



STATE REPRESENTATIVE MATT GABLER

Fall 2011

Serving the 75th Legislative District

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Dear Friends:

Summer's final days have given way to the beautiful colors of fall that we get to enjoy here in our part of Pennsylvania. It is also a season of change in Harrisburg, where we have enacted an on-time budget without increasing the burden on you, the hard-working taxpayer. Some tough choices were made, but the overwhelming call to rein in spending has been answered, and I feel we are now headed in a more sustainable and fiscally-responsible direction.

Thank you for taking time to read my newsletter, which chronicles some of those decisions and details some of the highlights of this session in the General Assembly. Please know that my votes reflect my continued fight to reform state government so it in turn reflects the needs of working families, seniors and children in places like Elk and Clearfield Counties.

I want to also take time to thank you for sending me to Harrisburg to serve as your representative. Your support is a true blessing, and I am humbled by the trust you have placed in me. Serving as your legislator is an honor and privilege I will never take for granted.

Sincerely,

Matt Gabler, State Representative
75th Legislative District

Do You Drive a Truck?

In reaction to a number of constituent questions my staff members have fielded, I will be holding a truck drivers' town hall meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 9, at 7 p.m., at DuBois Area High School.

My office has recently received many inquiries about new U.S. Department of Transportation regulations. This meeting is your opportunity to discuss your questions and concerns with Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Division Administrator Tim Cotter, who will be in attendance.



Calling All Veterans

I will be hosting the first in a series of monthly veterans outreach meetings on Tuesday, Nov. 1, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at my St. Marys district office, 53 South St. Marys Street, Suite 2. Anyone seeking help with veterans issues is encouraged to attend that day.



In May, congressman Glenn "GT" Thompson and I held a veterans town hall meeting at VFW Post 813 in DuBois. With me in this photo (left to right) are Dave Gralla, Commander of VFW Post 813; Clearfield County Commissioner John Sobel; Clearfield County Director of Veterans Affairs Domenick Kurtz; Thompson and Clearfield County Commissioner Mark McCracken.

VISIT ME ONLINE AT

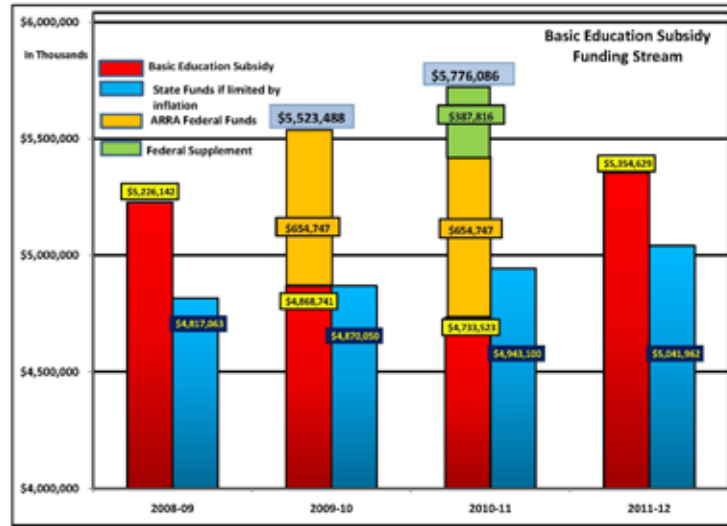
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Prioritizing Education

Our schools are charged with educating our children and providing for the future of our Commonwealth. Recognizing that education must be supported to enable Pennsylvania to grow and compete on a national and global stage, we crafted a budget to offer that support while recognizing the fiscal challenges we face. It sends to our school districts more state funding in the form of Basic Education Subsidies (red bars in chart below) than any budget in history. It also represents a substantial increase in funding for basic education over the last two years, when former Gov. Ed Rendell severely cut state funding and used federal stimulus dollars (yellow bars) that he knew would not exist this year to backfill support.

However, fully replacing missing federal stimulus dollars would have required a substantial tax increase that Pennsylvania's hard-working citizens could not afford and to which I could not agree. Increasing taxes would harm job creation in our state, causing more of our young people to move out of state to find opportunities. I remain committed to ensuring our schools have the resources they need to teach our children and prepare them for a successful future here in Pennsylvania.

Basic education funding in the 2011-12 returns to pre-stimulus levels and gets us back on track. Here is how schools in the 75th Legislative District are funded in the coming year, compared to years past:



	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Brockway Area SD	\$6,739,340	\$6,105,275	\$5,789,225	\$6,739,340
DuBois Area SD	\$14,108,893	\$13,112,931	\$13,168,493	\$14,567,016
Forest Area SD	\$2,476,405	\$2,226,653	\$2,111,388	\$2,476,405
Johnsonburg Area SD	\$4,894,043	\$4,400,466	\$4,172,668	\$4,894,043
Kane Area SD	\$7,789,397	\$7,231,934	\$7,010,194	\$7,789,396
Ridgway Area SD	\$4,841,285	\$4,425,917	\$4,250,004	\$4,841,285
Saint Marys Area SD	\$5,888,470	\$5,536,566	\$5,495,371	\$6,075,704

Supporting a Responsible State Budget

On June 30, the General Assembly approved a \$27.1 billion state budget for the 2011-12 fiscal year. I voted in favor of the plan because it sets the priorities that I consistently hear are important to the residents of my district – responsible, sustainable spending that supports education and our core functions of government.

