

State Senator  
**JOHN RAFFERTY**



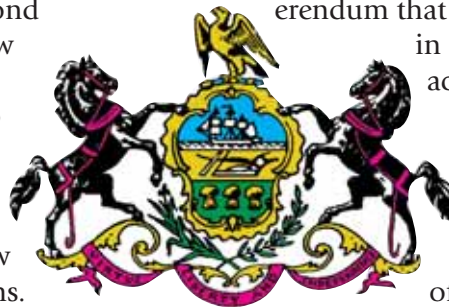
*Reports to You*

44TH DISTRICT • FALL 2008

## New State Budget Holds Line on Taxes

**D**espite a sluggish economy and a downturn in revenues, the Legislature succeeded in passing a new state budget that holds the line on spending and – for the second time in two years – includes no new taxes.

Senate Republicans led efforts to ensure that the budget charted a fiscally responsible course that protects vital, existing services, while limiting expenditures for new proposals and entitlement programs. The final budget makes new investments in public education and in our infrastructure systems such as bridges, dams and water and sewer projects. In particular, \$350 million is set aside to



make critical improvements to 411 bridges across the state. Voters will also have the opportunity to participate in a referendum that would invest \$400 million in new water and sewer projects across the Commonwealth.

Overall, the proposed 3.98 percent increase in spending from Fiscal Year 2007-08 is about, or slightly below, the rate of inflation. I believe it represents a fiscally responsible

plan for our state – one that will allow us to remain competitive and weather the current economic downturn.



## \$1 Million Grant Awarded to Public Safety Training Center

**A** new state-of-the-art Chester County Public Safety Training Center, to be built on a 70-acre tract in East Fallowfield and South Coatesville, is a step closer to reality with \$1 million in state funding.

I and some of my colleagues recently presented a check to the Chester County Economic Development Council in Uwchlan.

The center will train firefighters,

police officers, emergency medical personnel and other first-responders in the latest emergency procedures.

Chester County currently is the only suburban county without its own public safety training center. Police, firefighters and other first-responders now train in Montgomery, Lancaster and Delaware counties.

I am pleased that our emergency responders will have a first-

class training facility to assist them with up-to-date training methods to continue their distinguished record of outstanding protection to our communities.

Construction on the training center, which will be located off Route 82 near Newlinville Road straddling East Fallowfield and South Coatesville, is expected to begin in the spring of 2009 and be completed in 2010.

For more information go to [www.supportpstf.org](http://www.supportpstf.org)

## GPS Monitoring: Keeping Track of Sex Offenders

**I** recently joined state Auditor General Jack Wagner calling for Global Positioning System (GPS) monitoring of convicted sex offenders.

The proposal is aimed at further strengthening Pennsylvania's Megan's Law, which protects children and communities by requiring convicted sex offenders to register their names and addresses on the publically accessible Megan's Law Web site [www.pameganslaw.state.pa.us](http://www.pameganslaw.state.pa.us).

I am sponsoring legislation, along with Senator Jane Orié to require the use of GPS for individuals determined to be sexually violent predators; sex offenders who have been convicted of a subsequent sex offense after having been required to register; and individuals required to register

under Megan's Law and who have been convicted of failure to comply.

It amazes me that a person can drive into Philadelphia and use his or her vehicle GPS unit to locate open parking spots but for some reason we still don't widely use this same technology to track pedophiles who seek to harm our

children. It makes no sense to me and it needs to change as soon as possible.

Under the legislation GPS tracking would be done by either the body supervising the individual's probation or parole or by the Pennsylvania State Police. It would be a criminal offense to tamper with or remove the GPS device.

Senator Orié and I are also sponsoring Senate Bill 1130 to require Pennsylvania to implement the Adam Walsh Child Protection Act, which seeks to create a national sex offender registry available on the Internet as well as uniform enforcement.



Senator Rafferty speaking at the GPS Monitoring for Sex Offenders press conference.



## Students 'Capitalize' on Senate Opportunity

**N**early 100 students from six area school districts recently convened at Montgomery County Community College, West Campus, and got a hands-on look at how legislation works its way through the Penn-

sylvania Senate and is defeated or becomes law.

