

**MEMO**



MAR 02 2011

**Senate of Pennsylvania**

March 1, 2011

**TO:** ALL SENATORS  
**FROM:** Stewart J. Greenleaf *Stewart*  
**SUBJECT:** Cosponsorship – Legislative service agencies

I am introducing legislation amending Title 46 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to consolidate several of the legislative service agencies that provide research services into one centralized bicameral, bipartisan research agency. I believe that if we combine the functions of the legislative research agencies into one centralized office, we will create efficiencies that will save the Commonwealth a considerable amount of money. In addition, we will be bringing together an impressive array of expertise. Combined, the staffs of these research agencies will be able to share their talents and ideas to serve the legislature even better than the various agencies do today.

The Senate Judiciary Committee recently heard a presentation by the executive director of the Washington Institute of Public Policy which serves as a centralized bicameral, bipartisan research agency for the Washington state legislature. Usually by resolution, the Washington state legislature directs the Institute to undertake a particular project and report back to the legislature. The Institute provides research, fiscal analysis, and policy recommendations on any subject the legislature desires. I was impressed by the high regard in which the Institute's reports are held, not just by Washington's state legislature but nationally.

In Pennsylvania we have several fine agencies that provide the legislature with research assistance. These legislative service agencies include the Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee, the Joint State Government Commission, the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee, the Legislative Office for Research Liaison, and the Local Government Commission. My legislation is not intended to diminish the work done by any of these agencies and their staffs. However, I believe that it is time to consider a new approach that will serve the legislature better and save money.

In recent years the budgets for these agencies have been reduced significantly. It is very likely that these agencies will face substantial reductions once again this year. Despite these reductions and the resulting loss of staff, these agencies continue to do admirable work. By combining the agencies into one stronger agency, the legislature will continue to benefit from their expertise but at a lower cost.

These agencies have enabling laws which date back many decades. My legislation will borrow the best from each of these enabling statutes and provide the new centralized agency with a modern statute codified in Title 46 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes.

*If you would like to cosponsor this legislation, please contact Pat Snively of my office by e-mailing her at [psnively@pasen.gov](mailto:psnively@pasen.gov).*