

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
Legislative Journal

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2015

SESSION OF 2015 199TH OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

No. 18

SENATE

WEDNESDAY, March 4, 2015

The Senate met at 11 a.m., Eastern Standard Time.

The PRESIDENT (Lieutenant Governor Mike Stack) in the Chair.

PRAYER AND PLEDGE DISPENSED WITH

The PRESIDENT. Without objection, we will dispense with the prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance for today's Session.

**APPOINTMENTS BY THE
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE**

The PRESIDENT. The Chair wishes to announce the President pro tempore has made the following appointments:

Senator John P. Blake as a member of the Capitol Preservation Committee.

Senator Patrick M. Browne as a member of the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Minority Business Development Authority.

Senator Vincent J. Hughes as a member of the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Minority Business Development Authority.

Senator Rob Teplitz as a member of the Capitol Preservation Committee.

Senator John Yudichak as a member of the Aggregate Advisory Board.

Mr. Stockton Illoway as a member of the Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Council.

Mr. David W. Trimpey as a member of the Conservation and Natural Resources Advisory Council.

BILLS INTRODUCED AND REFERRED

The PRESIDENT laid before the Senate the following Senate Bills numbered, entitled, and referred as follows, which were read by the Clerk:

March 4, 2015

Senators WILEY, YUDICHAK, HUTCHINSON, BREWSTER, BLAKE and FARNESE presented to the Chair **SB 128**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in charter schools, further providing for definitions, for funding for charter schools and for powers and duties of department.

Which was committed to the Committee on EDUCATION, March 4, 2015.

Senators WARD, MENSCH, SCARNATI and BROOKS presented to the Chair **SB 502**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of August 9, 1955 (P.L.323, No.130), known as The County Code, in county commissioners and chief clerks, further providing for elections and vacancies.

Which was committed to the Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT, March 4, 2015.

JOURNALS APPROVED

The PRESIDENT. The Journals of the Sessions of January 27, 2015, and January 28, 2015, are now in print.

The Clerk proceeded to read the Journals of the Sessions of January 27, 2015, and January 28, 2015, when, on motion of Senator CORMAN, and agreed to by voice vote, further reading was dispensed with and the Journals were approved.

**GUEST OF SENATOR JAY COSTA
PRESENTED TO THE SENATE**

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Costa.

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I have two students to introduce today who are visiting us as part of the University of Pittsburgh's Institute of Politics Legislator for a Day program. The Institute conducts the Legislator for a Day program each spring to provide undergraduate students with the opportunity to shadow Members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly and to try to gain insight into the legislative process and the roles and functions of State Senators and State Representatives.

With us today is one of the young men who served as an intern in my district office this past summer as part of the Institute of Politics program. Andrew Villanueva is a senior at the University of Pittsburgh, majoring in political science and history. Originally from Midland Park, New Jersey, Andrew is a member of the Delta Tau Delta fraternity and has served in a variety of roles, including president of that particular fraternity. More recently, Andrew was in charge of planning and organizing Pitt's dance marathon for the entire Greek community. That event, which happened on February 21, raised over \$150,000 for the Children's Miracle Network. After college, Andrew hopes to work in government or politics either in Pennsylvania or his home State of New Jersey. Andrew is a talented young man and we certainly hope that he is able to find a place here in Pennsylvania as part of our government structure. Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming Andrew to the Senate today.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guest of Senator Costa please rise so that the Senate may give you its usual warm welcome. (Applause.)

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I have a second student I would like to introduce who is shadowing my colleague Senator Matt Smith today. His name is Nicholas Hufnagel. Nicholas is also a senior at the University of Pittsburgh majoring in French, urban studies, a double major, with a minor in economics. He is originally from Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania. During Nick's undergraduate experience, he, too, participated in the Institute of Politics seminar internship program where he interned in the office of Pittsburgh City Councilman Corey O'Connor, primarily responsible for attending to constituent matters. He also interned in the city of Pittsburgh's Department of Planning, where he acquired extensive experience in managing systems and utilizing GIS network.

Nicholas is a member of Phi Delta Theta, serves on the Student Government Board, and is a cadet of the first class in the Air Force ROTC. In his spare time, he likes to participate and play with photography. Following graduation in the spring of 2015, Nick is headed to California, where he will begin serving in the United States Air Force. I want to thank him, most importantly, for his service to this country, and certainly hope that he returns to the Slippery Rock community or Pennsylvania very safely at the end of his tenure. So Nicholas, thank you for being here today, and, Mr. President, I ask my colleagues to please give him our warm Senate welcome.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guest of Senator Costa please rise so that the Senate may give you its usual warm welcome.

(Applause.)

CALENDAR OVER IN ORDER

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Centre, Senator Corman.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I move that all of the bills on today's Calendar go over in their order.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS SENATE RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED

Senator CORMAN, on behalf of Senator TOMLINSON, by unanimous consent, offered **Senate Resolution No. 49**, entitled:

A Resolution recognizing the month of March 2015 as "National Athletic Training Month" in Pennsylvania.

Which was read, considered, and adopted by voice vote.

Senators RAFFERTY, HAYWOOD, TOMLINSON, TEPLITZ, WOZNAK, GREENLEAF, KITCHEN, FONTANA, DINNIMAN, MENSCH, WARD, PILEGGI, YUDICHAK, BOSCOLA, BAKER, WHITE, ARGALL, SCHWANK, ALLOWAY, COSTA, BLAKE, WILEY, McILHINNEY, VULAKOVICH, SMITH, AUMENT and VOGEL, by unanimous consent, offered **Senate Resolution No. 50**, entitled:

A Resolution designating the month of March 2015 as "Irish American Heritage Month" in Pennsylvania.

On the question,
Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Montgomery, Senator Rafferty.

Senator RAFFERTY. Mr. President, I offer the following resolution with my colleagues and friends, Senator Blake and Senator Wiley, which, Mr. President, you used to do with me when you were a Member of the Senate of Pennsylvania. This resolution designates March 2015 as "Irish American Heritage Month" in Pennsylvania. Mr. President, the Irish community in this Commonwealth is celebrating the occasion of the feast of the Apostle of Ireland, Saint Patrick.

Fleeing political, religious, and racial persecution in their homeland, Irish immigrants arrived on our shores penniless and many times unwanted, yet filled with hope that America held a future in which they and their children would enjoy the bountiful fruits of a nation founded upon the principles of liberty and justice for all.

In every phase of our national history, Irish Americans have taken their place at the forefront in politics, economics, religious, social, and artistic fields. Their contribution to the good and welfare of this Commonwealth is immeasurable and unflinching. Therefore, we designate March 2015 as Irish American Heritage Month.

Mr. President, as I stand in this great hall and I look at the murals in front of us, I am mindful that as we look at Philadelphia 1787, realizing that the commander of the longrifles, a Pennsylvania militia, was a colonel from Ireland; looking at Abraham Lincoln delivering the Gettysburg Address, that the Irish Brigade played such an important feat during the battle of Gettysburg to turn back the tide of the Confederacy; and finally, the panel with George Gordon Meade, the commander of the Union forces at the Battle of Gettysburg, himself of Irish descent.

Mr. President, we are proud of the part that Irish Americans have played here in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, building it and enriching the lives of everyone here. I am proud to be called an American citizen and continue to work with all of those to make the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania a better place.

Happy St. Patrick's Day, Mr. President. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair thanks the Senator, wishes him a happy St. Patrick's Day, and commends him, once again, for the great resolution and his great work on Irish heritage.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Lackawanna, Senator Blake.

Senator BLAKE. Mr. President, I want to join my friend and colleague, Senator Rafferty, in acknowledging the proud legacy and heritage of Ireland and the Irish people. All of the wealth of our legacy emanates from a small island in the North Atlantic with one-quarter of the population of this State. Nobel laureates in poetry and literature, statesmen, musical and artistic geniuses, and yes, even Presidents of the United States, can trace their roots and family to Ireland.

Today, Ireland enjoys freedom and liberty after more than a thousand years of struggle. In the old country and here in the United States, it has not always been easy for the Irish. There was a black day in February of 1847, when it was announced in the British House of Commons that 15,000 Irish were dying every day due to famine. When many left Ireland for all of the privileges and benefits offered to them in this country, they still had to deal with all kinds of prejudice. In 1924 in Boston, if you were Irish and looking for a job, you met a sign that said, "no Irish need apply." The resilience and the proud diligence of the Irish prevailed. They grew to strengthen the fabric of our society through hard work and perseverance. As my colleague said, on

St. Patrick's Day, Irishmen everywhere celebrate their common kinship. Back home in Scranton, one of the largest and most successful, long-running traditions is the wonderful St. Patrick's Day parade that the Society of Irish Women and the Society of The Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick will celebrate again this year. As my colleague noted, Irish soldiers, from the Irish Brigade in the Civil War, to the Flight of the Wild Geese forced out of Ireland after the Battle of the Boyne, have fought for freedom here and around the globe.

I had the privilege of visiting Ireland twice with my family, Mr. President. We went to the Linzer House to meet with a few legislators there in Dublin. I can tell you that the connection between the people, the land, the water, and the air is mystical. I am very glad to join my colleague in acknowledging the Irish heritage and express thanks for the faith and the constancy of the Irish. And in Gaelic, "go raibh maith agat," thank you, to the Irish people.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT. Well done, my friend. I believe I will see you at The Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick soon.

And the question recurring,

Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

A voice vote having been taken, the question was determined in the affirmative.

Senator EICHELBERGER, by unanimous consent, offered **Senate Resolution No. 51**, entitled:

A Resolution designating the month of March 2015 as "International DeMolay Month" in Pennsylvania.

On the question,

Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Blair, Senator Eichelberger.

Senator EICHELBERGER. Mr. President, it is a pleasure, as a former DeMolay member, to offer this resolution today asking for recognition of "International DeMolay Month." DeMolay has been in existence for 96 years. It is a character-building organization of young men between the ages of 12 to 21. It engages them in many activities and produces leadership qualities that go a long way in our local communities to help in many, many ways. So, I ask my colleagues to join me this morning congratulating the DeMolay Organization for the fine work they have done, and celebrating with them this entire month as they are recognized across the Commonwealth.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair joins with the Senator in congratulating DeMolay.

