



State Representative David M. Maloney

130th District, Pennsylvania House of Representatives

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SUBJ: "Why We Were Elected" Opinion by Rep. Maloney

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"Why We Were Elected" by David M. Maloney

While I campaigned last summer and fall for the State House of Representative, by far the thing people told me about the most was their struggles with paying school property taxes. I went to thousands of homes personally, and I listened to people tell me their own stories or the story of a friend, co-worker or relative who was fighting to stay above water financially, pay mortgages, pay taxes, bills and just buying food. These are extraordinarily difficult economic times and I don't know anyone who is not somehow affected by either job reductions or layoffs. I know we all feel the pain of nearly \$4.00 a gallon gasoline.

I am a believer in school property tax elimination. Berks County has long been the center of the struggle for change. I have great respect for the work former State Representative Dennis Leh did to advance the cause and recently former State Representative Sam Rohrer who kept the fight going. At the state capitol, I am part of several caucuses to do the same.

I am convinced that our public school funding formula is inequitable and outdated. This has created hot spots in Pennsylvania where some homeowners pay much higher school property taxes than in other parts of the state. The sooner the rest of the legislators in Harrisburg are convinced of the problem, the faster we move forward. The good news is there are more legislators now than in the last session from both sides in the State House, who ran on the commitment to eliminate school property taxes, and more Republicans like me who ran on a slate of conservative issues that we have made great progress on so far.

Last November, I was part of the new group of legislators who were elected to face Pennsylvania's problems and not kick issues down the road to deal with years from now. It's not popular work and some issues like education spending have many people concerned, but we have grabbed the bull by the horns for the sake of Pennsylvania's future.

State House Majority Leader Mike Turzai (R-Allegheny County) said the House this session has “completed the most productive first four months in recent legislative sessions as the House Republican Caucus works to fulfill the agenda it was elected to complete.” It’s true and I was part of it.

Our agenda in the State House is to: rein in spending – enacting a \$27.3 billion budget, on time with no tax increases. We are working to pass a jobs package which includes: Unemployment Compensation reform, welfare reform to eliminate fraud and to ensure that only those truly eligible will receive the help they need. Wine and spirit sales privatization is on the table.

This session, we Republicans led in the House with series of bills to deal with protecting children and rebuilding the people’s trust in state government. During the first legislative week a package of bills was moved to close loopholes in the state’s Megan’s Law. HB 40, the “Castle Doctrine” bill was passed to amend and strengthen self-protection laws. Also considered and passed were Gaming reforms to ensure integrity throughout the gaming license and regulatory process. The House passed HB1, commonsense lawsuit abuse reform or the “fair share” act. House Bill 377, “Sprinkler Mandate Elimination”, was already sent to the governor to sign. Part of our mission is to eliminate the barriers that keep businesses away from Pennsylvania.

We know we have much more work to do with the Basic Education Funding formula. I have been listening to the concerns of student and teachers in my district. I admire school teacher unions and school administrators who thoughtfully agreed to take pay freezes. In the House we will work to ensure a fair expenditure, and provide mandate relief so school districts can make their own decisions to help them control their own spending.

An amazing statistic was brought to our attention in the State House. In the last session, 2009-10, only 10 bills were sent to the Senate during the same time period, and in the 2007-08 session, no bills were sent to the Senate for its consideration. So far this session we have moved over 50 bills with help from both sides of the political aisle.

My intent here is to let readers know that we are making progress in Harrisburg, and we know we have much more work to do. We also know we are accountable to the voters.

- Rep. David M. Maloney (R) Pike Township, State House 130th District

