

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Legislative Journal

TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2015

SESSION OF 2015 199TH OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

No. 17

SENATE

TUESDAY, March 3, 2015

The Senate met at 11 a.m., Eastern Standard Time.

The PRESIDENT (Lieutenant Governor Mike Stack) in the Chair.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rabbi ERIC CYTRYN, of Beth El Temple, Harrisburg, offered the following prayer:

Good morning.

We pray together, dear God, Creator of all. You created each one of us in Your image to continue Your holy work here on earth. Our hearts are filled with gratitude and awe as we participate in the democratic process of representing and governing the people of this great Commonwealth. We invoke Your name, God, and ask for Your blessings over our elected officials, their staffs, and all citizens of our great Commonwealth and our great country. You have given us this great gift of democracy so we can institutionalize our belief that all people are created in Your image and, therefore, each one of us is absolutely equal to the other of infinite worth and nearly infinite potential. You have created this world with diverse life, diverse ideas, and diverse faiths so that each can find a home in Your presence.

So, we pray today that You will guide our elected leaders towards deeper sensitivities towards these diversities. Teach us to protect and defend each other's right to live, each person's right to express their thoughts, each person's right to joyfully pursue happiness, and each person's right to express their faith in our Commonwealth. Guide us also to a greater sensitivity towards pain that diseases bring to bear on our bodies and souls. Permit us to empathize more deeply with the pain and suffering that can be alleviated through decisions we are empowered to make in this great Chamber. Help us to be open-minded to our potential, and humble in the face of the power our constituents have granted us. We pray that You will empower us to feel joy when our neighbors feel joy and sadness when our neighbors are sad. You will enable us through our actions here in Pennsylvania's Senate Chamber to teach the world tolerance, kindness, justice, and compassion. You have taught us both justice, justice shall you pursue, that you may long live on the land I am giving you, and also love your neighbor as yourself and love the stranger.

Continue to challenge us, God, to protect the interests of those in power and those who are marginalized: minorities, the orphan, the widow, and the poor. Remind us today, dear God, that we

cannot merely pray to You to act on behalf of our fellow citizens. Bless us, please, with strength, determination, and willpower to do instead of merely to pray for Your sake and for ours speedily and soon, that our land and world may be safe and that our lives may be blessed. Blessed are You, God of all creation, who blesses all Members of this Senate with the wisdom to govern. Amen.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair thanks Rabbi Cytryn, who is the guest today of Senator Teplitz.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

(The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those assembled.)

BILLS INTRODUCED AND REFERRED

The PRESIDENT laid before the Senate the following Senate Bills numbered, entitled, and referred as follows, which were read by the Clerk:

March 3, 2015

Senators FARNESE, TARTAGLIONE, FONTANA, BREWSTER, COSTA, SMITH, HUGHES, RAFFERTY and BLAKE presented to the Chair **SB 589**, entitled:

An Act amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in miscellaneous provisions, further providing for accidents involving death or personal injury.

Which was committed to the Committee on JUDICIARY, March 3, 2015.

Senators TOMLINSON, DINNIMAN, GORDNER, SMITH and RAFFERTY presented to the Chair **SB 590**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of July 5, 2012 (P.L.1102, No.132), known as the State System of Higher Education Intellectual Property Act, further providing for title of act, for short title, for definitions and for repeal.

Which was committed to the Committee on EDUCATION, March 3, 2015.

Senators TOMLINSON, MENSCH, SCAVELLO, FONTANA, FARNESE, HUGHES and RAFFERTY presented to the Chair **SB 591**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, in personal income tax, further providing for charitable contributions by taxpayers.

Which was committed to the Committee on FINANCE, March 3, 2015.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Senator CORMAN asked and obtained a leave of absence for Senator VANCE, for today's Session, for personal reasons.

JOURNAL APPROVED

The PRESIDENT. The Journal of the Session of January 26, 2015, is now in print.

The Clerk proceeded to read the Journal of the Session of January 26, 2015.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I move that further reading of the Journal be dispensed with and that the Journal be approved.

On the question,
Will the Senate agree to the motion?

The yeas and nays were required by Senator CORMAN and were as follows, viz:

YEA-48

Alloway	Dinniman	McGarrigle	Teplitz
Argall	Eichelberger	McIlhinney	Tomlinson
Aument	Farnese	Mensch	Vogel
Baker	Folmer	Pileggi	Vulakovich
Bartolotta	Fontana	Rafferty	Wagner
Blake	Gordner	Scarnati	Ward
Boscola	Greenleaf	Scavello	White
Brewster	Haywood	Schwank	Wiley
Brooks	Hughes	Smith	Williams
Browne	Hutchinson	Smucker	Wozniak
Corman	Kitchen	Stefano	Yaw
Costa	Leach	Tartaglione	Yudichak

NAY-0

A majority of the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

The PRESIDENT. The Journal is approved.

GUESTS OF SENATOR ROBERT B. MENSCH PRESENTED TO THE SENATE

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Montgomery, Senator Mensch.

Senator MENSCH. Mr. President, what a day for some shadows and guests from the district to be here. Joining me today are Tyler Stalletti and Alexis Geissinger, who come from Quakertown, Bucks County. They both graduated from Quakertown High School. Tyler is currently a student at Bucks County Community College and intends to transfer next year to Temple University, majoring in business administration.

Alexis is currently a student at Southern New Hampshire University, majoring in fashion merchandising and managing.

Tyler is presently a volunteer fireman with the Trumbauersville Fire Company, and he has held a chair there for 7 years. He is also a member of the Richland Library in Quakertown, and is the current secretary for the Quakertown Historical Society, and friends with the Quakertown Rotary. He is presently interning with the Upper Bucks County Chamber of Commerce. Tyler plans to eventually buy his own hotel and run a successful business, a business that his family has been involved in for many years.

Alexis is currently working for a pediatric office in Quakertown, Pennsylvania.

Tyler has received a 2010 Recruitment Award and the President's Award in 2012 for his participation with the Trumbauersville Fire Company. Mr. President, join me in giving a warm Senate welcome to Alexis and Tyler.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guests of Senator Mensch please rise so that the Senate may give you its usual warm welcome.

(Applause.)