And the question recurring,

Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

A voice vote having been taken, the question was determined in the affirmative.

CONGRATULATORY RESOLUTIONS

The PRESIDENT laid before the Senate the following resolutions, which were read, considered, and adopted by voice vote:

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. John Hoover, Marshall Mills, Arthur Slothour, William Lieske and to Kory Woodworth by Senator Alloway.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. LeRoy Musselman, Dr. Michael J. Zawisza, Christopher Daynorowicz, Kayla M. Kasmari, Jennifer Lehman, Mikayla A. Ulicny, Victor Smith, Jacqueline J. Carroll, Ersha Kumar, Joyce Clay, Brandon Tyler Kutz, Dallas Hackman, Roy Hunsicker, Highwood USA, LLC, Pottsville Business and Professional Women's Club, Reading and Northern Railroad, Plain and Fancy Donut Shop, Silberline Manufacturing Company, Inc., and to The Salvation Army Older and Bolder Group of Tamaqua by Senator Argall.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Lucille D. Gough by Senators Argall and Schwank.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Stauffer, Mr. and Mrs. John Hershey, Mr. and Mrs. David E. Kreiter, Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Snyder, Mr. and Mrs. David Sloat, Emily Stauffer, Jay J. Burkins, Catherine L. Brackbill, Martin R. Martzall, Charles M. Shirk, Herbert J. Ackerman, Angeline R. MacIntire, Brentwood S. Shunk, Irene B. Garrett, Alma J. Horner, Louis A. Biacchi, Joshua Dean Eberly, Betty J. Marxen, Jean K. Dent, Karoline A. Kent, Ralph E. McComas, Anna Althouse, Sarah E. Sandkuhler, Clyde Ebersole, B. Ruth Peters, Sarah R. Shearer, Myra von Bergen, Pearl L. Enck, Richard R. Singer, Austin James Haberstroh and to Madalene Baer by Senator Aument.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Donald Jones, Richard Andrew Joerger, Jonathan Leif Tjornhom, Ruth Birth Titus, Karl A. Wagner, Jr., Dallas High School Cross Country Team and coaching staff, Greene-Dreher Alumni Association and to the Wayne County Public Library by Senator Baker.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to James G. Gavin by Senators Baker, Blake, and Yudichak.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Jason Legg by Senators Baker and Yaw.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Sister Miriam Francis Stadulis, Elizabeth Griesmer, Luzerne County Head Start, Inc., and to Trion Industries by Senators Baker and Yudichak.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Zane Black, Anthony Cable, Johnny Busiello, Chris Weiler, Jon Carrera, Cole Nye, Trent Olson, Jack Mueller, Michael Rogers, Will Moss, Nick Reenan, Max Toman, Danny Boychuck and to the Wyoming Seminary Preparatory School Wrestling Team by Senator Baker and others.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Sharon R. Snyder, Desiree A. McCabe, Angelique E. Sillcocks, Sophie Yakubisin, Nicolas Princetta and to Old Forge Junior/Senior High School Girls' Basketball Team by Senator Blake.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to the Reverend Dr. David A. Schattschneider, Maura Benner, Amelia Sapirman, Antonio Marrero, Josue Ferrer-Rios, Efrain Santiago, Sean R. McGregor, Nikolas J. Franekic, Alexa Iannace, Christian Daniel Maiella, Caitlynn Verzino, Michael Sergey Sutton, Saint Luke's University Health Network, Bethlehem Clubmen's Association, Whitehall Township Public Library, Greek-American community of the City of Bethlehem and to the citizens of the community of Bethlehem by Senator Boscola.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Erika Veiszlemlein, Julie Ann Knerr, Barry McElhone Seng, Rachel Okune, Andrew Traeger Shaffer, Domanick Jose Gonzalez, Jake

Alexander Stattel, Brian Charles Heckman, Adeline Guthrie, Moyinoluwa Opeyemi, Matthew Cherry, Liddys Raquel Sevilla, Allison Mitzak, Marissa Lynn Aranda, Emily Ledesma, Jacob Wiersch, Christina Scartelli, Emily Rachel Reiter, Brock B. Kline II, Celia Freed, Kara Chyung, Michael J. Buss, Helen Hsu, Kelli Anne Franza, Benjamin James Twigg, Zoe Catherine Kallus, Daniel Changyan Wang, Joshua Franklin Ledyard, Makenna Barrie Lenover, Marilee Falco, Virginia Oskin, Emily Kessler, Marie F. Sterlein, Karen Vasquez, Tayte Messman, Susan C. Yee, David M. Yanoshik, PPL Electric Utilities, Polish community of the Lehigh Valley, Saint Luke's Community Health Department and to Leadership Lehigh Valley Education Team by Senators Boscola, Browne, and Scavello.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Domenica Rosa Steinbaugh, John Palyo and to Mildred Hughes by Senator Brewster.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Donald H. Bee, James Duratz, Justin Andrew Knickerbocker, William Robert Shea IV, Josh Lesik, Sedona Albright, Abbe Biebel, Dylan Reynolds, Diversified Family Services, Grove City High School Boys' Swimming and Diving Team and to the citizens of the Borough of Edinboro by Senator Brooks.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Travonya Kenly, Catherine R. Petroll, Bertram Winzer, Megan L. Frey, Isabella G. Ellis, Florence Smith, Roma Weber, Evelyn Stauffer, Herman Lipton, Grace Walk Kodlick, James Thomas Clee, William Reed, Clyde Raymond Bower, Annetta Schimmel, June F. Schmoyer, Sujay Rajkumar, Rose Katz Breuer, Frederick Philip Ehrhardt, Frederick A. Osman, Rosanna Saper Jacobs, Regina Brenner, Libby Golomb, Gloria Hartglass, Marcel Guindine, Eva Levitt, Julius Jacobs, Michele Levy, Annemarie Alexander Werner Warschauer, Franklin Hoffman, Griffin Robert Weaver, Nathanael David Rakos, Jarred Anthony Ring, Evan Richard Dufour, CSi-Integrated Security and Communications, FASTSIGNS Lehigh Valley, Mack Trucks Macungie Cab and Vehicle Assembly Plant, Ace Electric, Inc., New Tripoli Bank, MKSD Architects, Meisner Services and to One Financial Services by Senator Browne.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Santo Napoli by Senators Browne and Argall.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Robert Ensminger by Senators Browne and Boscola.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Dr. Don Yoder by Senators Browne and McGarrigle.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Michael Magent, the Honorable and Mrs. Ed Pawlowski, Dr. Katy Worriow, Edward Donley, Milind Jagota, Julian Mark, Joan Preston, Alexandra Roscher, Tiffany Houser, Richard Koze, Donna Solberg, Marvin Snipes, Bryan Gault, Thomas Huntley-Loehr, Zyhera Younger, Brant Weidner, Courtney Molinaro, Liz Hayes, Sally Handlon, Stacy Perryman, Jason Greene, Emma Haynes, Mike Stasak, Tyra Ott, Barbara VanBuskirk, Elaine J. Conner, Saint Luke's University Health Network, Head Start/Early Head Start of the Lehigh Valley, ATAS International, Inc., Pediatric Cancer Foundation of the Lehigh Valley, National Penn Bank, Lafayette Ambassador Bank, Curtiss-Wright Corporation, Hospital Central Services, Inc., PPL Center, Fuling Plastic USA, Forever Fun Tennis, Moravian Academy Boys' Doubles Tennis Team, Whitehall-Coplay School District, Embassy Bank, AMF Parkway Lanes

