

# MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the House of Representatives

FROM: Representative Madeleine Dean

DATE: September 13, 2012

SUBJECT: Co-sponsorship – Recognizing the 236th anniversary of the ratification of the Pennsylvania Constitution of September 28, 1776

September 28, 2012 marks the 236th anniversary of the ratification of the Pennsylvania Constitution. In the near future I plan to introduce legislation to recognize this 236th anniversary of September 28, 1776.

Our Constitution predates and served as a model for the Bill of Rights of the United States Constitution, which did not take effect until 1789.

Following the Declaration of Independence, Pennsylvania crafted its first Constitution – one which declared a bill of rights and a structure for state government. Heavily influenced by William Penn, our declaration of rights held that all men have a right to life, liberty, property, happiness, and safety. Further, it lifted restrictions on voting, in which all tax paying free men were entitled to vote. Additionally, our first Constitution created a unicameral legislature, and included provisions for reapportionment.

Some people describe the Pennsylvania Constitution as the most democratic Constitution in America: one which ensures basic rights to our citizens, outlines the structure of our government, and provides the rules by which our Representatives are elected, and how they conduct the business of the state. Most importantly, the articles and amendments of the Pennsylvania Constitution compose the fundamental laws of our State.

Please join me in celebrating this anniversary, and recognizing our first Constitution. If you are interested in co-sponsoring this legislation, please contact Deb Brady in my Harrisburg office at 717-783-7619 or via email at [drbrady@pahouse.net](mailto:drbrady@pahouse.net).