

**JOHN A. LAWRENCE**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
13<sup>TH</sup> LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

**HARRISBURG OFFICE:**  
52A EAST WING  
P.O. BOX 202013  
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-2013  
PHONE: (717) 260-6117

**JENNERVILLE OFFICE:**  
1 COMMERCE BLVD., SUITE 200  
WEST GROVE, PA 19390  
PHONE: (610) 869-1602

**Legislation to discourage school districts from offering oversized severance packages to administrators**

August 30, 2011

Dear Colleagues -

I am sure many have been following the situation regarding the superintendent of the Philadelphia School District over the past week or so. While everyone has their own opinion on Dr. Ackerman's tenure at the helm of the district, I am specifically concerned about the generous taxpayer-funded severance package granted to the former superintendent. Published press reports indicate that the package includes a \$405,000 payment funded by anonymous donors, a \$500,000 payment funded by the school district, additional payments for unused sick and vacation days, and health insurance through June 2013.

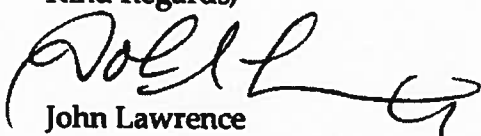
The taxpayers of Pennsylvania expect that state monies appropriated for education should be used for the instruction of students, not to fund generous severance / buy out packages for administrators. Such "golden parachutes" are widely ridiculed in the business world, and school districts should be discouraged from offering these types of juicy perks in administrative contracts.

In the near future, I will introduce legislation discouraging school districts from providing excessive administrative severance packages. Districts that choose to continue this practice will be fined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, upon payout of a severance package, an amount equal to the percentage of the state appropriation to the school district's budget multiplied by the monetary value of the severance package. As an example, if the state appropriation to a school district is 50% of the district's budget, and the district pays a \$500,000 severance package to an administrator, then PDE would fine the district \$250,000. The legislation will apply to new contracts signed 90 days after enactment, and exempt packages under \$25,000.

It is indeed the prerogative of each individual school district to negotiate contracts as they deem appropriate for their administrators. However, it is not the prerogative of the taxpayers of Pennsylvania to pay for oversized largesse. If school districts are willing to include golden parachutes in administrative contracts, they should find a way to fund them outside the state education appropriation.

If you are interested in cosponsoring this initiative, please contact Karen Updegraff at [KUpdegra@pahousegop.com](mailto:KUpdegra@pahousegop.com).

Kind Regards,

  
John Lawrence

*Thank you for your support!*