GUEST OF SENATOR ROBERT F. TEPLITZ PRESENTED TO THE SENATE

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Dauphin, Senator Teplitz.

Senator TEPLITZ. Mr. President, I rise to introduce our guest Chaplain before the Senate today, Rabbi Eric Cytryn, who is the spiritual leader of Temple Beth El in Harrisburg. Rabbi Cytryn served congregations in New Orleans and St. Louis before coming to Harrisburg in 2003. Throughout his congregational work, spanning over 25 years, Rabbi Cytryn has helped to create innovative programs in family education and spirituality. He is an avid fan of the Grateful Dead, and his guitar playing enhances Friday night worship at Beth El. I ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming and thanking our guest Chaplain for today, Rabbi Eric Cytryn.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guest of Senator Teplitz please rise so that the Senate may give you its usual warm welcome.

(Applause.)

The PRESIDENT. The Senate will be at ease to see if the House is ready for us to come over.

(The Senate was at ease.)

SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SECRETARY

The SECRETARY. Permission has been granted for the Committee on Appropriations to meet today off the floor in the Rules room to consider Senate Resolution No. 28.

COMMITTEE APPOINTED TO ESCORT THE GOVERNOR TO THE HALL OF THE HOUSE

The PRESIDENT. The time has come in our order of business to assemble in the Hall of the House of Representatives for a Joint Session. The President pro tempore has appointed the following Senators to act as a committee on the part of the Senate to escort the Governor to Joint Session: The gentleman from Montgomery County, Senator Rafferty as Chair; the gentleman from Washington County, Senator Bartolotta; and the gentleman from Cambria County, Senator Wozniak. The committee will leave immediately to discharge its duties.

SENATE PROCEEDS TO HOUSE TO HEAR GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE

The PRESIDENT. The Members of the Senate will please form a line in the center aisle immediately behind the Sergeant-at-Arms in order that we may proceed to the Joint Session.

RECESS

The PRESIDENT. The Chair now declares a recess of the Senate.

AFTER RECESS

The PRESIDENT. The time of recess having expired, the Senate will come to order.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Centre, Senator Corman.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, may we be at ease for a moment? Would the Members of the Senate Republican Caucus come to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT. The Senate will be at ease.
(The Senate was at ease.)

**SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS
ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SECRETARY**

The SECRETARY. Permission has been granted for the Committee on Local Government to meet off the floor today in the Rules room to consider Senate Bill No. 333.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVES

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Centre, Senator Corman.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I request temporary Capitol leaves for Senator Ward and Senator Vogel.

The PRESIDENT. Senator Corman requests temporary Capitol leaves for Senator Ward and Senator Vogel. Without objection, the leaves will be granted.

CALENDAR**THIRD CONSIDERATION CALENDAR**

**BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION
AND FINAL PASSAGE**

SB 42 (Pr. No. 23) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in licensing of drivers, further providing for issuance and content of driver's license.

Considered the third time and agreed to,

On the question,
Shall the bill pass finally?

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Luzerne, Senator Baker.

Senator BAKER. Mr. President, we have, in many ways, chosen to honor Pennsylvanians who perform military duty. We are working diligently to improve and increase what we offer to our veterans. A recent addition to the array of programs and services is the veteran's designation on the Pennsylvania driver's license and identification card. Such actions have been consistent with our gratitude and our respect for our veterans. Unfortunately, we constantly become aware of individuals who feel compelled to

fabricate military service, whether it is for reasons of ego or advantage. This despicable practice has come to be called stolen valor. The risk of public humiliation does not seem like enough of a deterrent. Federal law now provides penalties when this is done for material gain, and this bill adds an offense at the State level for those who falsely represent themselves as a veteran on a driver's license or identification card.

Falsely posing as a veteran is truly an affront to those who have served and sacrificed, and the fraud is an affront to taxpayers who sustain the programs and services our veterans have earned through their devotion to duty. So, today, I urge an affirmative vote on Senate Bill No. 42 to hold accountable those who misrepresent themselves as veterans on a Pennsylvania license or ID card.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Costa.

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I rise to applaud the gentlewoman on another measure particularly relating to our veterans, knowing that she has been at the forefront of these issues, and I ask my colleagues to support the measure as well.

I do want to take a moment to call to the attention of the Members something that came to light in a meeting we had recently. Senator Vulakovich chaired a meeting with our veteran organizations and one of the issues that came to light as it relates to this veteran's license plate and driver's license relates to the charge-back by the Department of Transportation. Mr. President, many of the folks in this room a year and a half or so ago voted to provide to PennDOT nearly \$2.5 billion in additional revenue, in a very courageous vote, to address many of the needs. At the same time, Mr. President, we failed to address the issue of PennDOT charging back to the Veterans Trust Fund in excess of \$750,000 for processing along those lines. It is important to note that the mission of the Veterans Trust Fund, which is administered by the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, is to assist and support Pennsylvania veterans and their families. The Veterans Trust Fund issues grants to statewide charitable organizations that assist veterans, veteran service organizations, and county directors of veteran services and affairs to assist veterans in need of shelter and other necessities to live.

Mr. President, I want to be able to put in people's minds that we need to address this situation as we go forward, and although it cannot be a part of this particular bill at this point in time, my hope is that we can figure out a way to redress this issue so we can drive that \$750,000 not back to PennDOT, which I think is doing pretty good right now, and drive it into our military and veteran organizations and individual veterans who need our help.

Thank you, Mr. President.

And the question recurring,
Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

YEA-48

Alloway	Dinniman	McGarrigle	Teplitz
Argall	Eichelberger	McIlhinney	Tomlinson
Aument	Farnese	Mensch	Vogel
Baker	Folmer	Pileggi	Vulakovich

Bartolotta	Fontana	Rafferty	Wagner
Blake	Gordner	Scarnati	Ward
Boscola	Greenleaf	Scavello	White
Brewster	Haywood	Schwank	Wiley
Brooks	Hughes	Smith	Williams
Browne	Hutchinson	Smucker	Wozniak
Corman	Kitchen	Stefano	Yaw
Costa	Leach	Tartaglione	Yudichak

NAY-0

A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate present said bill to the House of Representatives for concurrence.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVE

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Centre, Senator CORMAN.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I request a legislative leave for Senator Folmer.

