thorpe, Hickory Run State Park, the restored 18th century Quaker village in Fallsington, William Penn's home and gardens at Pennsbury Manor, the Moravian community in Bethlehem and others.

Anyone wishing more information on the heritage corridor project may contact the Delaware and Lehigh Canal National Heritage Corridor Commission, 10 East Church Street, Room 208, Bethlehem, PA 18018.

IN CONCLUSION...

The heritage park corridor concept presents us with a unique opportunity to preserve, protect and enhance our region's natural, historic and industrial past while providing an improved future. We need to build a public consensus on where we want to go and how we wish to go about such a task. This requires cooperation between the public and private sector, between the state and local governments, and between citizens, landowners, historians, businessmen and conservationists. Local input is essential. It will require a commitment to solving problems and to maintaining an adequate funding stream to make potentialities into realities. This cooperative experiment continues to unfold and we stand ready to assist in furthering the goals of the heritage park program.

Perhaps a portion of an editorial in the Pottsville Republican newspaper expressed the importance of heritage parks the best: "Identifying these and other resources, telling their story in a unique way and including them into a viable regional project is a worthwhile goal that will take years to accomplish, but the wait will be worth it."



TASK FORCES TAKE AIM AT PENNSYLVANIA'S PROBLEMS

Legislative Reform Task Force

A select legislative task force has been formed to pursue the structural reform of the Pennsylvania General Assembly. Formed as a subcommittee of the House Republican Policy Committee, the Legislative Reform Task Force will look into a variety of proposals for changing the way the General Assembly does business.

The task force will focus on a number of issues to include: the budget process; campaign and campaign finance reform; the power of special interests and lobbying reform; the legislative process - how bills are considered, proper roles of legislative leaders, the committee system, input from rank and file members, and enforcement of existing House rules; internal House operating procedures - staffing, expense reimbursements and internal financial arrangements; the congressional and legislative reapportionment process; and constitutional changes such as initiative and referendum, term limits and size and composition of the General Assembly.

All of us strongly opposed the 1991-92 budget and the record tax increase to fund it. It was the sorry state of that budget and the closed door deliberations that led to it that were major contributing factors to the formation of the task force. The budget debacle was a clear indication that something is drastically wrong with the way we go about deciding how to spend our state tax dollars, and that structural reform is needed to provide for a more open, efficient and democratic legislative process.

The first hearing of the task force focused on the budget and has led to a number of different legislative proposals. One would set spending limits and establish a strict budget timetable, as well as provide for open and active participation of all legislators in budget discussions and negotiations. Another would amend the Constitution to allow the state to operate under the previous fiscal year's budget if a new budget is not adopted by July 1. A third would establish a Revenue Estimating Commission, independent of the governor's office, to prevent manipulation of official revenue estimates and provide a more accurate estimate of revenues. There are a number of others.

Among those testifying at the first hearing and advocating reform were Attorney General Ernie Preate, the Pennsylvania Newspaper Publishers' Association, Common Cause, the National Federation of Independent Business, the Commonwealth Foundation, the Pennsylvania Leadership Council and several House members.

We are hopeful that the public will become involved in the reform process by offering suggestions. We are also hopeful that further legislative and administrative proposals will come forth as we continue our investigation and hold further hearings on other issues. It is essential that we find ways to make the legislative process more effective, less costly and more accountable.



From left to right, Reps. Bob Allen (R-125th), Paul Semmel (R-187th), Dennis Leh (R-130th) and David Argall (R-124th) discuss issues before the House Republican Policy Committee task forces on Legislative Reform and the Environment. Argall chairs the Environmental Task Force and he, Allen and Leh serve on the Legislative Reform Task Force. Semmel and Allen also serve on the Environmental Task Force.

Environmental Task Force

A 12-member Environmental Task Force has been formed to determine Pennsylvania's most pressing environmental issues and to suggest solutions to the state's environmental problems, whether it be by legislation, regulation or simple common sense.