Family budgets have firm deadlines that must be met in order to avoid consequences, and we are expected to do the same in crafting a budget. Unlike all eight years of the previous administration, this year's budget was enacted on time, allowing government services to continue without interruption.

The residents of Pennsylvania are forced to rein in spending in their households because of a difficult economy. This budget holds government to that same standard by spending less than last year's plan, an accomplishment which was never achieved under Governor Ed Rendell and has only happened three times in the last four decades.

Just as any responsible family resists running their checkbook down to "zero," this budget takes the responsible route. Some have advocated increasing our spending simply because of a temporary unexpected increase in revenues that is not guaranteed to continue. It is important to remember that we started this year with a \$4 billion deficit. Considering this, a half-billion dollar increase in revenues that is not guaranteed to recur next year does not constitute a 'surplus.'

Those of us who have been elected to serve in state government are charged with being good stewards of taxpayer dollars. For the first time since I've been in Harrisburg, I had the opportunity to vote for a budget that sets responsible priorities and is accountable to taxpayers.



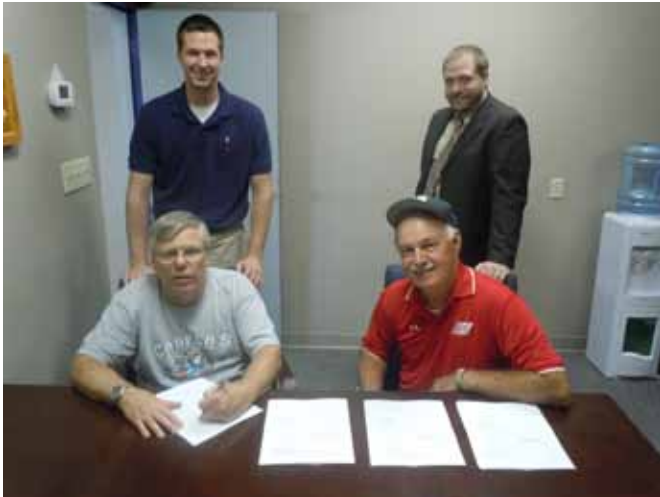
For the latest updates, visit me online at

Lawmakers Applaud Re-opening of Black Moshannon Shooting Range

In July, I proudly announced the Philipsburg Rod and Gun Club signing a 10-year lease agreement with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) that has allowed the club to re-open its shooting range at Black Moshannon State Park.

The club, which has been operating on its current site since prior to the establishment of the state park, had been without a lease and unable to operate since 2005. At that time, concerns were raised about the effects of accumulated lead shot on the ground. As a result, a plan is now in place that will ensure good stewardship of the land on which the range sits while allowing for recreational activity that has been a hallmark of the club for more than 60 years.

It was truly an honor to assist the Philipsburg Rod and Gun Club in reaching this goal. The greatest recognition for this agreement coming together goes to club President Dave Laux of DuBois and club Secretary Paul Bobby. The perseverance of these gentlemen, from even the simplest paperwork to the impressive list of professionals in the shooting range management field from whom they solicited opinions, resulted in club members being able to again take part in this sport that celebrates our local outdoor heritage.



Officers of the Philipsburg Rod and Gun Club recently signed a 10-year lease with DCNR to continue operating their shooting range at Black Moshannon State Park. Seated left to right are PRGC President Dave Laux of DuBois and Secretary Paul Bobby. Standing are Rep. Gabler and Rick Sollman, legislative assistant to Congressman Glenn "GT" Thompson.

Protecting Our Environment and Our Drinking Water

The most obvious environmental concern with regard to Marcellus Shale drilling is the impact on drinking water. Taking full advantage of this natural resource must not take place if we are going to ignore the responsibility we have to be good stewards of the environment.

I have recently authored legislation that takes this into account. My bill, House Bill 1975, will mandate a safe distance between drilling sites and drinking water sources. Truly realizing the vast potential of the Marcellus Shale formation cannot occur at the expense of safe, clean drinking water. Source protection must be a primary concern, and my legislation will preserve the basic, fundamental right to clean water.