The PRESIDENT. Senator Corman requests a legislative leave for Senator Folmer. Without objection, the leave will be granted.

CONSIDERATION OF CALENDAR RESUMED

THIRD CONSIDERATION CALENDAR RESUMED

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

SB 61 and HB 178 -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION
AND FINAL PASSAGE

SB 266 (Pr. No. 146) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act authorizing the Department of General Services, with the approval of the Governor and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, to grant and convey to the Bear Valley Franklin County Pennsylvania Joint Authority, or its assigns, two permanent utility and access easements from lands of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania at the Fort Loudon Historical Site situate in Peters Township, Franklin County, for purpose of groundwater withdrawal.

Considered the third time and agreed to,

On the question,
Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

YEA-48

Alloway	Dinniman	McGarrigle	Teplitz
Argall	Eichelberger	McIlhinney	Tomlinson
Aument	Farnese	Mensch	Vogel
Baker	Folmer	Pileggi	Vulakovich
Bartolotta	Fontana	Rafferty	Wagner
Blake	Gordner	Scarnati	Ward
Boscola	Greenleaf	Scavello	White

Brewster	Haywood	Schwank	Wiley
Brooks	Hughes	Smith	Williams
Browne	Hutchinson	Smucker	Wozniak
Corman	Kitchen	Stefano	Yaw
Costa	Leach	Tartaglione	Yudichak

NAY-0

A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate present said bill to the House of Representatives for concurrence.

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

SB 405, SB 427 and SB 489 -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

SECOND CONSIDERATION CALENDAR

BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION

SB 43 (Pr. No. 24) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in proprietary and official rights, further providing for wearing of uniforms and insignia.

Considered the second time and agreed to,

Ordered, To be printed on the Calendar for third consideration.

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

HB 89 and HB 90 -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

BILL REREFERRED

SB 201 (Pr. No. 504) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of December 19, 1974 (P.L. 973, No. 319), known as the Pennsylvania Farmland and Forest Land Assessment Act of 1974, further providing for roll-back taxes and special circumstances.

Upon motion of Senator CORMAN, and agreed to by voice vote, the bill was rereferred to the Committee on Appropriations.

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

SB 286, SB 287, SB 289 and SB 307 -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

BILL REREFERRED

SB 375 (Pr. No. 285) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act establishing the Health Advisory Panel on Shale Gas Extraction and Natural Gas Use; and providing for its powers and duties.

Upon motion of Senator CORMAN, and agreed to by voice vote, the bill was rereferred to the Committee on Appropriations.

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

SB 385, SB 501 and SB 514 -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

RESOLUTION REREFERRED

Senator CORMAN, without objection, called up from page 5 of the Calendar, **Senate Resolution No. 27**, entitled:

A Resolution directing the Advisory Committee on Public Health Law of the Joint State Government Commission to study the issue of youth vaccinations and immunizations to determine whether any amendments should be made to the Commonwealth's public health law.

Upon motion of Senator CORMAN, and agreed to by voice vote, the resolution was rereferred to the Committee on Appropriations.

RESOLUTION REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE

Senator BROWNE, from the Committee on Appropriations, reported the following resolution:

SR 28 (Pr. No. 498) (Rereported)

A Concurrent Resolution establishing the Joint Select Committee on Institutions of Purely Public Charity.

The PRESIDENT. The resolution will be placed on the Calendar.

SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS SUPPLEMENTAL CALENDAR No. 1

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 28, ADOPTED

Senator CORMAN, without objection, called up from page 1 of Supplemental Calendar No. 1, **Senate Resolution No. 28**, entitled:

A Concurrent Resolution establishing the Joint Select Committee on Institutions of Purely Public Charity.

On the question,
Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Lehigh, Senator Browne.

Senator BROWNE. Mr. President, I want to take an opportunity to thank Senator Scavello and Senator Eichelberger for their efforts in this regard. This Assembly is often criticized in areas where we could do better and work harder to accomplish results. I stand here proudly to say the legacy on behalf of others over a long period of time on work in this area relating to definition

standards when it comes to taxation of purely public charities is something that we can be proud of just because of the process that we went through back in 1997 to do it. Notwithstanding the fact that we are now going through a process to look to update it, to change it, and to modernize it at the current time, it is important to understand that there are people who are in the building, people outside of the building, and people who are no longer with us, specifically a gentleman from Erie County named Karl Boyes, who was chairman of the House Committee on Finance back in 1997, who often said, after he finished that process of getting so many interest groups involved in a bill, so many supporting the bill, and a very controversial topic, which can be said to be probably one of our most successful efforts at local tax reform statewide, that it was his proudest moment in the General Assembly. He passed several years after that. Doing this honors his work and honors the work of the General Assembly, which was and will continue to be a very successful effort in our work product here in the General Assembly. So, I just want to take an opportunity to thank both Senator Scavello and Senator Eichelberger for continuing that legacy. Thank you.

And the question recurring,
Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

A voice vote having been taken, the question was unanimously determined in the affirmative.

RECESS

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Centre, Senator Corman.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I request a recess of the Senate for the purpose of a meeting of the Committee on Local Government to be held in the Rules room at the rear of the Chamber.

The PRESIDENT. For the purpose of a meeting of the Committee on Local Government, without objection, the Senate stands in recess.

AFTER RECESS

The PRESIDENT. The time of recess having expired, the Senate will come to order.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS BILLS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEES

Senator GREENLEAF, from the Committee on Judiciary, reported the following bills:

SB 485 (Pr. No. 425)

An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in falsification and intimidation, further providing for the offense of impersonating a notary public or a holder of a professional or occupational license.

SB 525 (Pr. No. 472)

An Act amending Title 61 (Prisons and Parole) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, establishing the Prison Industry Enhancement Authority; providing for employment of prisoners by private industry and for subcontracts with correctional agencies; establishing guidelines for prisoner compensation; and providing for location of private sector prison industry.

HB 221 (Pr. No. 464)

An Act amending Titles 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) and 53 (Municipalities Generally) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in selection and retention of judicial officers, further providing for continuing education requirement; and, in municipal police education and training, further providing for powers and duties of Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission.