The task force members are a diverse group, with a variety of ages, occupations and experience, and representing the length and breadth of the state from rural, suburban and urban districts. The task force has a wide-ranging agenda, and wishes to involve citizens from across the state in its deliberations. The task force has held two public hearings thus far, in Harrisburg and Pottsville. In the months to come, this special task force will conduct a number of public hearings on a wide variety of environmental issues across the state. We hope to hear from as many citizens as possible and to share the results of the hearings with all members of the House. It is apparent from the enthusiastic response at the first two hearings that many concerned individuals want to provide input on the state of our environment and wish to help us reach our stated goals.

We are hopeful that in some cases our findings will lead to legislation to be enacted on a bipartisan basis during this session of the General Assembly.

The first set of public hearings in Harrisburg featured testimony from a wide variety of sportsmen's groups, citizen action committees, business, industry and the federal government. Those testifying sought to prioritize environmental concerns in a general sense. Further hearings will address the issues in more detail and seek to identify particular concerns that have not yet been addressed or have not received enough attention in the past.

The hearing in Pottsville, for instance, focused on proposals to construct two contaminated soil incinerators and a medical waste incinerator in Schuylkill County. More than 20 witnesses appeared at Pottsville's City Hall, including those wishing to construct the facilities, local citizens' groups opposed and representatives from a number of environmental organizations.

We have heard a number of sound proposals. It is obvious that citizens are eager to offer solutions and opinions on environmental problems, and these should lead to positive results when our investigation is complete.



CAPITOL REPORT

from

Rep. Paul Semmel

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Hamburg, PA 19526
(215) 562-3411

204 West Main St.
P.O. Box 352
Kutztown, PA 19530
(215) 683-9199

Fall 1992

Dear Friends:

As the long days of summer come to a quick close, I hope this newsletter finds you and your family in good health and in good spirits.

With the change of seasons come other changes. Foremost for the people of the 187th district is the change in boundaries. As a result of the state Supreme Court's reapportionment ruling, I must bid farewell to some of my old neighbors. To those of you who I served in the past but will no longer represent, I bid a fond farewell and a thank you for the opportunity you gave me.

To my new neighbors—a warm welcome and a promise that I will work as hard to fulfill my responsibilities to you as I have worked to meet the responsibilities of the people to whom I must say good-bye.

My experience in public service over the years has taught me that constituents expect two things from their legislators. They demand prompt and knowledgeable help in dealing with the bureaucracy and they want strong representation of local viewpoints in the legislative debate and votes that set state policy.

As your state representative, I am your closest contact to and with state government. As such, my primary goal is to effectively represent you in both respects and to use my office to affect our state for the betterment of all Pennsylvanians.

It is in this spirit that I share this newsletter and the following overview of some important topics. Should you want additional information, please don't hesitate to call.

As always, I look forward to working with you and for you in the coming years.

With warm regards,
Paul Semmel

Rep. Paul Semmel

“In defining democracy, Woodrow Wilson said that the ‘beauty of democracy’ is that you can never tell when a youngster is born what he or she is going to do with their lives. And that no matter how humbly that child is born, he or she has a chance to master the minds and lead the imaginations of the whole country,” said Rep. Semmel at Brandywine Heights commencement.

Pictured with Rep. Semmel (l-r) are co-Valedictorians Amanda Flicker and Kate Roth.



WELCOME...