and to the Northwood Racquet and Fitness Club by Senators Browne, Boscola, and Scavello.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to the Ted Snyder family, Dr. and Mrs. J. Robert Lovett, Ralph W. Tutlane, Jr., Andre Fick, Caroline Pritchard, James Olsen, Larry Zerbe, Rodale Institute, Kirby Park Tennis, members and coaches of the Wyomissing Area Junior/Senior High School Boys' Tennis Team and to the Berks Reading Area Tennis Organization by Senator Browne and others.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mary P. Hubler, Gino P. Nicosia, Luc Lallement, Guy Gadowsky, Paige Laughlin, Andrew Hurd, Jonathan Robert Dupler, David M. Breon, Friends of Black Moshannon, Kiwanis Club of State College and to the Mount Nittany Vineyard and Winery by Senator Corman.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Dr. Tammy J. Murdock, Ruth Polasko, Tyrone Brown, Richard Fitzgerald, Kayla Houghtelin and to Hyatt House Pittsburgh-South Side by Senator Costa.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Robert Steven Taylor by Senators Costa and Smith.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Martin Madigan, Jr., by Senator Costa and others.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to the Reverend and Mrs. Buddy Goodwin, Mr. and Mrs. Robert McNeil, Dr. Don Meyer, Van Buren G. Brown, Sr., Roland Lamb, Dennis Kevin Thomas, Carol Kramer, Lorraine Loux, Susan Heist, Josh Gibson, Lillian DeBaptiste, Zachary Kevin Casey, Tyler Ronayne, Adam David Pozza, Deborah Miles, Karen Miller, Joan M. Holliday, Robert E. Fenza, Terry Woodman, Robert Siter, Andrew Follett, Sr., Michelle Ferretti, Rosemarie Ferranto, Julian McCracken, Peter Urscheler, Emmett Guici, Jeffrey T. Griffiths, Patty A. Boyd, Warren F. Strawsnyder, Tammy L. Klotzbach, Jetquatta Parker, Tredyffrin and Easttown Care, SCORE Chapter No. 544, Safe Harbor of West Chester, West Chester University, Applied Video Technology, Inc., Communities in Motion, LuLu Boutique and Gifterie, Dish, LLC, Foundation at Great Valley, citizens of the City of Coatesville, Great American Pub, West Pikeland Township, Lewis Automotive, Inc., Historic Yellow Springs, Canine Partners for Life and to the Downingtown Area Senior Center by Senator Dinniman.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Marian B. Tasco by Senators Dinniman and Haywood.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Joe Kaufmann by Senators Dinniman and Leach.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Blake Bennington Barstar by Senators Dinniman and McGarrigle.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Judith Sudler, Elizabeth Garduno, Tina Phillips, West Chester Food Cupboard, Mushroom Festival and to Capacity for Change by Senators Dinniman and Pileggi.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Kairo Amadaeus Calabretta and to Robinson Theodore Fulcher by Senators Dinniman and Rafferty.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Therese H. Woodman by Senator Dinniman and others.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Carol B. Stevens, William C. Calvert and to the Buchanan State Forest by Senator Eichelberger.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mary Graham, Louis P. Paolone, Jr., and to Jeanette A. Ciocci by Senator Farnese.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Travis Rhoad by Senator Folmer.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Jack L. Wolfersberger by Senators Folmer and Teplitz.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Robert Nutting by Senator Fontana.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Dr. John Molitoris, Jr., Dr. Gina Riofski Scala, Maryann M. Kovalewski, Gabriel J. Scala, Kelty Campbell, Raiden Victor Wiest, Justin Ryan Keller, Kent Lane, John Thomas, Aleksander J. Matunis, Rebeka L. Yocum, Joshua J. Cover, Victor M. Guevara and to Matthew A. Gummo by Senator Gordner.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Dr. Harry Clark, Thomas Burg, Arnold Rosenthal, F. Ruth Hunsberger, Clarence Musselman, Eric James and to Charles Kirkner by Senator Greenleaf.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Camille S. Holt, Mark Weiss, Anthony Oliver, Brian Gralnick, James Edward Reynolds, Wendy Blutstein, Tim Neumann, Francesca J. Tadeo, HIAS Pennsylvania and to First Baptist Church of Crestmont by Senator Haywood.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Verdell L. Ganges, Saint Paul's Baptist Church of Conshohocken and to Barbershop Talk Human Family Day Foundation, Inc., by Senator Hughes.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Sister Mary Bur by Senator Hughes and Williams.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Glenn J. Swartfager, Mr. and Mrs. Clem Urban, Mr. and Mrs. Barry Magnetto, Mr. and Mrs. Bruce McFall, Mr. and Mrs. Ted Jackson, Mr. and Mrs. Edmund B. Ford, Bonita A. Castelli-Weary, Trevor Phelps, Betsy A. Kellner, Justin Patrick Ellis, Scott Wolbert, Grace Solle, Joshua Davis, Teresa Russell, Michael R. Wisner, citizens of Washington Township, Griebel's Dairy Farm, LLC, Forest County Industrial Development Corporation, Conewango Creek Watershed Association and to the Calvary United Methodist Church of Oil City by Senator Hutchinson.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to the Butler County Association of Township Officials by Senators Hutchinson, Vogel, and White.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Evelyn Ward and to Branville G. Bard, Jr., by Senator Kitchen.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Ryan William Silverthorn, Kristen M. Janfrancisco, Kate R. Foy, Courtney G. Dougherty, Erin F. Bailey, Christina E. Dunn, Carolyn E. Brady, Christian Matcovich, Lower Merion Fire Department, Good Will Fire Company and to George Clay Fire Company by Senator Leach.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Beth Rothschild by Senators Leach and McGarrigle.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to David Rennix, Dominic A. Franchi, Daniel R. Azarian, Peter Caceci and to Thomas Hogan, Jr., by Senator McGarrigle.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to the Honorable Libby White, Dr. Barry G. Ginsberg, Dr. Richard O. Coe, Ruhay Patel, Dylan Gerhart, Edan Michener, Morgan G. Jaslar, Theresa K. Webster, Deanna M. Mikalauskas, Heather L. Ursino, Ryan Dortone, Carolyn Della-Rodolfa, Gina Furia Rubel, Ronald Bernstein, Jeffrey Marshall, Mauda Franca Catelani Warden, Jacob Edmund Douglass, Neha Gupta, Tania Thomas, Cieran Rody, Robert A. Bittenbender, Parker Nelson, Zachary Pierce, Jake Monson, Gilmore and Associates, Inc., and to the Village Improvement Association of Doylestown by Senator McIlhinney.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to William Snyder by Senator McIlhinney and others.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Manfred Marschewski, Inez Hicks, Altamese LeRoy, Joan Rhoads, Frances Charles, Alma Martella, Margaret Foley, Anadine Nixon, Anna Williams, Dale Blankenbiller, Matthew A. Hetrick, Valentino Giangiacomo, Eva M. Bitterman, Haley M. Moonan, Lindsay R. Patla, Jade A. Wisinski, Gabriella Di Domizio, Alyssa S. Everett, Ronald James Helmick, Wilhelmina Shaffer, Eric Wade and to Souderton Charter School Collaborative by Senator Mensch.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Manfred Marschewski by Senators Mensch and McIlhinney.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Madge O. Miller, Kathrine Demsey, Dorothy Mastriena, Frances E. Stallings, Doris German, Rachel Schellberg, Victoria B. Andrews, William C. Lex, Jr., Ethel M. Lex, Keith Klaver, Robert Weigand, Mary E. Smith, Darren Sereikis, Kyle Andreoli-Brown, Stephen F. Taylor, Emma A. Lane, Danielle K. Doran, Jessica L. Nichter, William Quinn, Gregory L. Reitze and to W. Scott Reitze by Senator Pileggi.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Ron Cusamano, Grace J. Cote, George W. Waterman III, Christopher Phillip Lavan, Joshua Bream, Matthew Breish, Nathaniel Bream, Margaret A. Mawson, Olivia J. Kimber, Matthew A. Hetrick, Laurel C. Wynn and to Eagle Eye Home Inspection Services by Senator Rafferty.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to the Honorable Emanuel A. Bertin by Senator Rafferty and others.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Doris Martini, Genevieve Murray, Richard H. Walker, Todd Smith, Christine Minich, John Berne, Emily Housler, Jefferson County Development Council, Jefferson Paving Corporation, Beacon Light Behavioral Health Systems and to Shults Toyota/Edmond Chevrolet by Senator Scarnati.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Vaughan, Dr. Jonathan Goldner, Tyler Reagle, Linda Rice, Joseph Farda, Sr., Robert Wehe, Andy Worthington, Brian Snyder, James Weiss, Maliyah A. Jones, Oksana Picca, Luke Karam, Tyson Klump, Joy Labadie, Christopher Eckert, Eric Hoffman, Bethany A. Trempel, Samantha A. Bartholomew, Marge Sagness Dally, Antonia M. Roach, Robert Philips, Steven Joseph Daurio, Austin Charles Firth, Anthony Joseph Biondi, Daniel Thomas Christenson, Tom Philips, Mark Philips, Sean Demczyszyn, Ethan Christopher Green, James Decker, Cameron Ohrwashel, Benjamin Lloyd Robert Mustonen, Keenan D. Migliori, Terry Decker and to the citizens of the Borough of Nazareth by Senator Scavello.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Peter Gallagher and to Weiler Corporation by Senators Scavello and Blake.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Carol Ritter, Frances MacDonald, William Skinner, Cindy Fairbanks and to Hoss Enterprises, LLC, by Senators Scavello and Boscola.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Nicolas Bentz, Adam T. Kowalski, Timothy F. Smith, Luke Poploskie, Koby Stitzel, Jacob T. Strahan, Andrew N. Saylor, Robert Leinbach, Philip Hobaugh, Gabrielle R. McCartney, Lucy N. Horn, Catherine Scoboria, Lauren C. Spease, Emily A. LeVan, Julianna L. Pierdomenico, Stella Nein Gallagher, Tyler C. Becker, Berks County Polish-American Board of Education, Reading Police Beneficial Association, members of the Berks Arts Council, 2015 Exeter Youth Cheerleading Organization, Friends of Nolde Forest, Department of Social Work at Kutztown University and to the citizens of Kutztown Borough by Senator Schwank.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Rick Lanciano by Senators Schwank and Argall.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to the Honorable Wayne T. Murphy, Dr. Charles E. Oakley, Jr., Eileen Sharbaugh, Eleanor Friedman, James E. Trigg, Kathleen N. DePuy, Thomas Rigatti, Meghan Dillie, Mary Robb Jackson, Gavin Todd Allcorn, Sewickley Presbyterian Church, citizens of Collier Township, Seton-La Salle Catholic High School Girls' Basketball Team, Quaker Valley High School Boys' Swimming Team, Chartiers Valley High School Boys' Basketball Team and to Pleasant Hills Middle School of Pittsburgh by Senator Smith.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to the Honorable Rick Gray, Jim Kalenich and to the Lancaster Inter-Municipal Committee by Senator Smucker.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to C. James Jorgensen, Lisa Troha, Maynard L. Brubacher, Zachary Sweeney, Joseph P. Schickel and to Saint Rita of Cascia Roman Catholic Church of Connellsville by Senator Stefano.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Dr. Joan Parker, John Ignatius Kane and to Wendell Young IV by Senator Tartaglione.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Colonel Colleen A. Dickinson, Milik Gantz, Dwight Whitlock, Nehemiah Mack, Christopher Rockey, Cavan McIntyre-Brewer, Michaela Gelbaugh, Brittany Robinson, Sierra Brabham-Lawrence, Kristian Beverly, Alyssa J. Foreman, Caitlin R. Armour, Shawna Weller, Joseph Clover, Paul Craig, Vivian Tafuto, Allie Raab, Joe Marshall, Tesia Kempinski, Andrew S. Gordon, Jennifer Wiley, Jahaad Joseph Proctor, Tina Nixon, Sheree-Lee S. Knorr, Benjamin Nicholas Pazuchanics, Constance Plater, Ellen M. Pleasant, Natasha McArthur, Nursing Foundation of Pennsylvania, members and coach of the Hershey High School Girls' Swimming and Diving Team, members and coach of the Hershey High School Girls' Swimming Team, Northern Dauphin County YMCA Before and After School, Widener University School of Law, Harrisburg Campus, Halifax Area High School Archery Team and to the McLamb Memorial Church Day Care Center by Senator Teplitz.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Widener University School of Law, Harrisburg Campus by Senators Teplitz and Alloway.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Thomas Walton, James McGuire, Jr., Robert Walter, Scott Dengler, Frank Walter, Sr., Frank Walter, Jr., Richard Woodmender, Diane Woodmender, Rachel R. Barrett, Katharine E. Wiley, Elizabeth G. Sauers, Joseph P. Cusick, Jr., Ferdinand Reetz, Jr., Barney Wheeler, Brian Abrescia, Richard McCullough, Gerald Hathaway, Christopher Devicaris, Brian J. Stanton, Kyle Knowles, John Currey, Rick Baker, Joseph Chamberlain, Zack Cooperman, Cornwells Fire Company No. 1 and to Saint Bede the Venerable parish by Senator Tomlinson.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to the Bucks County Children and Youth Social Services Agency by Senator Tomlinson and others.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to the Livingston family, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Stough, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Zenuch, Dr. Francis Michelini, Raymond B. James, Samuel H. James, Ellen C. Barger, Krista M. Haas, Sarah E. Neville, Erin M. Mulhearn, Sarah E. McCausland, Wendy B. Hoverter, H. Edward Black, Donald C. Darr, Kirk D. Stoner, Pamela C. Martin, Matthew Alexander McEldowney, Alana Eisenhower, members and coaches of the Boiling Springs High School Wrestling Team, Mechanicsburg Area School District and to The Salvation Army of Carlisle by Senator Vance.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Beverly Sullivan, Kevin Carson Selavko, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Beaver County, Troop 406 of the Boy Scouts of America and to Blackhawk High School Girls' Basketball Team by Senator Vogel.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Noah J. Young, Tyler Huber, Jacob Stokes, Nicholas Garrett Haver, Nathan J. Love, Andrew McKenna Cook, Ethan T. Tady and to the citizens of the Borough of Tarentum by Senator Vulakovich.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Bruce Charles Arians, Nicholas James Workman and to Saubel's Markets, Inc., by Senator Wagner.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Domenic Gallo, Paul Krinock, Joseph Ziegler, Rich Umbaugh, Dean Piper, Robert Fry, John Paul Sommers, Robert A. Baker, Richard J. Fry and to Casey Michael Veychek by Senator Ward.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Yves Carreau by Senators Ward and Fontana.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Paul Botsford, Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Haggerty, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Graham, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wilson, Wilma Johnson Heutchy, Michelle Pfeifer, Joyce Laverick, Pamela Huber, Lynn Chiaramonte, David Metz, Minnie Sum, Keith D. Myers and to Joshua K. Fischer by Senator White.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Dr. Stephen T. Radack III, Norman Stark, Samuel Justin Wetzel, Crime Victim Center of Erie County, Fairview High School Girls' Swimming Team and to the Shiloh Baptist Church of Erie by Senator Wiley.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to the Reverend Dr. Daniel T. Black, Brianna J. Walker, Solid Rock Baptist Church and to Greater Philadelphia Health Action, Inc., by Senator Williams.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Andrew Le by Senators Williams and Tomlinson.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to A. Wayne Fluke and to Band of Brothers Shakespeare Company, Inc., by Senator Wozniak.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Gary Clark, Mr. and Mrs. Tony Mussare, Mr. and Mrs. Leslie M. Gruver, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Rothra, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Greene, Mr. and Mrs. Rod O'Bryan, Mr. and Mrs. Keith Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Frey, Mr. and Mrs. Max L. Whipple, Dr. Kent C. Trachte, Raymond J. Marshalek, Bernard A. Oravec, Robert Stephen McGuire, Warren Renninger, Kyla Tsai-McKinney, Natalie Lamoreaux, Brittany L. Snyder, Melanie E. Santo, Elysia L. Hinkel, Emmalynn Voneida, Latasha Newcomer and to Cole Walter by Senator Yaw.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Rizzo, Monsignor John J. Bendik, Honorable Martin R. Kane, Dr. John F. Callahan, Philip Anthony Corrado, Michael Shott, Mary Virginia Augello, Leon H. Snyder, Thomas J. Reilly, Sr., James A. Wimmer, Stephanie H. Augustine, Lori DeMoore, Sophia Samoleski, Logan W. Berger, Peter Gallagher, Frank Marshalllick, Jared Marshalllick, Ray Clymer, Medico Industries, Inc., EthosGen, LLC, White Haven Center Lions Club and to the Greater Hazleton Chamber of Commerce by Senator Yudichak.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to David J. Wenzel and to Annette Palutis by Senators Yudichak and Blake.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to the Reverend Virginia Ann Miner by Senators Yudichak and Scavello.