Senator HUTCHINSON, from the Committee on Local Government, reported the following bill:

SB 333 (Pr. No. 568) (Amended)

An Act amending Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in preemptions, providing for leave and compensation mandates.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVE CANCELLED

The PRESIDENT. Senator Vogel has returned, and his temporary Capitol leave is cancelled.

SENATE RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED

Senators VOGEL, SCHWANK, BAKER, WOZNIAK, TEPLITZ, HAYWOOD, GREENLEAF, SCAVELLO, FONTANA, BROOKS, YAW, COSTA, KITCHEN, MENSCH, EICHELBERGER, WARD, PILEGGI, BOSCOLA, ARGALL, WHITE, RAFFERTY, ALLOWAY, HUTCHINSON, FOLMER, VULAKOVICH, SMITH, AUMENT and BARTOLOTTA, by unanimous consent, offered **Senate Resolution No. 42**, entitled:

A Resolution designating March 31, 2015, as "Pennsylvania Farm Bureau Day" and congratulating Pennsylvania Farm Bureau members for their significant contributions to our Commonwealth and its agricultural industry.

On the question,
Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Beaver, Senator Vogel.

Senator VOGEL. Mr. President, today I rise to offer this resolution designating March 31, 2015, as "Pennsylvania Farm Bureau Day." Mr. President, we all know that agriculture is our number one industry in Pennsylvania. I believe that it is important to recognize the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau and its 54,000 member families for their contribution to this Commonwealth and the Commonwealth's agricultural industry. This resolution is a small gesture of gratitude and a way of saying thanks for all that the Farm Bureau and its members do on behalf of the farming community and for the citizens of Pennsylvania. I ask you to support me in this resolution today.

Thank you, Mr. President.

And the question recurring,
Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

A voice vote having been taken, the question was determined in the affirmative.

Senators TEPLITZ, HAYWOOD, GREENLEAF, WOZNIAK, ARGALL, DINNIMAN, HUTCHINSON,

FONTANA, PILEGGI, TARTAGLIONE, VULAKOVICH, COSTA, SMITH, HUGHES, RAFFERTY, YUDICHAK, BOSCOLA, BAKER and AUMENT, by unanimous consent, offered **Senate Resolution No. 43**, entitled:

A Resolution observing March 14, 2015, as "Charter Day" in Pennsylvania.

On the question,
Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Dauphin, Senator Teplitz.

Senator TEPLITZ. Mr. President, this resolution recognizes March 14 as "Charter Day" here in Pennsylvania. On March 4, 1681, King Charles II of England granted William Penn a charter for land in the New World to make up for a large debt that the King owed to Penn's father. William Penn's charter exists as the formal beginning of the colony and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. William Penn wrote a frame of government for the Commonwealth that established a democratic system containing full freedom of religion, fair trials featuring independent juries, assemblies consisting of elected representatives of the people, and a separation of powers in the government. All of these ideas later formed the crux of the U.S. Constitution. It is important for the citizens of Pennsylvania to understand the overall history of the Commonwealth and how the principles of governance here can be traced back to the beliefs of William Penn.

So, Mr. President, as we celebrate the 334th birthday of our great Commonwealth, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Pennsylvania's history and heritage by recognizing March 14 as Charter Day in Pennsylvania.

Thank you, Mr. President.

And the question recurring,
Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

A voice vote having been taken, the question was determined in the affirmative.

Senators TEPLITZ, WOZNIAK, HAYWOOD, DINNIMAN, GREENLEAF, FONTANA, BREWSTER, ALLOWAY, RAFFERTY, SCHWANK, COSTA, PILEGGI, AUMENT, YUDICHAK, SMITH, VULAKOVICH, TARTAGLIONE, HUGHES and BOSCOLA, by unanimous consent, offered **Senate Resolution No. 44**, entitled:

A Resolution designating the month of April 2015 as "Distracted Driving Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

On the question,
Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Dauphin, Senator Teplitz.

Senator TEPLITZ. Mr. President, this resolution designates the month of April 2015 as "Distracted Driving Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania. This is the third year that I have offered this resolution. Distracted driving is any activity that could divert a person's attention away from driving. It endangers motorists, passengers, and bystanders alike. In fact, in 2012 more than 421,000 people were injured in accidents resulting from dis-

tracted driving, a 9-percent increase from the previous year. Additionally, more than 3,300 people were killed in crashes involving a distracted driver.

Although there are many forms of distraction, studies show that texting while driving is among the worst of all driving distractions. The best way to end distracted driving is to educate all Pennsylvanians about the danger that it poses. So I ask my colleagues to not only support this resolution, but to keep the phone out of reach in the car and encourage constituents and community leaders to do the same.

Thank you, Mr. President.

And the question recurring,

Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

A voice vote having been taken, the question was determined in the affirmative.

Senator EICHELBERGER, by unanimous consent, offered **Senate Resolution No. 45**, entitled:

A Resolution recognizing the importance of finding the cause and cure for multiple sclerosis; expressing appreciation to the Pennsylvania chapters of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society for their work; and recognizing the week of March 2 through 8, 2015, as "Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week" in Pennsylvania.

On the question,

Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Blair, Senator Eichelberger.

Senator EICHELBERGER. Mr. President, this neurological disease affects 2.3 million Americans and about 23,000 people who live in this Commonwealth. It strikes adults, typically between the ages of 20 and 50, and is just a devastating disease to many people and the families who surround them. I support, as I am sure we all do, the work of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society and ask that we take time this week to recognize them and thank them for the work that they do to help the people who have this terrible disease today and to prevent others from having it in the future. Thank you very much.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair thanks the gentleman for a very important resolution, very important issue.

And the question recurring,

Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

A voice vote having been taken, the question was determined in the affirmative.

Senators PILEGGI, AUMENT, BAKER, BOSCOLA, BREWSTER, COSTA, DINNIMAN, FARNESE, FONTANA, GREENLEAF, HAYWOOD, HUTCHINSON, RAFFERTY, SCAVELLO, SCHWANK, SMITH, TEPLITZ, VULAKOVICH and WOZNIAK, by unanimous consent, offered **Senate Resolution No. 46**, entitled:

A Resolution designating the week of March 15 through 21, 2015, as "Sunshine Week" in Pennsylvania to commemorate the anniversary of James Madison's birth.