The students each became a "Senator for a Day" during the seminar I hosted. We were joined by top officials from the Montgomery County District Attorney's

office, the Pennsylvania State Police, the Department of Environmental Protection and top educators.

The best way to learn about the legislative process is to participate in it. The Seminar for Future Leaders, now in its fifth year, offered the students a first-hand opportunity to develop legislation, debate the issues in committee, amend the bills, table the bills or send the measure to the full Senate, where again it would be debated, amended and finally voted on.

This is one of the most fun events I have the opportunity to sponsor each year. It is a great learning experience for the students to help them realize the importance divergent opinions play in the legislative process.

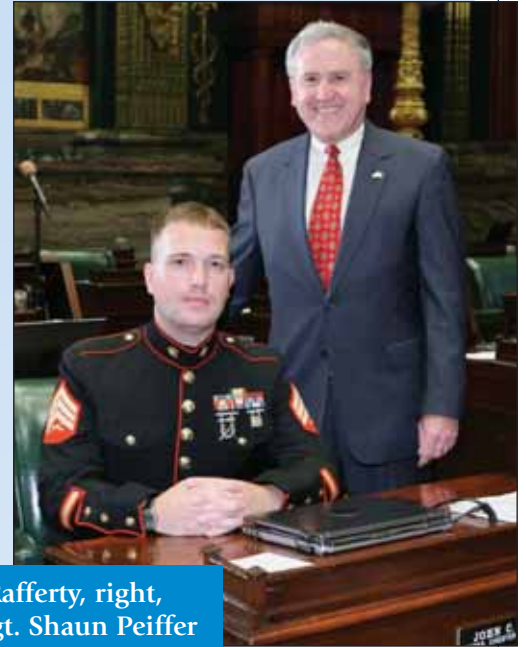
Senator Rafferty talks with the student Senators after the "Senate" adjourned.





Senator Rafferty talks with 4th grade students at St. Phillip Neri Elementary School about his role as a state senator.

## SENATOR JOHN RAFFERTY'S PHOTO GALLERY



Senator Rafferty, right, salutes Sgt. Shaun Peiffer in the Senate Chamber.



The Senator gets a first-hand look at an electric vehicle at a Fraternal Order of Police Law Enforcement Expo.

Senator Rafferty during a tour of Keystone Helicopter. The Senator praised Keystone's success during the recent economic downturn, as the Chester County business is adding employees and expanding.



As Upper Uwchlan Township Supervisor Kevin Kerr, left, and Congressman Jim Gerlach, center, look on, Senator Rafferty presents a Senate proclamation honoring Upper Uwchlan Township, as it celebrates its 150 anniversary.



## Rafferty Bills Would Reform Nominations Process

In a move to eliminate any chance for a conflict of interest, I have introduced two bills that place certain limits on the executive nominations to serve on boards and commissions.

Senate Bill 1404 would prohibit individuals from being nominated to or serving on a board or commission if they already serve on another board or commission, or if they have a pecuniary interest in a contract that has been granted or approved by another board or commission.

The companion piece of legislation, Senate Bill 1405, would prohibit any individual who has an ownership interest in a casino located in the Commonwealth, or who is applying for a casino or slot machine license, from being nominated to or serving on a board or commission.

There is a definite need to prohibit individuals from serving on more than one state board or commission simultaneously. It is equally important that we prohibit them from being a public board member and then have a financial interest with another board or agency, such as a bond

counsel or accountant.

In my mind this is just commonsense legislation from an ethical standpoint. No one with a financial interest in a gaming license, a gambling casino, shall serve on a public board, commission, authority or agency.

The governor currently nominates individuals to serve on boards and commissions, and the nominations then go to the Senate for approval. The two bills will place certain restrictions on who

the governor can nominate and eliminate any potential for a conflict of interest.

### **PUBLIC SAFETY REMINDER**

Please help our first responders by remembering to pull off the road immediately for all emergency services vehicles including police, fire or ambulance. It is the state law and it is for the protection of you and our first responders.



