

ANGEL CRUZ, MEMBER

528E MAIN CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 202180
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120-2180
PHONE: (717) 787-1407
FAX: (717) 780-4769



2749 NORTH 5TH STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19133
PHONE: (215) 291-5643
FAX: (215) 291-5647

House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the House of Representatives
FROM: Representative Angel Cruz
DATE: May 25, 2011
SUBJECT: Co-sponsorship Legislation – Poll Watchers

In the near future, I plan to introduce legislation that will mandate training for poll watchers and stipulate that they can only perform election activities in the district in which they reside.

A Poll Watcher is a representative of a candidate, political party, civic organization or proposition who is legally present in the polling place to observe the conduct of an election. Under current Pennsylvania law, all Poll Watchers must be registered voters. These individuals are offered training prior to election day by the entity or individual that they represent. My legislation amends the Pennsylvania Election Code mandating training for poll watchers before performing job duties on Election Day. At the successful completion of training, a certificate would be provided to a poll watcher, which would have to be presented at the polling place before performing duties. Mandatory training will ensure poll watchers will know how to properly perform duties. In some cases, lack of knowledge can lead to disorder and disruption.

In 2004, the Election Code was revised to allow individuals to be a poll watcher in any district within a county. My proposal restricts individuals to performing poll watching duties at a polling station in the district in which they permanently reside. This practice would be advantageous to all parties since the poll watcher would be more apt to know the voters. In addition, both proposals would aid in the prevention of voter fraud.

Please join me in sponsoring this important legislation. If you would like to co-sponsor this legislation, please contact Christina Consylman in my office at (717) 787-1407 or CConsylm@pahouse.net.