

JEFFREY P. PYLE
MEMBER
60TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

HARRISBURG OFFICE:
Room 218, Ryan Office Building
PO Box 202060 • Harrisburg, PA 17120-2060
Phone: (717) 783-5327 • Fax: (717) 782-2904

FORD CITY OFFICE:
312 Ford Street • Ford City, PA 16226
Phone: (724) 763-3222 • Fax: (724) 763-9788
1-800-287-0614

SARVER OFFICE:
280 North Pike Road • Sarver, PA 16055
Phone: (724) 353-2223 • Fax: (724) 353-2221



House of Representatives
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg

COMMITTEES
Appropriations, Secretary
Transportation
Environmental Resources & Energy

Chairman, House Coal Caucus

E-mail: jpyle@pahousegop.com
Web: JeffPyle.net
Facebook.com/RepJeffPyle

TO: All House Members

FROM: Jeff Pyle
60th Legislative District

DATE: October 26, 2015

SUBJECT: Cosponsorship of Legislation –Statewide Elections – Recall Office Holders

In the near future, I will introduce legislation to provide the People of Pennsylvania a means by which they can reign in the conduct of statewide elected officers who are unresponsive, incompetent or simply no longer represent the views of the people who elected them to office. This legislation will amend the state constitution to allow for recall elections for the offices of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Auditor General and State Treasurer.

Members may have heard about the recall elections in the State of Wisconsin in 2012. My research shows that Wisconsin is actually one of twenty (20) jurisdictions in the United States (19 states and the District of Columbia) that provide for the recall of elected officials. The process for recall elections vary from state-to-state. Some require a lower percentage of petition signors and action by the General Assembly. Others require a higher percentage of signors and no involvement by the General Assembly. Some states require a showing of criminal conduct or incompetence, while others do not require any prerequisite for the recall at all.

My legislation would provide for the following:

- An individual seeking to hold a recall election would file an affidavit with the Bureau of Elections within the Department of State.
 - An affidavit could be filed no sooner than six (6) months after the statewide elected official assumes office.
- Petition circulators will have 150 days from the day the affidavit is filed with the Department of State to circulate a recall petition.
 - A recall petition must be signed by a number of electors equal to at least 25% of the total votes cast for that position in the preceding election (with at least 200 signatures from each of at least 34 counties).
- The Bureau of Elections has 100 days after the filing to review the recall petition and determine whether it is valid and sufficient.

- Once a petition is certified, the Department must schedule a special election within 100 days of the certification, where a simple question will be placed before the voters:

“Shall (name) be recalled from the office of (position)?”

- If the question is answered in the affirmative, the statewide elected official in question shall be removed immediately upon certification of the election results; and a “successor election” must be scheduled shortly thereafter (where voters will select a person to replace the recalled official).
- This legislation also provides a process for persons eligible to serve in the position to circulate nominating petitions during the pendency of the recall election; and process for holding a special primary election to precede the successor election.

Recall of elected officials occurs infrequently. In our nation’s history, there have been three gubernatorial recall elections held in the United States. Most recently was the 2012 recall vote involving Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker (who survived the recall attempt). But, in 2003, California voters successfully recalled Governor Gray Davis. In 1921, North Dakota voters recalled their Governor, Attorney General and their Commissioner of Agriculture. However infrequent recall votes might be, I believe that voters should be afforded an opportunity to re-examine their election choices.

Thank you for your attention to this correspondence. I urge you to add your name to the list of cosponsors of this milestone legislation.