CONDOLENCE RESOLUTIONS

The PRESIDENT laid before the Senate the following resolutions, which were read, considered, and adopted by voice vote:

Condolences of the Senate were extended to the family of the late Thomas Willard Davis, to the family of the late Kenneth Richard Weidner and to the family of the late Joseph P. Brennan by Senator Baker.

Condolences of the Senate were extended to the family of the late Joseph Louis Ciampi by Senators Baker and Yudichak.

Condolences of the Senate were extended to the family of the late Charles J. Jefferson, to the family of the late James E. Dundon and to the family of the late Kevin P. Klapac by Senator Boscola.

Condolences of the Senate were extended to the family of the late George P. Forte, and to the family of the late Anthony W. Talocci by Senator McIlhinney.

Condolences of the Senate were extended to the family of the late Corporal Robert Higgins by Senator Tomlinson.

Condolences of the Senate were extended to the family of the late Janice M. Keen-Livingston by Senator Wozniak.

POSTHUMOUS CITATIONS

The PRESIDENT laid before the Senate the following citations, which were read, considered, and adopted by voice vote:

Posthumous citations honoring the late Jack Loew and the late Dorothy L. Strawsnyder were extended to the families by Senator Dinniman.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY

The following announcements were read by the Secretary of the Senate:

SENATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2015

Off the Floor	URBAN AFFAIRS AND HOUSING (to consider Senate Bills No. 330, 486 and 566)	Rules Cmte. Conf. Rm.
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CANCELLED

THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2015

10:00 A.M.	BASIC EDUCATION FUNDING COMMISSION (public hearing on basic education funding issues)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
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MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2015

9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Governor's Office/Governor's Budget Office/Executive Offices)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
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1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Independent Fiscal Office - Economic Outlook & Revenue Overview)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
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3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of General Services)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
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TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2015

9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Attorney General)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
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1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Treasury Department)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
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3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Auditor General)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2015

9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Judiciary)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
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1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - State Police/Homeland Security)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
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3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Drug & Alcohol Programs)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
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THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2015

9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Gaming Control Board)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
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1:30 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - PA State System of Higher Education)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
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3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Community Colleges)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
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MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2015

9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Public Utility Commission)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
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1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - SERS/PSERS)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Health)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
<u>TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2015</u>		
9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Insurance)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
11:00 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - State Related Universities)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Aging)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
<u>WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2015</u>		
9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Environmental Protection)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Corrections/Office of Probation and Parole)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - PA Liquor Control Board)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
<u>THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2015</u>		
9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Human Services)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Community & Economic Development)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of State)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
<u>MONDAY, MARCH 30, 2015</u>		
9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Education)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Labor & Industry)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Banking & Securities)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
<u>TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2015</u>		
9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Revenue/Lottery)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
11:00 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Historical & Museum Commission)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Transportation)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Agriculture)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
<u>WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2015</u>		
9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - PA Emergency Management Agency)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.

11:00 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Military and Veteran Affairs)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.

PETITIONS AND REMONSTRANCES

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes everybody's good friend from Philadelphia, Senator Hughes.

Senator HUGHES. Thank you, Mr. President, my good friend, the Honorable Lieutenant Governor Michael Stack.

Mr. President, I rise for this moment to publicly say for this body and for all who are paying attention, and so that it can be commemorated in the official annals of the Senate of Pennsylvania, that, if you will, another one bites the dust. It is an old song that I am sure the President is familiar with. Yesterday, the former executive director of our side of the Committee on Appropriations, through the Governor's budget presentation, Randy Albright, who is now serving as Budget Secretary, helped present to the Commonwealth the vision, through the Governor, of what Pennsylvania should be like. We salute Randy for his fine work and his years of service to this body, to the Senate. So we lost Randy, and we lost a couple of others out of our office - Greg Thall, Peter Speaks, and Jackie Hopp - a whole bunch of them. They are falling like flies, Mr. President, but they are still doing great public service, and we appreciate that.

Today, I rise to speak on this floor and publicly say thank you to another one of our folks who is leaving our ranks, Charles Lang Duncan III, who will be soon leaving our office after 4 years of service in our office as an official staff member, and many years ago he was an intern in our office. Charles is the proud son of Cheryl and Charles. He graduated from Saint Joseph's University, where he served as bowman on the rowing team, and he is a proud graduate of the Widener University School of Law. He is a gentleman who has handled the work of our office admirably, tried and was successful being a servant not just to our office, not just to our Caucus, but on numerous occasions tried to assist Members on both sides of the aisle, helped to move their agenda forward. We want to thank all of those folks who worked in our office, and we definitely want to thank Charles for his years of service.

It is a great and wonderful story when you see a young man grow up, coming from the heart of north Philadelphia, to the highest positions and working in the most important offices in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It is a proud moment to see someone of this caliber rise up to this level of service, and for the work that he has done and to the work that he is going to be doing in the future. I only hope that in his new position, that his wife, Meredith, will be happy because he will be home a lot more than he is right now, and we hope that Meredith is pleased with that, because, if she is not pleased, then he might wind up working back for us in the very near future. But, Mr. President, we want to congratulate Charles for his years of service. We want to congratulate him and salute him for the work he is yet to do. We know he will represent himself proudly. We know he will continue to represent the service to this body in the great tradition that he has done in the past.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.
(Applause.)

