

GENE DIGIROLAMO, MEMBER

49 EAST WING
PO BOX 202018
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-2018
PHONE: (717) 783-7319
FAX: (717) 772-2414

DISTRICT OFFICE:
2424 BRISTOL ROAD
NESHAMINY VALLEY COMMONS
BENSALEM, PA 19020
PHONE: (215) 750-1017
FAX: (215) 750-1295



House of Representatives
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg

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June 6, 2018

The Honorable Daryl D. Metcalfe
Chairman-State Government Committee
Pennsylvania House of Representatives
144 Main Capitol Building
PO Box 202012
Harrisburg, PA 17120

RE: State Government Committee Public Hearing
Delaware River Basin Commission

Dear Chairman Metcalfe and Committee Members:

I have had the honor of representing the people of PA Legislative District 18 for 23 years. The district I serve is diverse geographically in that it borders Philadelphia, is a hub for industry and business, and is also home to several parks including the environmental sensitive Neshaminy State Park Tidal Marsh and Natural Area.

The Bucks County Commissioners put forth a vision for transforming Bucks County's waterfront, including Bensalem Township, in 2005. In 2012, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission followed up with a similar plan, "Accessing the Tidal Delaware."

In recent years, we have witnessed these planning documents come to life. The Waterside development has created a new community on the Delaware River waterfront. When completed, it will include 600 homes, retail establishments, office space, and a marina.

Currently, there is a lot of enthusiasm for development along the Delaware River however, there was a time not all that long ago, when that was not so because the river was very polluted. By the late 1960's, there was a growing public awareness and concern for controlling pollution, which led the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC), a federal interstate agency created in 1961, to adopt water quality standards. Federal law, known as Clean Water Act, followed in 1972. Together with additional state led initiatives, these policies vastly improved the conditions and water quality of the Delaware River. Although an on-going initiative, the clean-up of the Delaware River is hailed as one of the world's top water quality success stories.

The policies of DRBC have helped to foster a desirable environment for living, recreating, and business growth. I am aware of several entities within my district that hold dockets with DRBC. PARX Racing is just one example of a thriving commercial enterprise in the 18th Legislative District. PARX has been a tremendous job creator and revenue generator for the region.

Bensalem Township is home to a vast number of businesses, manufacturers, residential development, parkland and open spaces. The Delaware River Basin Commission has carried out its mission and responsibilities in a manner which has protected our resources without hindering economic development. The 18th Legislative district with its many plans and projects underway, clearly serves an example.

Thank you in advance for the opportunity to comment on the upcoming hearing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gene DiGirolamo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Gene DiGirolamo
State Representative
18th Legislative District