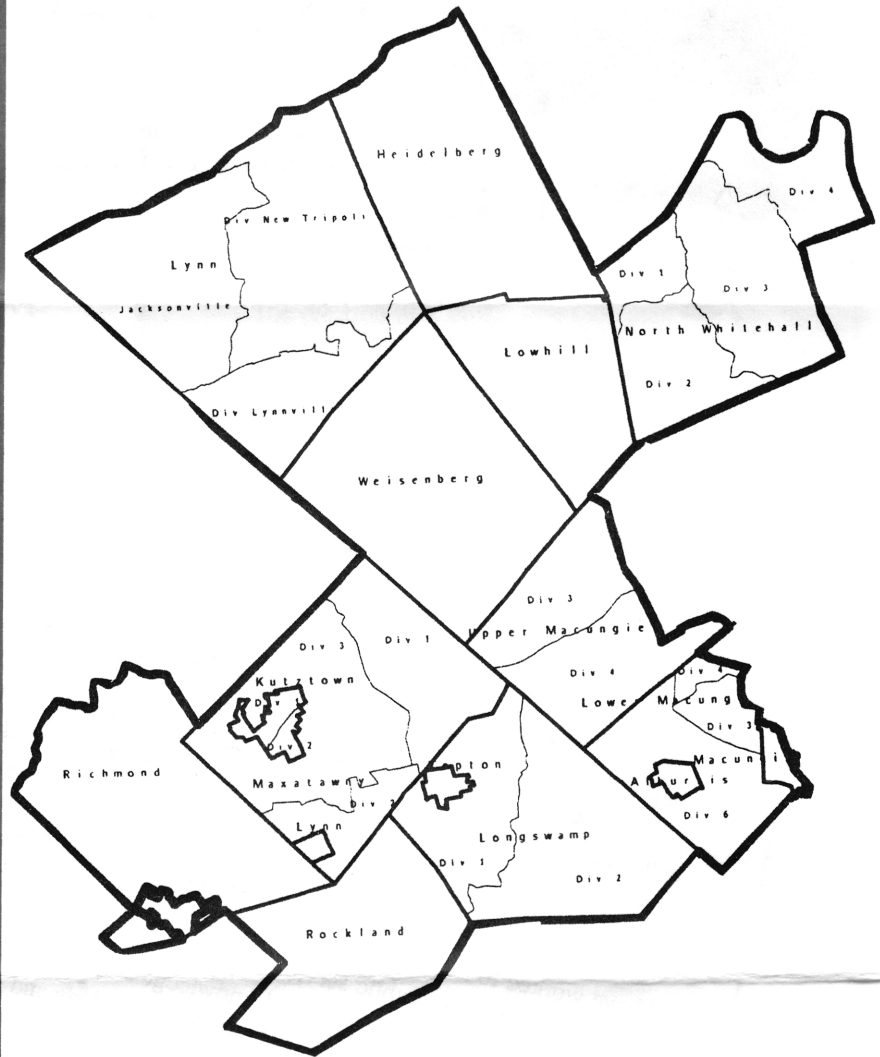
187th Legislative District

A CAN-DO STAFF

The staff in my three district offices are very knowledgeable, courteous and waiting to assist you on any state-related question or concern. They are: Schnecksville - Jerry Faust, Carol Archibald and Jean Husack; Hamburg - Sandra Christman; Kutztown - Joy Adams. Give 'em a call!

Among services the district office staff provides are:

- Assistance with PennDOT problems.
- Obtaining copies of birth and death certificates.
- Distributing applications for higher education grants.
- Securing applications for Civil Service jobs.
- Providing information, brochures and publications, such as maps and state laws of various types.
- Obtaining copies of House and Senate legislation.
- Arranging tours of the Capitol building and meetings with state officials.
- Assisting in arranging community improvement programs through state assistance.
- Providing information to senior citizens regarding benefits and available services.
- Voter registration forms.



Schnecksville Local Office Staff. . . Here to Help You!



Carol Archibald (l-r), Jerry Faust and Jean Husack are capable and caring people available to help you with any State related matter.

FOR RESIDENTS CALLING LONG-DISTANCE PHONE:

1-800-427-0187

1992-93 BUDGET:

Semmel Votes "NO" on Flawed Fiscal Fiasco

Last fiscal year, when the 1991-92 budget was voted upon, I opposed it for many good reasons. However, one reason stuck out far above the rest. Higher taxes.

This year, like last year, there was one reason that stuck out far above the rest. Misplaced priorities. Following is a chart that points out why, in good conscience, I had to oppose both spending plans.