The PRESIDENT. We will all miss Charles and wish him very good luck. I am sure we will see him all over the place, as he is a man with a plan, and we look forward to seeing him.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Lehigh, Senator Browne.

Senator BROWNE. Mr. President, of course, the highlight of the week was the presentation by our chief executive, Governor Wolf, of his spending plan for the future fiscal cycle. It is one of the most important things that happens in any year of a legislative Session, to find out from the chief executive, from the Governor, what his strategies are to meet our common goals. It is important to garner from that some general themes. We have an opportunity over the next several months, as is the process in our appropriations process, to do our due diligence, to do our oversight. Before we go through that process, I want to take an opportunity, just from my perspective, to give some thoughts of concern and possible consensus regarding the Governor's proposal.

Now, I believe one of the general themes the Governor was trying to communicate to us is that State government needs to be in a stronger place in the overall picture of the Pennsylvania economy, that we need to expand our presence in certain key areas in order for Pennsylvania to be stronger and to prosper. In order to do that, we have to raise additional revenue in order to accommodate that expansion. That, of course, is different than our approach, the Senate Republican Caucus' approach over the last 4 years, where we had tried and were successful to pass budgets that used our current revenue capacity to meet our goals, closing a tremendous amount of deficits to do that, not imposing additional costs on an economy that was retracting, with the general thought that you cannot make your own fiscal house stronger by making the fiscal house of those who pay the bills weaker.

Last year was one of our more challenging years, because in order to do that we had to use some onetime revenue and spending opportunities. Some have claimed that those are gimmicks; some in this building have done that. I must, respectfully, in regard to what is common practice in the world of those who pay the bills, respectfully disagree with that, because when a private enterprise that does not have a perpetual life like we do needs to close their budget holes when it has cash flow problems, the general thought is you use your unencumbered assets, your unencumbered cash flow, those things that your customers have already paid for before you ask them to pay more in order to sustain, in order to balance your books. That is what we did last year. It is not an uncommon practice in the private sector. It is something that is done very often when there are fiscal challenges to match revenue and expenditures.

In order to advance the Governor's overall theme, he presents a budget that is \$33.8 billion, a \$4.7-billion increase in overall commitments by the Commonwealth, a 16-percent increase over the last year's spending commitment. Now, that is, honestly and admittedly, an all-in scenario. It includes a 2.7-percent increase in overall spending, new spending. It includes what the Governor had taken and put into a restricted account with the goal of making sure that payments are made against that, a \$1.75-billion commitment that we need to make to our school district employee retirement system, and a new program that he would like to advance to increase the State share over the local share in supporting our primary and secondary institutions to reduction of

property taxes, at least in the current fiscal cycle, of \$2 billion. So, all in, commitments by the Commonwealth, \$4.7 billion, 16.1 percent.

Now, it is important to note that, in regard to history--and in a lot of things we do we have to make sure we reflect on history, because it reflects on what Pennsylvania's abilities are in our revenue capacity to support spending--that under the Rendell years the average rate of growth in spending was 4.17 percent, and under the Corbett years it was 0.08 percent. That is 16.1 percent. Even with the suggestion of additional revenue, the growth of that revenue capacity, if we maintain our economic conditions at approximately 3 percent, there is no way for that rate of spending growth to be sustained. Even at the \$776 million and the PSERS contribution, which is 8.7 percent, our growing revenue capacity cannot sustain that rate of growth. That will be part of our conversation during our due diligence process: What will that do to our ability to sustain that additional spending?

One of the key notes of the Governor's program is a significantly higher commitment over last year's dollars in education to pursue his goals of schools that teach. He has presented that as a restoration, primarily, of a loss of commitment, which we have heard consistently over many months, of \$1 billion. With all due respect to the Governor, I will repeat--many in this Chamber will repeat, again and again, I guess until we are blue in the face--that that \$1 billion primarily was a commitment of Federal resources in a stimulus strategy by Washington and a direct investment into our schools, with the thought process that our economy would grow to such a point where we could restore that money without having to raise taxes. Every year--I will try to read this, it is a little small--2011-12 basic education funding, \$5.3 billion State dollars; \$5.4 billion, 2012-13; \$5.5 billion, 2013-14. The commitment to our schools is important, but it is the first time in my 21 budgets where we talked about an obligation by the chief executive, the Governor, to spending and revenue that he does not control. We have to move on from that in terms of our obligations to our schools. So that is primarily what that is.

Now, in regard to that commitment of additional dollars, the Governor had mentioned prospects of a new formula, which I am collectively working with colleagues across the building in the Basic Education Funding Commission to provide for a more sustainable, predicable formula to distribute dollars regardless of what that commitment is. We will have a very active discussion whether an additional commitment in primary and secondary ed is a good thing and at what level, but we need a new formula at a minimum to distribute it, because our formulas in the past have left our school districts with a tremendous amount of unpredictability regarding the State's obligations and commitment to primary and secondary ed.

We also have to keep in mind, if we are suggesting additional money in primary and secondary ed, that Pennsylvania is currently spending \$14,761 per child, which is the eighth highest in the country, and States that are above us in spending are States where, in real dollars, it is more expensive. The cost of living in those States - Connecticut, New York, other States - is more expensive. So we have to pay our support staff and our teachers in those institutions more money in order to provide the same services. So, in the concept of real dollars, we are really in a category of number one. So we have to keep that in mind when we are talking about total spending and the commitment of the

Commonwealth to invest further dollars in primary and secondary ed. So I was very encouraged that the Governor had mentioned in his budget, in regard to the State's additional role in this regard, that we would pursue additional accountability. Accountability is really important. If we are going to invest additional dollars on behalf of our citizens, then our school districts should be accountable for the performance of our children. That is something that our Caucus stands for, and I am very pleased that the Governor mentioned that.

One of the key notes of the Governor's plans on education relates to property tax relief. He believes that the State has to garner a higher share of the overall education pie in investing in our schools, and to do that, a reduction in property taxes, a reduction in local share. He is committing a \$2 billion number in his revenue capacity for this budget, and \$3.8 billion total. Now, as the Majority Leader had mentioned just yesterday, the thing we have to be concerned about is what it means not only in the short term, but in the long term. Does that property tax relief sustain itself over time? That relates to our ability to sustain those numbers relating to spending in the school district. History shows, based on those two components, that will be difficult without additional protections.

If you look back just on my experience here, the amount we have committed in the education budget for primary and secondary ed in 1995 was \$6.2 billion. In 2014, it was \$10.9 billion, which is a 4-percent increase over that period of time on an annual basis. Revenue capacity grew at about that same level. So we were committing that consistent amount of growth in revenue capacity to our schools. When we look at spending on our children in primary and secondary education institutions, in 1995 we were spending \$6,428; now we are spending \$14,700. That is a 130-percent increase, or 6.5 percent a year. I see no reason, historically, why that trend line will not change, and if it does not change and that spending continues to grow faster than the revenue capacity that we have to sustain it through increasing taxes to support it, eventually that property tax relief will go away and we will be back where we started when we first advanced this.

Now, the citizens of Pennsylvania have seen this in the past, and they responded to it. We all have talked about property tax relief. We feel the best way to do it is to not only shift, but replace, so that there is no incremental growth there. What Governor Casey had advanced back in 1998 was a proposal to shift the State resources to reduce school district property taxes, and what was the response by the public? The public voted that down by over a million votes, and the reason why is because they believed that we were just going to increase State revenue capacity, reduce property taxes, and as I mentioned, those property taxes would go back up. So our citizens will be concerned, without additional discussions of the components of this plan, as to what this means to them in the long term.

Another significant component of the Governor's budget relates to economic development, trying to pursue his goals of jobs that pay. We have, of course, the same goals. He presented to us, in regard to that, a 40-percent increase in overall support in economic development, more than doubling many of the discretionary programs in the economic development budget over last year's dollars. He is also recommending that we underwrite a new long-term bond of \$675 million to fund business investment and energy development investment. So a tremendous new commitment to Pennsylvania in publicly directed economic develop-

ment. Now, one of the basic questions that I believe we have to ask in this regard, because we decided in our approach that we would look to maintain a competitive environment before we would choose to subsidize, that is it prudent to increase costs on the overall economy in order to pull money into State government to subsidize new opportunities, or is it better for us to let the private economy grow on its own? This is a strategy that dictates that the public's role in investing is as important as the private sector's role in investing. That is a policy statement in regard to this significance that we have to reconcile in our work.

I have to mention, in regard to the \$675 million bond, the overall concept of debt and the fact that we need to be concerned about the amount of debt on our books as it relates to that commitment. In this budget we are looking at, in total across State government, another \$6.2 billion in revenue, general obligation bonds, and pension obligation bonds. Over the period of time from 2003 to 2011, general obligation bonds went up from \$7 billion to \$11 billion. Now, when you look at general obligation debt, it is 2.4 percent of personal income, but that is not the whole picture when we are talking about the debt load that Pennsylvania is carrying and how much we are expecting our citizens to support. If you want to be all in and present a full picture, you have to include the \$70 billion in debt on our pension books, the \$17 billion in debt in our unfunded healthcare retirement benefits, and when you do that, we are currently at 14 percent of personal income. Fourteen percent of our citizens' personal income is needed to support the debt we have now. When you look at that from a standpoint of a State's financial position and put it all in, which accounting standards require us to do, the State is now insolvent by \$23 billion. Now, we have to consider that fact if we are going to go back to our taxpayers and ask them to underwrite long-term borrowing for any commitments that we would like to make, no matter how good they are.

