



House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

MEMORANDUM

To: All House Members
From: Rep. Josh Shapiro
Date: January 20, 2011
Subject: Co-Sponsorship of Legislation Eliminating the Legislative Surplus

In the near future, I intend to introduce legislation to statutorily eliminate the legislative surplus.

In December, the Legislative Audit and Advisory Commission (LAAC) released the FY 2009-10 audit that showed the General Assembly amassed a \$188.5 million surplus. The independent audit recommended that Pennsylvania adopt a policy to limit the legislative surplus. A copy of the audit and the accompanying recommendations can be found at www.pahouse.com/shapiro.

Most states have policies in place to either prohibit legislative surpluses or to limit them. I believe we should eliminate the legislative surplus in Pennsylvania and, given the challenging fiscal climate we face as we prepare for the upcoming budget, we ought to use the current surplus to address the needs of Pennsylvanians.

The purported reason for maintaining a surplus is to ensure that the Executive Branch is not given unfair leverage over the Legislative Branch in the event of a budget impasse lasting beyond June 30. In order to address that issue and maintain a proper balance of power between the Executive and Legislative branches, my legislation also includes a provision to allow for limited emergency spending authority for the legislature in such circumstances, if authorized by the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

If you wish to join me in cosponsoring this important legislation, please contact Sean Brennan in my office at 783-7619 or sbrennan@pahouse.net.