On the question,

Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Delaware, Senator Pileggi.

Senator PILEGGI. Mr. President, I am pleased to introduce this resolution designating March 15 through March 21 as "Sunshine Week" in Pennsylvania. This resolution commemorates the anniversary of James Madison's birth on March 16, 1751, and encourages our General Assembly and government agencies across the Commonwealth to enhance the public's access to government records and information, and insure that all meetings of deliberative bodies and their committees are fully noticed and opened to the public. James Madison, the father of our Federal Constitution, wrote that "consent of the governed" requires that the people be able to "arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives." An open and accessible government is vital to establishing and maintaining the people's trust and confidence in their government and in the government's ability to effectively serve its citizens.

Mr. President, I ask for an affirmative vote on this resolution.

And the question recurring,

Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

A voice vote having been taken, the question was determined in the affirmative.

Senators BOSCOLA, COSTA, HUGHES, FONTANA, FARNESE, BREWSTER, DINNIMAN, HAYWOOD, KITCHEN, TARTAGLIONE, TEPLITZ, SCHWANK, WOZNIAK, BAKER, GREENLEAF, SCAVELLO, VULAKOVICH, SMITH, AUMENT and RAFFERTY, by unanimous consent, offered **Senate Resolution No. 47**, entitled:

A Resolution recognizing March 8, 2015, as "International Women's Day" in Pennsylvania.

Which was read, considered, and adopted by voice vote.

Senators VULAKOVICH, ALLOWAY, ARGALL, BAKER, BREWSTER, COSTA, DINNIMAN, EICHELBERGER, FONTANA, GREENLEAF, HAYWOOD, KITCHEN, PILEGGI, TEPLITZ, TOMLINSON, WARD, WHITE, WILEY, RAFFERTY, SCAVELLO, HUTCHINSON, FOLMER, BLAKE, VOGEL, SMITH, AUMENT, YUDICHAK, McILHINNEY and BOSCOLA, by unanimous consent, offered **Senate Resolution No. 48**, entitled:

A Resolution recognizing March 30, 2015, as "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day" in Pennsylvania.

On the question,

Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Vulakovich.

Senator VULAKOVICH. Mr. President, 42 years have passed since America's involvement in Southeast Asia ended and, yet, that conflict continues to impact our society. Just saying the word "Vietnam" evokes feelings and emotions for anyone who lived through that turbulent era. Like Korea before it, Vietnam was a conflict without a clean resolution for our nation or for the men and women who served in them as well, or for those who followed the war through evening television newscasts. The 15

years of American involvement in Vietnam in a way marked the end of idealism and innocence for our nation. This was not a conventional war in any sense. Americans truly were strangers in a strange land where it was difficult, if not downright impossible, to tell friend from enemy. All it took was one mistake or one moment of carelessness and the consequences could be fatal.

More than 304,000 American service members were wounded in Vietnam. Of the 58,193 service members who lost their lives, 3,144 were from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. What made it worse for many veterans was the way the conflict finally ended. All of those years in the jungle and on those hilltops and the lives lost seemed so worthless with the final airlift from Saigon and the inglorious collapse of the south. In fact, March 30 is a historic day. It marks the very date that the last of our U.S. troops departed Vietnam in 1973. While statues, parades, and honors were bestowed upon those who served in World War I and World War II, that was not the case for veterans who served in the jungles of Southeast Asia. They came home to a divided nation, received little gratitude, and in some cases, outright animosity as a reward for their service and their sacrifice for our country.

Therefore, it is appropriate that Pennsylvania and the United States of America pay tribute to the unsung heroes of the Vietnam War. Mr. President, let us offer a special prayer of gratitude to those men and women who served in Southeast Asia and never forget those whose dreams were left unfulfilled. I ask for an affirmative vote on this resolution. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair thanks the Senator for an important resolution honoring those brave men and women who fought and were present during the Vietnam War.

And the question recurring,

Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

A voice vote having been taken, the question was determined in the affirmative.

CONGRATULATORY RESOLUTIONS

The PRESIDENT laid before the Senate the following resolutions, which were read, considered, and adopted by voice vote:

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Lieutenant Colonel Scott A. Ritchie by Senator Aument.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Jay Proctor by Senator Boscola.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to RCN, PA Markets by Senators Boscola and Browne.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Clara Badesso by Senator Browne.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Kayani Hull, Faith Crawford, Langston McArthur, Tyler Allen, Mary Ellen Wilcox, Nikhai Hill-Green, Camille Cupid, Ashley Lloyd, Tileya Norris-Donald, Kayla Bowser, Trinity Gamble, Abby Warner and to Anthony Thomas Sciulli by Senator Costa.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Bin Hamoodah Group by Senator Hughes.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Janet Murnaghan by Senators McGarrigle and Pileggi.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Teresa A. Haley by Senator Pileggi.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Krischen Hunt and to Josiah Howe by Senator Scarnati.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to John J. Riley by Senator Scavello.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Mary Ellen McMillen by Senator Teplitz.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Karen Gibbon by Senator Tomlinson.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to David Michael Fisher by Senator Vogel.

Congratulations of the Senate were extended to Ginny Deruelle by Senator Ward.

POSTHUMOUS CITATIONS

The PRESIDENT laid before the Senate the following citations, which were read, considered, and adopted by voice vote:

Posthumous citations honoring the late Alice Maris Bird Baird and the late Catherine Dowd Judge were extended to the families by Senators McGarrigle and Pileggi.

BILLS ON FIRST CONSIDERATION

Senator RAFFERTY. Mr. President, I move that the Senate do now proceed to consideration of all bills reported from committees for the first time at today's Session.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

The bills were as follows:

SB 333, SB 485, SB 525 and HB 221.

And said bills having been considered for the first time,
Ordered, To be printed on the Calendar for second consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY

The following announcements were read by the Secretary of the Senate:

SENATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2015

10:00 A.M.	LOCAL GOVERNMENT (to consider Senate Bill No. 333)	Room 461 Main Capitol
Off the Floor	URBAN AFFAIRS AND HOUSING (to consider Senate Bills No. 330, 486 and 566)	Rules Cmte. Conf. Rm.

THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2015

10:00 A.M.	BASIC EDUCATION FUNDING COMMISSION (public hearing on basic education funding issues)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
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MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2015

9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Governor's Office/Governor's Budget Office/Executive Offices)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Independent Fiscal Office - Economic Outlook & Revenue Overview)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.

3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of General Services)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
<u>TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2015</u>		
9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Attorney General)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Treasury Department)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Auditor General)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
<u>WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2015</u>		
9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Judiciary)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - State Police/Homeland Security)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Drug & Alcohol Programs)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
<u>THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2015</u>		
9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Gaming Control Board)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
1:30 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - PA State System of Higher Education)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Community Colleges)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
<u>MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2015</u>		
9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Public Utility Commission)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - SERS/PSERS)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Health)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
<u>TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2015</u>		
9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Insurance)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
11:00 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - State Related Universities)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Aging)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
<u>WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25, 2015</u>		
9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Environmental Protection)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Corrections/Office of Probation and Parole)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - PA Liquor Control Board)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.

THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2015

9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Human Services)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Community & Economic Development)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of State)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.

MONDAY, MARCH 30, 2015

9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Education)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Labor & Industry)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Banking & Securities)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.

TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2015

9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Revenue/Lottery)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
11:00 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Historical & Museum Commission)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Transportation)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
3:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Agriculture)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2015

9:30 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - PA Emergency Management Agency)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
11:00 A.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.
1:00 P.M.	APPROPRIATIONS (Budget Hearing - Dept. of Military and Veteran Affairs)	Hrg. Rm. 1 North Off.

PETITIONS AND REMONSTRANCES

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington, Senator Bartolotta.

Senator BARTOLOTTA. Mr. President, this morning we heard Governor Tom Wolf deliver his Budget Address, and it is now clear to the people of Pennsylvania what his priorities are: more spending, more taxes, and a greater burden on Pennsylvania's families and job creators. The Senate Republican Caucus has different priorities. Instead of billions in more spending, we want to continue to find ways to be efficient with the tax dollars we already have. We want to maximize the value of State government for its citizens. As our neighbors struggle to pay for child care, basic utilities, and their mortgages, Governor Wolf wants them to pay even more to Harrisburg without addressing the underlying problems. Too many families are living paycheck to paycheck and simply cannot pay more taxes because the Governor wants to spend more.

Instead of piling more burdens and raising costs on the people whom we represent, the Senate Republicans want to provide relief for them. Relief for Pennsylvania means removing barriers

that hinder job growth. It means controlling the cost of State government so that taxpayers keep more of their hard-earned money in their pockets. It means reforming government so that it is more efficient and more responsive to the needs of Pennsylvanians. Republicans want to give the taxpayers that much-needed relief. We want to reform the State pension system that is driving up property taxes. We want to innovate public education so that we are able to provide a quality education for the next generation. We want to lower taxes and eliminate burdensome regulations that are driving employers out of our State and costing hundreds, if not thousands, of good-paying jobs.

I ran for office with a message of reforming government, controlling taxes, and limiting spending. I cannot ask my community, my neighbors, and their families to send billions more to Harrisburg without exhausting all of the options to fix the structural budget problems. Over the next several months, you will hear details about two very different visions for Pennsylvania's future. One vision will break Pennsylvania's budget, drive jobs out of the State, and cost taxpayers billions in additional money. Our vision will revitalize Pennsylvania's economy, rein in the out-of-control growth of government, and provide real relief to Pennsylvanians. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Costa.

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I just want to rise and offer a few brief remarks about the Governor's 2015-16 proposed budget that was offered today by Governor Tom Wolf. The Governor's proposed \$28.9 billion plan is simply a blueprint, a starting point for us to begin crafting a spending plan to help meet next year's fiscal concerns. The plan is, no doubt, bold, responsible, but most importantly, necessary. It is substantive and it is significant. We must begin the conversation by stating that it is necessary because we have been left by the previous administration in excess of a \$2.3-billion structural hole, a structural deficit that we have foisted upon the people of Pennsylvania because of our failure to put into place policies that allowed us the opportunity to invest in our Commonwealth.

It offers multiple solutions to our troubling problem, as I mentioned, all within the contexts of a modest 2.7-percent overall spending increase over the current-year budget adopted by Governor Corbett. It is a plan that would deliver significant property tax relief. I want to repeat that, significant property tax relief, a 50-percent school property tax reduction for the average Pennsylvanian. More importantly, it results in a net 13-percent reduction in the overall taxes paid by the average homeowner here in Pennsylvania. So, with respect to the previous speaker's concern about the pocketbooks of Pennsylvanians and homeowners, clearly, that portion of the Governor's proposal, the portion of his comprehensive plan, covers that aspect of it by reducing that significant property tax with relief being provided. He also makes critical education funding decisions, creates substantial job creation dollars, and helps Pennsylvania's most vulnerable citizens.

It is not a very passive plan; it is an aggressive plan. It requires each of us, however, to look at how Pennsylvania can move forward responsibly. As I mentioned earlier, the plan will provide property tax relief, \$3.8 billion worth of property tax relief, by far the most relief ever considered for beleaguered property tax owners. As I mentioned, it is a 50-percent reduction,

representing about \$1,000 in school property tax reduction for the average homeowner.

That is not all, Mr. President. The Governor's budget proposal seeks significant investments in public education to help offset the nearly \$3.4 billion cumulative deficit that the previous administration foisted upon the students of Pennsylvania, in addition to refunding education to the tune of nearly \$1 billion, beginning at early learning and pre-K programs, with a \$100 million increase to the pre-K program, all the way through higher education, where we begin to restore the cuts that took place a number of years ago under the previous administration. Beyond the \$140 million in higher education, we are also adding \$120 million for pre-K and Head Start, as I mentioned, and also making significant investments in the areas of charter school reimbursements to our school districts, dollars for dual enrollment, and additional dollars for the Head Start program.

Beyond that, Mr. President, there is a conversation that was raised earlier about pensions. The Governor has a plan in his budget proposal to help address the pension crisis. We need to take steps to look at that and have a conversation along those lines. What the Governor has called for is a budget proposal that addresses the pension situation by borrowing similar to what we did a few years back when we did the unemployment compensation fix. When we owed the Federal government nearly \$4 billion, we borrowed under the Corbett administration. It was a thoughtful, creative plan that generated savings. It was coupled with employee benefit reductions as well. We need to be mindful of that as we go forward.