In the concept of government that works, there are, of course, the issues we have in many areas when it comes to mandatory costs and costs that are growing. Another significant component of the Governor's budget relates to the Department of Corrections. It is troubling that we continue to see escalation of Corrections of \$150 million, particularly as it relates to healthcare in our correctional institutions, and we have to talk about that. That is an escalating number that we cannot support. We also have to make sure that the strategies that this Caucus has stood for, the Republican Senate Caucus stands for under the leadership of Senator Greenleaf, the strategies of trying to use our correctional institutions appropriately and not have people in those correctional institutions who could be better served in other areas, risk assessment on our offenders goes forward properly, because we are talking a \$40,000 cost for a person sitting in one of our correctional facilities.

Right now, we are experiencing challenges because not all of those stakeholders involved in that mission are carrying it out appropriately. Part of the suggestions that are made in this budget that our Caucus has talked about, and Senator Greenleaf is going to lead on, is a merger of the Department of Corrections and the Board of Probation and Parole, which is a very good proposal. It is something that we should look to advance. It is something that we will work with the leadership of our chairman of the Senate Committee on Judiciary to try to deal with the long-term issues relating to the cost of corrections, to try to get the recidivism that plagues our correctional institutions and the costs of those insti-

tutions under control. That is a very important topic that we will be talking about over the next 6 months.

The Governor, in regard to government that works, had talked about pension reform. Pension reform and pension costs are a cancer that is taking over the ability of State government to meet its obligations to its children and its citizens. We are looking at, as the Majority Leader had mentioned yesterday, an increase of \$2.5 billion to \$5 billion until we get to the top of our payment obligations. It is draining our local school districts' ability to serve our children, and because of that, we have to be serious about dealing with the costs associated with it.

Part of that is making sure that these systems do not sustain an unusual amount of risk above where they are now. We are flying, in terms of the risk of these plans, at \$70 billion in debt at 300,000 feet, and we are suffocating. We should not fly at 400,000 feet and think that is going to solve the problem. Part of the Governor's proposal is to increase the amount of debt in the plans and look to savings through something that, historically, has only shown to provide additional risk by looking to the markets to realize investment earnings above the cost of that bond, what is called arbitrage. This is something that is used on Wall Street but is tremendously risky. I think how we should benchmark whether that plan is a good plan for Pennsylvania is the fact that this General Assembly collectively, Democrats and Republicans, in 2010 made a statement in statute, because we were sustaining too much risk, that in the future we were not going to use pension bonds as a means to solve our pension problems. The rating agencies applauded us for that. They are also telling us that if we go in that direction again, that is a negative mark on our obligation to serve our retirement systems, and it will likely be something for which they will consider downgrading us again. I am really concerned if that is the fundamental approach that the administration is looking at to solve our pension problem. We need to have a really serious conversation in line with what the Majority Leader had mentioned yesterday to deal with the underlying costs in the plans so they can become more sustainable.

In human services, the Governor had mentioned an increase of \$700 million. We are projecting more than that, so he is trying to deal with the cost drivers in human services. One of the things, of course, we are disappointed in is the choice to move away from a more private sector solution to serving the expanded population for Medicaid. We believe that we are providing greater access to our citizens who would be part of this expansion. That was one of the purposes of it. But there are things that he is proposing that we should seriously look at, and that is looking to drive down the most significant costs of human services relating to the choices of these settings of care for senior citizens, and citizens with disabilities, looking to more community-based settings that are things that people will choose and will be less expensive. He is talking about community-based managed care, something that I think we could work with him on to better manage the cost of human services. But we have to make sure that in doing that, we do not just get additional utilization that drives up costs. It is a new approach that needs to be looked at very seriously.

Now, many of the items that he talked about are popular in some circles of the General Assembly, investments in the areas that the Governor is proposing. In light of a \$1.7-billion deficit with insufficient reserves with mounting debt, there are several questions we have to ask in regard to this overall plan, and those

are, what is the plan to secure the revenues to invest in these programs? Is the plan responsible in relation to how it flows with our economy? And are they resources that are secure and sustainable? If we look at that overall pie and the revenue components of the pie, I believe at this point in time the Governor's suggestions for additional spending do not have the same appeal and will not be sustainable.

In looking at a revenue package, you have to first look at where we are now and look at Pennsylvania's position relative to other States if you are suggesting changing it, because if we are uncompetitive, anything we do hopefully will not make us less competitive, because we are just exacerbating the same problem. There are many sources of information that are used to evaluate this. Many think tanks do this. The source that I like to use is a source that actually asks the people in the field, those who manage the finances of the companies that are affected by our taxation, and there is a survey done by "CFO Magazine" every year that asks these people a question: What is your overall impression of the tax environment of the State? That is the most important question, and Pennsylvania sits 44th, 6th from the bottom. So, that is what people are responding to us in terms of what we do. They are looking at us and seeing what is our competitive position and what are we doing about it. The national average is better than ours, as you know, sitting at 44th. So in doing that, and evaluating our proposal, we have to remember the fact that we are not sitting in a competitive position right now.

So, in regard to the components of the Governor's plan, one of the key components, one of our most competitive levies in that package and the one that raises the most money, is an increase in the personal income tax from 3.07 percent to 3.7 percent. Now, of course, this is something that a lot of our families pay. There is a provision that provides for a greater poverty exclusion, which is a good thing, but for most families, it will result in an increase in taxation. As I said, part of this will go to property tax reduction, but I also said, that may be the case in the short-term, but in the long-term, that might not be the case. So, what we may end up with 10 years from now is higher expenses from State government in personal income tax and not the corresponding reduction in property taxes.

Where this is most concerning, well, not most, but obviously of concern as well, is how it affects small business. When you have a revenue package that is supposed to promote growth and be predictable, sustainable, and easy to administer, you do not want to impose additional taxes on the growing part of your economy. The small business pass-through, a lot of them family-held businesses, have doubled in Pennsylvania over the last 10 years. They have doubled. That is the growing part of our economy. We are deciding, through an adjustment of personal incomes, tax rates from 3.07 to 3.7, to directly impose State government's will on the growing part of our economy, on the one component of our revenue portfolio that many will say is competitive. So, in regard to that response to what we are doing to make ourselves more competitive, the only thing this can do is make ourselves less competitive.

The second component of the Governor's revenue package that is important to recognize is a change in the rates and the base for sales and use tax. A 6-percent rate exists now that has existed for many, many years. The Governor is proposing increasing it to 6.6 percent and expanding the base to include a lot more business segments and services. We have to keep in mind,

again, that this is a tax that all of our families in Pennsylvania will be paying more because of the rate adjustment, and will be paying more because it applies to more segments of our economy. Some of it is used for property tax reduction, but, again, is that sustainable? One of the points of major concern for me is that the service sector of our economy is the growing part of our economy. So again, we are deciding to advance a revenue package that directly affects the growing part of our economy. In many regards, we are not talking about 6 percent to 6.6 percent, we are talking about zero to 6.6 percent. So, when many of the service industries go to their customers and try to pass it on, and their customers see their bills in 1 year going up by 6.6 percent--it is likely that they will not--and if you are talking about a loss of 6.6 percent to your bottom line cash flow, that is tough to consume, especially in 1 year. So, that is a part of the proposal where we have serious concerns.

One part of our revenue portfolio that we have had concerns about for many years is how high we are flying and how uncompetitive we are in corporate net income tax rates. At 9.99 percent, Pennsylvania is the highest in marginal rates, at that rate the highest jurisdiction in the country, and on the planet. We have been talking about this for years, the ability to try to have the revenue capacity, the growth, to reduce that tax. The Governor is proposing to reduce it from 9.99 to 4.99, something in isolation that should be applauded. However, if you look at it in total, there is major concern, at least I have, and our Caucus has major concern, what does it mean in total? How is it being paid for? The way it is being paid for is by the adoption of a whole new structure when it comes to compliance by corporate enterprise when paying corporate net income tax. That is called a combined reporting structure. And what that is, other than in the past when each company had to file separately, now that company, and every subsidiary, has to file together, putting all of their income from all over the country into that return. And what tends to happen with these structures is that those companies that have the highest market presence in your State, those companies that call Pennsylvania their home, those companies that we can rely on because they are here, and they are committed to continue to invest here, are the ones that tend to see higher taxes, not the ones that are outside the State. I know of many who have told me that this combined reporting structure, in their regard, will result in higher taxes. Even though this is the shrinking component of our economy, there are only 30 percent less companies that are using this structure than in the past, even though that is the case. If we are looking to reform a component of our revenue portfolio that has been so uncompetitive for years, we have to make sure we do it right and not reform it in such a way that the companies we depend on are the ones we are imposing our will on. That is the concern of this proposal.

The other piece of the corporate structure part of the revenue portfolio relates to the capital stock and franchise tax. The Governor is looking to phase that out. That is something that we have collectively worked on for years, and that is a good proposal. That has always been a bad tax because it directly affects the capital of business, notwithstanding their cash flow; that if they are losing money, they still have to pay. Which means they have to take money out of their capital that they would invest in their people instead of State government. But there is a counterproposal here that works in the opposite direction that the Governor is proposing that gives us great concern. That is how

the State allows companies to use their losses. A good tax policy allows that policy to flow with the economy, and when a company loses money, they are not paying additional money out of their capital into the State. We have one of the most restrictive policies in relation to that in Pennsylvania. Most States allow companies to use those losses so their operations flow with our tax policy. So, while at one end, we are taking a tax off of the books that affects the company's capital, on the other end, we are adding a proposal that allows them to save capital when they lose money. Those are inconsistent policies and not policies that promote effective growth in our tax policy in Pennsylvania.

Of course, the Governor is advancing a severance tax, 5 percent, and \$.04 per thousand cubic feet, modeling West Virginia. This Caucus has worked with Governor Corbett on putting together an understanding that there should be a revenue component relating to natural gas drilling in the Commonwealth. The concern that relates to this proposal is more in range of what we are targeting to raise from the proposal itself. The Governor is projecting to raise \$1 billion out of this regime. We are having trouble, given current prices and current volumes, to get to that number. If you try to back into that number and try to find a rate that matches that number, it puts Pennsylvania at the highest effective rate of severance tax in the entire country. Now, when we are trying to reduce corporate net income taxes below where we were before when we were the highest of the country, and now we are advancing a proposal that makes our severance tax the highest in the country, that is working at cross-purposes. It all comes down to what you need to raise a billion dollars, and to raise a billion dollars, what we are coming down with is a rate that is far in excess of what other States are imposing.

