

TO: All House Members

FROM: Representative R. Lee James

DATE: April 16, 2014

RE: CoSponsorship Request - Amendments to Title 35 streamlining infrastructure repair during declared disasters

When a disaster strikes, Pennsylvanians rely not only upon government agencies to help ensure a quick recovery, we need the support of the private sector to minimize the disruption of public utilities and other services.

In major disasters, private companies routinely deploy assets to Pennsylvania communities from other states to help with the restoration and recovery of electric, telecommunications and other important services. During events like Superstorm Sandy in 2012, Hurricane Irene in 2011 or even the ice storm this past winter, and for many other declared disasters, teams of skilled employees work hand-in-hand with their Pennsylvania-based colleagues to get our residents re-connected quickly and efficiently.

The legislation I am proposing protects out-of-state businesses typically affiliates of PA based companies, solely in the state to respond to a state declared disaster from the state's licensing and legal reporting requirements. The bill further eliminates barriers that could hinder the quick and efficient deployment of individuals and hard assets during a declared disaster. When individuals are deployed to a disaster-stricken area, they can be subject to state and local taxes, as well as myriad other reporting, registration and other rules that impede recovery efforts. The companies that deploy these resources are burdened with additional compliance costs associated with processing these payments and meeting other local requirements.

It is important to note that my proposed legislation is not a tax break for individuals or employees; instead, it is a measure that would allow our residents to recover from disasters more quickly and efficiently with the help of experts from other states who engaged only as long as is necessary to restore normal operations during declared disasters.

I believe that this bill represents a strong public-private partnership that is essential when a disaster strikes. Please join me in sponsoring this very important legislation.