This builds upon that. This does the same exact thing along those lines and we take a pension situation to help address our budget need that provides for pension relief not only for our Commonwealth but for our school districts as well. We pay for that, Mr. President, with a responsible and reasonable Wine & Spirits modernization or customer convenience type of plan with respect to our Wine & Spirits shops across this Commonwealth so that the generation of savings, the net increased revenue from our Wine & Spirits shops under the modernization or customer convenience plan allows us to take that additional \$100-plus million, combine it with the other \$80 million we are generating annually, and put that into debt service to help us pay down the debt that helps us address the pension costs that allows us to begin to continue to build upon the wonderful changes we made here under Act 120. We have to be clear about what we did with respect to Act 120. Act 120 was the pension reform that this Chamber led the effort on. Senator Browne and some others were in the forefront of that conversation, and what we put together was a pension plan for new employees, a benefit plan that resulted in a 25-percent reduction in pension benefits. So, those new employees who have been working for the Commonwealth since 2010 came to us with a 25-percent less benefit package than folks who had been hired prior to that. That is a significant amount and one of the most significant reductions across the country, I might add, along those lines.

Beyond that, our costs for those individuals going forward is approximately 3 percent, which is less than or equal to what the private sector is paying with respect to their pension costs. So it is a positive plan that put us on course and put us on schedule to be able to resolve our unfunded liability. This proposal that the Governor has put forth, as it relates to this issue of pensions, allows us to get to a place sooner than later, allows us to draw

down nearly \$10 billion of our unfunded liability, and has a plan to put together a way in which we can drive the resources from the modernization to pay down the debt service.

With respect to the education investments I mentioned earlier, the Governor has given us a plan, a concept as it relates to Marcellus Shale. So we tax the Marcellus Shale industry at some level -- it has been proposed at nearly a billion dollars, but at the end of the day, whatever that number might be, those Marcellus dollars help us pay for the education conversation. The modernization helps us pay for the pension crisis. And then we go further to address the jobs. This Governor has put forth a very bold plan with respect to how we deal with our business tax climate. He is proposing we reduce the CNI from 9.99 down to 5.99, and then in 2018 down to 4.99--major reductions--as well as continuing the phaseout of the capital stock and franchise tax. Now, we have been playing with this capital stock and franchise tax, as he reported today, for 17 years, and it is about time we finally bring that to closure. I have been one who has been advocating for a pause over the past several years, but I think given the bold, comprehensive total plan that the Governor has put together with all of these segments of what we need to do, now is the time to embark upon a comprehensive business tax climate discussion that allows us to lower the CNI, allows us to expand the base as it relates to combined reporting, allows us to implement that, and finally does the capital stock and franchise tax going forward.

Finally, Mr. President, at the end of the day, our human service programs. Every one of us knows about the cuts in our human service programs that have impacted the individuals in our respective districts, every one of us. In our counties we hear from the reduction in those dollars, we see that firsthand at the county level, particularly with respect to the services that are provided. This budget puts in significant dollars to restore those programs, to provide relief to those counties as we go forward.

So, at the end of the day, when you look at this Governor's budget as proposed, it is a comprehensive budget, as I mentioned, that encompasses the things the people of Pennsylvania wanted us to address. They clearly elected this Governor by stating that we want you to make investments in education, we want you to be smart about education, we want to have schools that teach, and we want you to be a Commonwealth that is going to grow jobs, and he is doing that. He wants a government that works. When you look at all of those things, this budget does that: significant and historical restoration to education dollars, an investment in the business community by reducing business taxes, school property tax relief, human service investments, economic development, addressing the pension crisis, and dealing with the issue of modernization with respect to our Wine & Spirits. You cannot get more comprehensive than that. It is an exciting time for us to lead in Pennsylvania.

This Governor was elected on the premise that he wanted to give us a fresh start, and we now have an opportunity in this General Assembly to provide Pennsylvania with a fresh start when we can deal with these issues that we have before us now.

So, I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. I recognize there will be differences as we go forward, but at the end of the day, we are here to do a job, and that job right now is to debate and discuss this Governor's budget over the course of the next couple of weeks in the hearings of the Committee on Appropriations. I am looking forward to the point in time by June 30 when we will be able to stand together, vote

on a budget and enact a budget that allows us to do the wonderful, bold things that this Governor has put forth for us today.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Centre, Senator Corman.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, just a couple comments. First of all, I want to reiterate the comments of my colleague and the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations earlier today to congratulate the Governor for getting a budget put together. I know when you are elected in November and sworn in in January, trying to put a budget together by the first week in March is not an easy thing to do. He put forward his vision today. My colleague on the other side of the aisle talked about how it was a bold vision. Bold it is, but another term might be unaffordable. Let us understand and let us agree with what this is. This is not a \$29.8 billion budget, this is not a 2.5-percent increase in spending, this is a \$34 billion budget. We can take things offline and take our pension obligations and move it to a different fund so it does not show under the General Fund, we can collect money for property tax relief and pretend it is not a spend of State government, but it is. The facts are the facts.

This is a record-setting budget proposal. We have never seen anything like this, so I will agree with that from the Senator. We have never seen anything like this before. When you are talking about an over 15-percent increase in spending from the year prior, you are talking about a \$4.5 billion tax increase for this year alone, \$12 billion over the next 2 years, that is bold, if that is the direction. If you think that us taking more money out of taxpayers' hands, out of families' hands, out of homeowners' hands, if we think taking money away from them and bringing it to Harrisburg so we can solve their problems is the answer, well, that is what you have. That is what we heard today, that clearly we need more money here in Harrisburg, and that the constituents we have back home do not need as much. That was the bold plan that we heard today.

Property tax relief is something we have all talked about for years and it is something that has escaped us. The Governor has put forward a proposal. The problem with the proposal is it does not do anything to keep property taxes down. When you do not deal with pension reform -- and I would disagree with my friend from Allegheny County that he dealt with pension reform. I think what he did was a little, maybe put your foot in the water, so to speak, but it does not do anything with the structural problem of the pension system. So, what is going to happen is not only are we going to raise our personal income tax to pay for this reduction in property taxes, but the property tax will go right back up because there is nothing to control that. Because even if we adopted the Governor's pension plan, it does not do anything about the contributions in the near future, so all of those contributions for the school district will continue to skyrocket, continue to go to the property tax to get that money, and we will be right back where we were before, but now you have a higher PIT and a higher sales tax to go along with your higher property taxes.