There is a cigarette tax that increases the cigarette tax by \$1, a 40-percent increase; and taxes on other tobacco products, 40 percent to the wholesale price of chewing tobacco, cigars, loose tobacco, and e-cigarettes. I would like to focus, just for a minute, in regard to the overall theme of this revenue package in relation to the tax on cigars. I am not sure if all Pennsylvanians know this, but Pennsylvania is a place where we have a very vibrant and very large cigar distribution industry. Now, why is that the case? The market for cigars and the manufacturing of cigars is in the Caribbean, so it would seem to make sense that you would want that market to be closer to the Caribbean, and it is. The other big State is Florida. It is Pennsylvania and Florida, and there is a reason for that, because Pennsylvania and Florida are the only States that have chosen to not tax cigars. These companies have decided to be here for one reason, and that is because we have honored their investment here. They are here because we have decided not to tax their products. It is the only reason why they are here, and we know that. We have gone through this conversation before. We went through it in prior administrations, and now we are doing it again, knowing that these industries are only here because we are not imposing this tax, and we are going to do it anyway. And what is going to happen? They are going to have no reason to be here anymore. They are going to want to be in Florida, and that would make sense, because Florida is not taxing them and they are closer to their market.

I think the emphasis on that tax and the reason it keeps on coming back tells me just a general theme regarding this overall revenue package, and that is just a general uncertainty and ambivalence toward the proper relationship when it comes to the tax policy of the public sector to the private sector, an ambivalence

to what we need to do in structuring tax policy relating to the growing segments of our economy, an ambivalence to companies that call Pennsylvania their home and have invested here, and will increase their investment here, just as long as we are partners with them, an ambivalence to the greatest opportunity that we have in Pennsylvania since coal and steel, with a proposal that could potentially put our effective rate the highest in the country, an ambivalence to the reason why companies are here in the first place. For me, that is the one that makes the least amount of sense, knowing that if we impose a tax, they are likely to leave. That is what has been presented to us.

Now, ambivalence, Mr. President, to economic conditions and tax policy is not a strategy for fiscal sustainability. It is not. If we decide to go forward with this type of platform and want to make investments into our schools and our economy based on that, then what we will likely see is an economy that does not grow, spending we cannot sustain, and people who are more exposed, people who are dependent on these programs, who are employed based on these programs that down the road we will have to pull back on or raise taxes to support them, again, in this endless spiral of increasing costs to meet our needs. It is the key difference and the key area of concern as it relates to the Governor's budget, and something we desperately need to reconcile.

Mr. President, Members of the General Assembly, I can say very confidently, those who have been here most of their lives are very proud of our State. They are proud of the fact that millions have come here over the years to pursue opportunities for themselves and their families. They are proud of the fact that we have had unlimited manufacturing capacity that has built our State and our nation, a State that at one time on its own, by itself, was the fourth largest economy on the planet. Now, I know Governor Wolf shares the goals with us of maintaining that legacy. We have those same goals, and when you have the same goals, there is always common ground to develop strategies to meet those goals. All I am asking is that we reflect on our history, we reflect on what other States have done around us to solve their financial problems in a worse competitive position than we are, States that we take companies from because they have made those decisions. We are a Republican Caucus that has always found a way to get things done. That is our reputation. We will be pleased to work with the Governor, work through his proposal to come down to a final spending package that advances the interests of our constituents, this generation of Pennsylvanians, and for generations to come.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT. I took a lot of notes, as I know that my friend from Philadelphia County, Senator Hughes, also did.

With that, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Hughes.

Senator HUGHES. Mr. President, I yield my time momentarily to Senator Rafferty.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Montgomery, Senator Rafferty.

Senator RAFFERTY. Mr. President, I accept the time from my friend and colleague from Philadelphia, Senator Hughes, who I know is a State-related man himself. Today is Pitt Day. It is a day where people are trying to get out of town because of the storm coming, but Pitt had a number of events planned for today and they have exhibitions set up in the main Rotunda. As a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, as well my

colleague Senator Wozniak, we both received a great education from Pittsburgh, we wanted to just take this time to wish them well and much success for the University of Pittsburgh. It is a blue and gold day. Notice I am wearing my Pitt tie, Mr. President, and wish them well and continued success.

Thank you, Mr. President, and I thank Senator Hughes for his time.

The PRESIDENT. Pitt is a great school. We are lucky to have Pitt. My niece, Caroline Mirsch, is also a student at Pitt.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Hughes, who had time to take more notes.

Senator HUGHES. Mr. President, you are right, I did take more notes. I just want to say that we are in the period right now, after the Governor's budget presentation, where we need to go after the facts and the details of that presentation. Both the House and the Senate will engage in their process of hearings of the Committee on Appropriations in the next several weeks. For the next 3 to 4 weeks, we will get into great detail about what the Governor has proposed, the fine details, line by line, department by department, of what is in his document. Then we will be able to move from there to help shape a budget for the people of Pennsylvania that reflects their interests, it reflects their desires, reflects their needs, and reflects their direction.

We are all proud of this Commonwealth, as the gentleman, the Republican Leader, the Majority Leader, and the chairman of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, my friend Senator Browne, indicated we are all proud of Pennsylvania. It is a wonderful State, it is a great place to live, work, enjoy yourselves, raise your children, retire, except for the weather right about now. This is not a great place to kind of hang out in right now, okay? But we all enjoy this State. We all enjoy what it offers. We are proud of this Commonwealth; however, we are not proud of the direction this Commonwealth has gone in the last 4 years. We are not proud of the fact that, and history is important to look at, Pennsylvania has dropped to 50th in the nation in new job creation. We are not proud of the fact that Pennsylvania was last in the seven-sector region of the States in our area, - Ohio, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, and of course our own lovely and wonderful Commonwealth - we were last in private-sector job creation. We are not proud of the fact that our test scores have gone down in our schools. We are not proud of the fact that almost 25,000 folks who had the responsibility of educating and creating intellectual life in our children and worked in our schools, that they lost their jobs while some of the biggest tax giveaways to the largest corporations of the Commonwealth let them walk away with hundreds of millions of dollars, if not billions. We are not proud of that.

We are not proud of the fact that in the last 4 years the previous Governor shut down the Commonwealth's adultBasic healthcare plan, a plan, Mr. President, that I know you were intimately involved in supporting and advocating for. You spoke on this floor on numerous occasions about the adultBasic healthcare program. We are not proud of the fact that 42,000 people lost their health insurance in a very callous and cold move. I will never forget that week. You were here, Mr. President, on Tuesday, the first Tuesday of February of 2011, when the previous Governor announced the ending of the adultBasic program and 42,000 people lost health insurance. Forty-two thousand hardworking individuals, low-income, hardworking individuals who are struggling every day, lost health insurance. They did not

deserve to lose it. They played by the rules, but the system did not provide care. We, as a Commonwealth, were generous enough and thoughtful enough and thought it would be the right thing to do that we stood up for them. Well, they lost their health insurance. The previous Governor indicated, well, we cannot provide coverage anymore because we do not have the money to pay for it. You remember that. So that was Tuesday. The statement was these folks do not matter. We cannot provide health insurance to them.

On Thursday of that same week, 3 days later, the previous Governor announced a \$400 million tax giveaway to the wealthiest corporations of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. So those that had, got more - a \$400 million tax break; accelerated depreciation is what they call it. It is a technical term. Most of the folks who live in Pennsylvania do not have to worry about that. They are not in that income category, not in that income climate. That is that tall cotton of money-makers. That is that 1 percent who hang around and serve on those boards of corporations. They know, but the rest of the folks in the Commonwealth, that is a foreign conversation. Those folks got a \$400 million tax break, tax giveaway. We had enough money to give them a \$400 million break, but we did not have enough money to provide health insurance for 42,000 hardworking, low-, moderate-, and modest-income Pennsylvania citizens. We are not proud of that fact.

We are not proud of the fact that the State implemented an unnecessary asset test for folks involved in the SNAP program, folks involved in the food stamp program. We are not proud of that. Unnecessary. Allegedly, it was fraud, but all of the research indicates that there was essentially no fraud going on in that program, and all of the data indicate that it was not necessary because of the way the program is administered. In fact, removing those food stamps did not even help the State's finances. It did not do anything to help the State's finances because those are Federal dollars. We are not proud of the fact that we unnecessarily eliminated the State's General Assistance program. Again, a program designed to help out low-income individuals. All right?

We are not proud of the fact that it has taken far too long, almost 2 years, before we can fully implement the Medicaid expansion program and provide health insurance to over 600,000 Pennsylvania citizens who, again, are working and playing by the rules. They are making a difference on a daily basis. The previous Governor refused to, even though this body voted 40 to 10, and you stood on the floor that day, Mr. President, you were a Member of this Senate. You stood on the floor that day and you cast that vote and this body overwhelmingly approved the direction to go into Medicaid expansion, but because of shenanigans in the House of Representatives, the House could not even get a chance to vote on it collectively. We are not proud of the fact that those folks were not allowed the opportunity to get health insurance when it was there and available to them. We are not proud of the fact that some cumbersome program was put together called Healthy PA, that is falling on its face because it is not providing care to people who deserve to get care. Folks who are providing drug and alcohol services to individuals who are utilizing drug and alcohol services, they are suffering and need access to services before they fall into the oblivion of addiction. They cannot get access to services now and they are kind of hanging out there with nowhere to turn to. Their programs are even in a situation where they are being threatened to shut down

because of what was put into place. We are not proud of the fact that there was a 10-percent cut to human service programs across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Allegedly, there was no money to pay for it, but remember those folks who received that huge tax break.