1991-92	1992-93
HIGHER TAXES	MISPLACED PRIORITIES
PERSONAL INCOME 3.5% ↑	WELFARE PROGRAMS 3% INCREASE ↑
BUSINESS TAXES ↑	BASIC EDUCATION NO INCREASE
CONSUMER TAXES 6 % added to:	PRISONS/CORRECTIONS.....\$40 MILLION ↑
- Household paper and cleaning supplies	STATE-OWNED
- Cable Television Services	UNIVERSITIES \$9 MILLION ↓
- Long-distance phone calls	BEN FRANKLIN ECONOMIC DEVELOP-
- Take-out/home-delivered pizzas	MENT PROGRAM \$1.3 MILLION ↓
- Professional services	SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
- Cigarette Taxes	CENTER \$1.3 MILLION ↓
GASOLINE TAX05/GALLON ↑	AGRICULTURE \$1 MILLION ↓
UTILITY GROSS RECEIPTS	DEFERRED MAINTENANCE FOR STATE
TAX ↑	SYSTEM OF HIGHER ED \$3.7 MILLION ↓
INCREASE EXCISE TAX ON	PENN STATE, TEMPLE, LINCOLN
TIRES ↑	APPROPRIATIONS \$3.5% ↓
PUBLIC UTILITY ↑	<u>PLUS:</u>
REALTY TAX ↑	NO RESOLUTION OF WORKERS'
AUTOMOBILE RENTAL	COMPENSATION
AND LEASING TAX ↑	NO RESCUE PLAN FOR FINANCIALLY
	TROUBLED PACE PROGRAM

MANUFACTURED HOMES UPDATE:
Available upon Request

LAND GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The rapid rate of growth and development in our neighboring counties and the spin-off consequences of that development are of constant concern not only to the residents of the community, but also to county and state officials.

Given the impact of suburban sprawl upon communities unprepared for the growth, a House Select Committee on Land Use and Growth Management was established. Over the last 15 months, the select committee conducted research and held public meetings to determine the best route to control growth. Based upon input from professionals and interested parties, a report containing 65 recommendations for improving land use practices was recently released detailing suggestions.

In addition to land-use practices, the report contains suggestions on related concerns such as farmland preservation and open space issues, affordable housing, environmental protection, and urban revitalization.

The basis for these recommendations lies in the "top down, bottom up" approach whereby local officials and citizens would have control over the consequences of land use and development in their area. Additionally, the report recognizes that communities do not exist in a vacuum—that the development of one community will directly impact neighboring communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The development of vacant, run-down urban housing, where infrastructure is already in place

Increased involvement from the state Planning Commission

The establishment of model zoning and ordinances by the state Planning Board for use by communities not yet faced with development dilemmas

The requirement of the state Planning Board to review projects by other state agencies to assess their impact on land use

Authorization of counties to mediate development disputes between neighboring municipalities

The creation of a broad statewide plan for development, and monitoring of county plans for consistency with the statewide plan

That infrastructure be in place before development occurs, saving taxpayers from being stuck with the bill for infrastructure development to accommodate new development.

NEW LAWS

- ◆ LIVING WILLS
- ◆ TUITION SAVINGS PLAN
- ◆ FIRE AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILD CARE
- ◆ OIL, GAS WELL REGULATIONS
- ◆ SCHOOL-STRIKE LEGISLATION
- ◆ HIGHWAY REPAIR

** Should you like more information on the above, please contact me at 799-0187, 683-9199 or 562-3411.

YOU'RE INVITED....

Fall is one of the most beautiful seasons to visit Harrisburg. Please come visit us here at the Capitol.

In addition to touring the most architecturally beautiful state Capitol, guided tours of the Governor's Home are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. The tours are offered through the end of October. Arrangements for groups of more than 10 persons may be made by calling Lucinda Hans Smyser at (717-787-1192).

REMEMBER TO REGISTER and VOTE!

Deadline for registration is Oct 5th.
Election is Nov 3rd.
Registrations are available in my local office.

Keeping You Informed...

Look for Rep. Semmel's weekly column in local newspapers and check your television guide for air times of his Legislative Roundtable and State House Perspectives Report.