So, if we really want to get serious and we really want to help our school districts, we have to change the pension system. We have to have the courage to go where everyone else in the world has gone. Everyone else has gone away from a defined benefit plan to a defined contribution plan. We have to have the courage to say to our folks, we are going to work together. We are going

to put this plan on a system that is sustainable over the long haul. Are there going to be sacrifices in the process? Absolutely. No one can argue that point, but if we want to save property taxes, if we want to help the school districts alleviate their budget problem, if we want to help State government and our budget problems, we cannot do any of that until we deal with the pension problem.

My colleague talked about unemployment compensation and the model that he used as an example. I agree with him. The only thing he left out, as an example, is they made structural changes to the unemployment compensation plan so that they could afford the bond that they did to help pay off the Federal government. If we make the structural changes to the State pension system, then we can talk about possibly doing a bond. But to just do the bond to pay for and hope, that we bet on Wall Street -- let us not forget, I was here in 2003 under Governor Rendell and we bet on Wall Street. They came up with a plan to smooth it out and figured we would grow our way out of this pension problem that we were having at the time. For a while, it worked. Well, 2008 came, the recession of all recessions, and what happened? Our two pension funds, we bet on Wall Street, and we lost \$30 billion in value in 2008 alone. That was our bet. It did not come out very well.

So without the structural changes in the pension system for the long haul to tell the taxpayers of Pennsylvania, yes, there is a sacrifice here, we have to put more money into the system, and yes, we have to change the system, but we are going to fix it so we never, ever, ever have this problem again. That is what going to a defined contribution does. It fixes this problem. You plant the flag and pension reform is really done. Not, well, we are going to roll the dice and hope it comes up 7, and maybe it will. Maybe it will not. What do we do if it does not? Then we have a bigger problem than we have now.

So, I cannot agree that what the Governor proposed today is pension reform. If he wants to use the model of unemployment compensation, we are here to talk about that and make the structural changes, but everything starts there. Everything starts at us getting together, once the Governor acknowledges that we have a pension problem, and we get together and come up with solutions that make real structural changes, then we can begin to have a conversation about this budget.

That is what is driving the school district problems and that is what is driving the State problems in our budget. Our contribution is about \$2.8 billion this year for the two pension systems. That is the taxpayers' contribution that we put in towards the two funds. That has to go to \$5.6 billion. As painful as it has been, we are only halfway there, and then it is going to stay there for awhile. That is money that could be going to education in the classroom, that is money that could be going into economic development, that is money that could be going back to the taxpayers through tax relief, that is money that could be going toward environmental protection - all of the things we could be investing in that we are not because we have to pay off this fund because we do not have the courage to make the structural changes in the pension system that are absolutely necessary.

We failed. We had a Republican Governor, a Republican House and Senate, we could not get the votes to make that happen. We were not getting any help from the other side. They did not have any investment in Governor Corbett because he was

particularly unpopular. I get that. So, we could not lift it. But, sort of like a tsunami, you are standing there at the edge of the beach and you watch this really pretty wave coming at you, and it might be pretty when it is a few miles out, but when it gets close, it gets pretty scary. Well, that wave is about to hit land, and we could either say to the taxpayers, you know what, you just have to pony up and pay it, or we can make the changes that everybody else in the world has made. All of the media, as I said earlier, they have all gone to defined contribution. All private enterprise has gone to defined contribution. Most States have gone to defined contribution. We are the last bastion. I wonder why that is? Why are we the last bastion of a defined benefit plan? I am in the system, my wife is a schoolteacher, she is in the system. I get it. It is a problem, but we are willing to face up and deal with it. Until we do that, everything else we are talking about is a mirage.

Let us understand, as I said earlier, the Governor's whole plan is based on a \$4.5-billion tax increase this year, a \$4-billion increase in spending, and a \$12-billion tax increase over 2 years. We do not have the votes for that. I know he ran on a lot of things he wants to do. Well, I have six freshmen, newly elected Members who ran and none of them ran on tax increases. None of them. So, they feel like they have a mandate to be here, they feel like they are going to stick to their guns and say, this is important to us, we have to reform State government, and I cannot go back and talk to my constituents about paying a higher PIT, a higher sales tax, getting rid of the exemption on sales tax, until we deal with the pension system, which everyone in the private sector has had to deal with. They have all lived and died with the private sector and their pension funds, in their 401(k)s, but now we have to tell them not only did you have to take a loss, but now you have to pay more for us. You have to pay more for us. I mean, does anyone sort of realize what we are asking of the taxpayers? You just need to pony up \$2.8 billion to \$5.6 billion. That is where we are headed under Act 120, a bill that I voted for and I agreed with. But it does not mean that we do not make changes.

So, unless we are going to tell the taxpayers tough break, we bet on Wall Street and we lost, we are going to bet again, maybe we will do better this time, and even if we do, we are still not changing the structure or the contributions either at the State or the school district level, which means property taxes are going back up, State taxes are going up. But it is okay, we will solve your problems, you just need to pay more to Harrisburg. That is the message for today.

So, again, I congratulate the Governor for his vision, he put it out there. It was a courageous vision, one that I do not particularly agree with, but still it is vision that he holds and it is an honest one. I respect him for putting it forward. We hope we can find a place where we can start discussions to bring this budget in line before the end of June. It is going to take sacrifices on our part, it is going to take sacrifices on his part on things that he wants to do. We get that, but we have to start with where the problem lies. We have to cut it out, and that is pension reform. If you ask your constituents, I bet it polls really, really well back home that pension reform is the number one issue here in Harrisburg and we need to get to it.

Thank you, Mr. President.

RECESS

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Centre, Senator Corman.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I move that the Senate do now recess until Wednesday, March 4, 2015, at 11 a.m., Eastern Standard Time, unless sooner recalled by the President pro tempore.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

The Senate recessed at 4:45 p.m., Eastern Standard Time.