Gabler's Veterans Legislation Passes House Unanimously

On June 22, the House unanimously passed my legislation that would help improve services provided by county veterans' affairs directors to veterans in Pennsylvania. House Bill 755, which now sits with the state Senate, adjusts the County Code to make it easier for county veterans' affairs directors to attend annual statewide association meetings.

As a captain in the U.S. Army Reserve, I am honored to have the opportunity as a legislator to offer this commonsense fix to our laws that will help our veterans. The men and women who fought for our country have earned the right to have the highest level of care and services possible. In turn, our county veterans' affairs directors need to be exposed to opportunities where they can learn from their peers about the latest changes and innovations in state and federal laws and programs in order to do the best job possible for our servicemen and servicewomen.

Ensuring Marcellus Revenues Benefit Local Communities

I am a co-sponsor of House Bill 1715, authored by state Rep. Brian Ellis (R-Butler). Known as the Unconventional Gas Well Impact Fee for Local Governments Act, this legislation allows a county to collect an impact fee from an unconventional well such as a Marcellus or Utica Shale well within its boundaries. All of the revenue generated by this fee would stay at the local level and could not find its way to the state's General Fund, where it would likely be diverted for unrelated spending in other regions of the state.

Pennsylvania is blessed with an incredible natural resource in the Marcellus Shale. While the state, and conceivably the country, stands to benefit greatly from this natural gas formation and its unlimited potential, we must address the impact on our municipalities and the affect on our environment that drilling has and will have in the future.

Castle Doctrine Becomes Law

I am proud to have been a co-sponsor of House Bill 40, the Castle Doctrine legislation, which was signed into law June 28. This is truly commonsense protection for all Pennsylvanians. Law-abiding citizens are now allowed to protect themselves and their families without fear of retribution. It also includes a civil immunity safeguard that prevents a citizen from being forced into a frivolous lawsuit due to self-defense.

House Bill 40 is based in part on a similar law enacted in the state of Florida which addresses the use of deadly force in defense of one's self and others. This new law creates a presumption that an attacker or intruder intends to do great bodily harm to an individual and others, and force, including deadly force, may be used as a means of protection.

The people of Pennsylvania deserve the right to defend themselves and what belongs to them when challenged by an attacker. When faced with an imminent threat, citizens now have the ability to stand their ground and "defend their castle" without the obligation to retreat. It allows the use of lethal force inside of one's home, occupied vehicle or any place they have the legal right to be.

Recognizing Our Future Leaders

I am honored to extend my sincere congratulations to the young men and women who have shown remarkable leadership, dedication and service to their communities. During the past few months, I have had the pleasure of presenting House citations to the following Eagle Scout and Girl Scout Gold award recipients:

EAGLE SCOUTS

- Zachary Bauer – DuBois
- Ben Dagher – St. Marys
- Luke Dagher – St. Marys
- Owen Daly – DuBois
- Kevin Detsch – St. Marys
- Josh Feldbauer – St. Marys
- Joshua Gebauer – St. Marys
- Benjamin Grieggs – St. Marys
- Dylan Hanes – St. Marys
- Adam Jesberger - St. Marys
- Cheston McAninch – DuBois
- Jeffery Petrocchi - Kersey
- Jonathan Prechtl - St. Marys
- Matthew Riddle - St. Marys
- Jared Schaut - St. Marys
- Sam Schneider - St. Marys
- Kelly Shaffer - St. Marys
- Derek K. Smith - Kersey
- Joshua Smith - Weedville
- Kyle Smith – Ridgway
- Ryan Sprague - DuBois
- Ralph Tettis – Ridgway
- Eric Wehler - St. Marys
- Ross Wingard - St. Marys
- Cody Woelfel – Kersey
- Zach Young - Johnsonburg

GIRL SCOUT GOLD AWARDS

- Lacey Gosnell – Ridgway
- Marie Michelini - Force
- Catherine Roth - St. Marys
- Evelyn Schwer - St. Marys
- Jenna Shenkle - DuBois

Around the 75th District



Arbor Day in St. Marys



Youth Leadership Academy at Penn State-DuBois



Meeting with the Clearfield County Farm Bureau



Catholic Schools Week at Elk County Catholic Elementary School



Celebrating WCED's 70th anniversary



Memorial Day at Mt. Zion Historical Park, Weedville



Soap Box Derby champions



Presenting a flag to the DuBois Senior Center

District Office Services

My district offices are here to help you. Services my staff and I provide include:

- ◆ Driver's license and vehicle registration applications and renewals
- ◆ PACE and PACENET applications for seniors
- ◆ Property Tax and Rent Rebate applications
- ◆ State tax forms
- ◆ Student aid applications
- ◆ Free state maps, state park information, and PA Vacation Guides
- ◆ Copies of legislation
- ◆ Tours of the State Capitol
- ◆ Referrals to agencies to resolve state-related matters

If you need help with any of the above or with any other state-related matter, please do not hesitate to call one of my district offices.