We are certainly not proud of the direction the Commonwealth has gone in the last 4 years with respect to denying people the right to vote. The crazy, crazy--and it presents itself more directly right now, Mr. President, as we celebrate, this coming weekend, the 50th anniversary of a day called Bloody Sunday. You will remember that, Mr. President, the anniversary of Dr. King and all of those heroic individuals who chose to march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Alabama. We celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act this year. We celebrate that struggle. We honor that struggle of walking across, as I said, the Edmund Pettus Bridge. We recognize that. So we are not proud of the past 4 years. We are proud of our Commonwealth, but we are not proud of the work of the last 4 years, and so that sets up the context of what the Governor put forward yesterday - a new direction, a fresh start. It is his proposal for us to negotiate, deliberate, converse with, and try to come to a common ground, hopefully by June 30. Hopefully, with a document that we can be proud of by June 30, but if it has to go longer, then it will go longer, if we have to fight to take Pennsylvania in a different direction, because the past direction has led us to calamity, mayhem, and destruction of the lives and opportunities of too many of Pennsylvania's citizens who did not deserve to be put in a situation that they were put in.

We had a chance to raise the minimum wage in the last 4 years, Mr. President, but our previous Governor chose not to take that chance and chose not to advocate for those individuals to raise their wages. So, right now we are suffering in an environment where we are, essentially, as a State, saying that it is okay to pay people below the Federal poverty level. That is unacceptable. This new Governor said, you know what, I want the minimum wage increased and I want it increased to \$10.10 an hour. Not to \$15 an hour, which most of the advocacy groups are advocating for, but something reasonable, something moderate, to \$10.10 an hour. A proposal that you supported in the past, and Senator Tartaglione has been a prime sponsor on, and many of us believe is the right way to go.

The Governor introduced a budget proposal yesterday that called for the largest reduction in property taxes in the history of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. That is what he did, Mr. President, the largest reduction in property taxes in the history of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The Governor introduced a budget yesterday that recoups the education cuts that the previous Governor saw fit to put in place. That is what he called for yesterday. You know, I know, and everyone listening knows that the number one issue that the people in this Commonwealth want us to deal with is the appropriate and responsible investment in the education of our children. There should not be a situation, like too many of our students have to confront, where they do not have the right teachers in their school building--not in their grade, but in their school building--to educate the children for the classes and the tests that they are supposed to be taking. A very public matter came up in my own district, discussed locally and nationally, of Overbrook High School, the fabled Overbrook High School: the high school that produced the greatest basketball player in the history of the

world, Wilt Chamberlain; the high school that produced the first African American astronaut, Guy Bluford; the high school that produced Will Smith; the high school that produced so many wonderful things, wonderful children, wonderful products, wonderful investments. They did not even have a biology teacher. The children who were having to prepare to take a test in biology, a high-stakes test in biology, they did not even have a biology teacher. That is not the only school that has to deal with environments like that, and it is not just in Philadelphia. It is a matter that is occurring across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, so much so that people across the country are paying attention to what we do. The Governor saw fit to prioritize education funding and get us thinking right again and get us moving back in the right direction by making a dramatic increase in public education funding, to recoup the cuts that the previous Governor took.

This Governor invested in putting people to work, Mr. President. I cannot tell you the number of private sector folks, business people, and developers who want to do investments, who want to transform communities, who want to put people to work who have said to me, come to our office looking for help, and over the last 4 years the State has not been a place that has been friendly to investments, help, and helping out business folks in trying to move their circumstances forward with support from the Commonwealth, as all of the economic development programs in the Commonwealth have basically been wiped out. No help was available. The cupboard was bare. This Governor says, you know what, we are going to invest, we are going to take a shot, we are going to invest in you and put our programs back on the line. We were once the envy of the nation in terms of providing support for our businesses in helping them and making the appropriate investments all across the board. That is what the Governor wants to return to, and he wants to raise their wages so they can get family-sustaining wages in the jobs they have. Mr. President, the Governor proposed, once again, one of the largest cuts in the history of business taxes that are paid in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

So, we have to put all of this together. We have to factor all of this together. He is taking Republican principles and he is taking Democratic principles. He said we need to fix the pension fund, and one of the easiest ways to fix the pension fund is not paying these exorbitant fees that are being paid by fund managers in each of the funds - the PSERS or teachers' fund, and in the State employees' funds, not paying so many fees. We need to take a serious look at the fees that are being paid, and maybe we need to reduce them because right now they are in the hundreds of millions of dollars. Maybe we need to reduce them dramatically and take the reductions in those fees and put them back into the funds so that those funds can do a better job and have the appropriate payment, because, quite frankly, we need to be honest with ourselves. Democratic governors and Republican governors over the last 17 years have not made the appropriate payments to the pension funds that we were supposed to make. It is time we do that so those funds can be safe and secure, and that is not just important to the retirees who benefit from those funds, but that is important to the entire Commonwealth because we get a significant reduction and economic investment out of those funds when they pay those retirees and those retirees spend those dollars here in Pennsylvania. That is important and that is significant.

I just might add the expansion of Medicaid will not be run by the public sector. The Medicaid program has not been run by the public sector for almost 25 years. It has been privately run. What the Governor wants to do is give the private sector an opportunity to show their stuff, once again, in an expanded population. They have saved this State billions of dollars, and they can do so again and they have improved the outcomes of people's health. They can do that again with the Medicaid expansion program, not the hybrid craziness that Healthy PA has turned out to be.

So, the Governor has taken Pennsylvania in a new direction, providing Pennsylvania a fresh start. We need to seriously look at what he has laid out on the table. We need to analyze it in great depth. We need to look at the fact that is it true, as was stated yesterday, that the net benefit for Pennsylvania citizens from the property tax reduction, to the expansion of poverty exemption, to the expansion of the rent rebate program--which is very important--is it true that if you add those breaks there, and you add the extra taxes that folks will have to pay, that Pennsylvania citizens make out better in the end by an average of 13 percent? Is that, in fact, true? We need to analyze that, because if that is correct, if we net out better, then that is probably the direction we need to be going in. If we are creating more jobs and paying a better wage, that is certainly the direction we need to be going in. If we are providing more health insurance and we are doing it at a lower cost, we need to go in that direction. If we are putting our arms around long-term care, which is the technical term for basically healthcare services for those of us who are getting old - nursing homes and assisted care living - and all that kind of stuff, and we are putting our arms around that and reducing the cost that we spend there but providing better care, then we need to embrace that. That is the right direction we need to go in.

This is big thinking. This is big work. We need to be big about stuff. Our citizens are requiring us to solve problems in a major way. They are not looking for minimalist thinking anymore. They are not looking for small thinking anymore. We have suffered under small thinking for the last 4 years. We have suffered under small policy for the last 4 years. It has taken us from being the envy of the nation in terms of job creation and economic development to the worst in the nation in terms of private sector job creation. It has taken us from being a leader in raising the minimum wage, because we beat the Federal government in raising the minimum wage in 2006, to where we are trailing States across the nation in terms of raising the minimum wage. It has taken us from a leader in providing health insurance to the uninsured to now trailing the nation in going down that path. It has taken us from being a leader and being the only State in the nation where education test scores went up every grade level in every subject matter, because that is where we were 4 years ago, to now where test scores are going down across the board. And us making teachers, counselors in schools, and bus drivers, making them the enemy. They have become the enemy.

That is the direction we went in. It caused a \$2.3-billion budget deficit. It caused a crisis in our education system. It caused a crisis in our job creation system, and we cannot go back to that way of thinking and that policy because we have 4 years of havoc that we can point to. We have to go in a different direction. We have to go on a different path. The Governor laid down a bold strategy and a bold program. It cannot be taken in isolation; it has to be taken as a whole. There are some rough patches

in there that we have to confront. There are some adjustments that hopefully we can make to make it more palpable, to make it work better than maybe even he offered up. I am prepared to go down that path. I am prepared to do the hard work. I am prepared to do honest analysis of the situation. I think our Caucus is, and I think the Pennsylvania citizens -- I do not think, Mr. President, I know Pennsylvania citizens want us to do something different than what we have done before.

We have been presented with a different option. Let us do the appropriate work, let us get to the business of putting Pennsylvania on the right track, the right course, and again, and give the Pennsylvania citizens a fresh start.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Costa.

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I want to thank the gentlemen on both sides of the aisle for their very candid comments. I rise to offer some brief remarks that I want to introduce for the record relating to Dr. John Murray, a distinguished Pittsburgher, Allegheny Countian, and Pennsylvanian whom we lost 2 weeks ago. Chancellor Murray was a professor of law at Duquesne University, and a chancellor there, as well, and I ask that these remarks be spread upon the record.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT. Without objection, the remarks will be spread upon the record.

(The following prepared remarks were made part of the record at the request of the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator COSTA:)

Mr. President, I rise today to offer some brief thoughts about the recent loss of a distinguished individual from the Pittsburgh area, Dr. John E. Murray, Jr., former chancellor and professor of law at Duquesne University. Dr. Murray previously served as dean and professor of law at the University of Pittsburgh and Villanova.

Dr. Murray was a life-changing teacher, but an even better person. He lived an extraordinary life and provided insight, advice, and counsel for students and public officials for more than 50 years. He was an author and teacher who was able to make even reluctant law students understand the law's complex beauty. Dr. Murray was widely regarded as the preeminent expert on contracts and the Uniform Commercial Code.

As president of Duquesne University, he guided the school through a tumultuous period and helped restore its national reputation. In civic affairs, as chair of ComPAC 21, Dr. Murray used his leadership skills, calm demeanor, and balanced approach to craft recommendations that reformed Allegheny County government.

My thoughts and prayers are with both the family of Dr. Murray and the community as we mourn the loss of a wonderful man who touched and transformed lives wherever he went.

RECESS

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Centre, Senator Corman.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I move that the Senate do now recess until Monday, April 13, 2015, at 1 p.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time, unless sooner recalled by the President pro tempore.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

The Senate recessed at 12:25 p.m., Eastern Standard Time.