

MEMO



DEC 07 2010

Senate of Pennsylvania

December 6, 2010

TO: ALL SENATORS
FROM: Stewart J. Greenleaf *Stewart*
SUBJECT: Cosponsorship -- **Funding for Mass Public Transit Systems**

I am reintroducing **Senate Bill 154**, a joint resolution that proposes an amendment to the Constitution of Pennsylvania permitting gasoline taxes and motor license fees to be used for the development, construction, reconstruction, maintenance and repair of mass public transportation systems, and the costs and expenses related to them.

Presently, Article VIII, section 11 of the constitution limits the expenditure of gasoline taxes and motor license fees "solely for construction, reconstruction, maintenance and repair of and safety on public highways and bridges and air navigation facilities and costs and expenses incident thereto, and for the payment of obligations incurred for such purposes." Expanding the use of such taxes and fees to help fund mass transit only makes sense given the benefits derived from public transit systems. They:

- Provide access to jobs for working persons who do not own cars.
- Ease congestion on our highways and streets.
- Ease the demand for parking facility construction.
- Reduce pollution.
- Reduce the wear and tear on existing highways and streets.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania needs a dependable and consistent funding source for mass public transportation systems. While the General Assembly approved a transportation funding plan via Act 44 of 2007 to help finance public transit as well as highways and bridges, the federal government's rejection of the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's application to toll Interstate I-80 now jeopardizes future funding for mass transit as provided for under this act. A viable public mass transit system is vital for economic growth, and is extremely important to the quality of life in Pennsylvania.

This legislation, as a proposed constitutional amendment, must pass the General Assembly during two separate legislative sessions and then be presented to the voters for approval.

If you would like to cosponsor this legislation, please contact Pat Snively of my office by e-mailing her at psnively@pasen.gov.