A contingent from the Pennsylvania State Police was among 175 members of the law enforcement community from Berks, Chester and Montgomery counties who recently attended the fifth annual Law Enforcement Appreciation Breakfast hosted by Senator Rafferty at Lakeside Inn.



## Underage Drinking Enforcement Legislation Signed by Governor

The Pennsylvania General Assembly has approved legislation I introduced to permit the continuation of Pennsylvania State Police age compliance checks at bars, restaurants and beer distributors.

The new law allows age compliance checks, which can identify establishments that serve alcohol to minors and will help stem the flow of alcohol to underage pur-

chasers and drinkers.

What began as a highly successful pilot program almost two years ago but was set to expire at the end of 2007, Senate Bill 737 permits the State Police to continue age compliance checks with individuals between the ages of 18 and 21 who attempt to purchase alcohol with their real driver's license – which clearly states that the individual is under 21.

Since the inception of the program, the State Police have conducted more than 2,500 age compliance checks. Of those - 1,109 underage individuals were sold alcohol.

Licensed establishments who serve alcohol to minors are fined and required to comply with Responsible Alcohol Management Training conducted by the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board.

## Bridging the Gap



### State Budget Includes Good News for Roads, Bridges

Pennsylvania's new state budget provides for borrowing to make much-needed investments in public infrastructure, such as bridges, dams and water and sewer projects. In particular, \$350 million is set aside to make critical improvements to 411 bridges across the state as part of the "Rebuild PA Program."

Among the list of more than 400 bridges PennDOT has scheduled for construction work during the fiscal year 2008-09 as part of the budget initiative are one in Berks County and three in Chester County in the 44th District.

I am supportive of this program and voted in favor of the legislation that will make improvements



to the Route 422 Bridge over the Norfolk Southern Railroad in Amity Township; the East Reece-

ville Road Bridge over Beaver Creek in East Brandywine; the Harmonyville Road Bridge over French Creek in Warwick Township; and the Fairview Road Bridge over Beaver Run in East Nantmeal.

Work is expected to begin on the Amity project in November, while work on all Chester County projects will begin in early 2009. Money to pay back the bonds which will finance the work will come from the state's motor vehicle fund.

Our highways, roads and bridges are crucial to a good economy, and we need to ensure that they are safe and well-maintained.



### Water and Sewer Funding Crucial to Public Safety

As part of our state's new budget, the Legislature pushed for a historic investment of \$1.2 billion in additional funding for vital water and sewer improvement projects.

Act 63 authorizes \$800 million in bonds for water and sewer maintenance that would be paid back from funds from slot machine revenue.

Act 64 authorizes a voter referendum to borrow another \$400 million for water and sewer repairs. The new money is poten-

tially good news for ratepayers in our district. Townships and municipal authorities must compete for the money. The water/sewer funding will help ensure sewage plant upgrades are done on time and that the smaller amount of nutrients from those sources is reduced more quickly.

The new funding will support projects that protect communities against dangerous floods, and rehabilitate unsafe, high-hazard dams. Funding will also be made available for dam, flood protec-

tion, water and sewer improvements. Flood protection funding will allow an increase in grants awarded to municipalities, boost support for stream improvement projects and complete emergency closure work and rehabilitation projects.

Separate legislation was enacted that will allow the Department of Environmental Protection to pursue nonstructural flood prevention projects — something it is unable to do under the existing statute.

## A New Look to Constituent Web Site

In an effort to better serve my constituents in the 44th Senatorial District, I recently revamped my Web site, which can be found at [senatorrafferty.com](http://senatorrafferty.com).

The homepage features a wide array of helpful information on the latest issues in the news and a schedule of upcoming events. There are quick links to a variety of topics from mortgage issues to help for

seniors; how to apply for prescription drug assistance; and how to reduce unwanted telemarketing calls. You can also find tax forms and voting information as well as a special page dedicated to children.

The site also allows district residents to email me with their questions and comments. Please feel free to contact any of my offices for additional information or as-



sistance – my staff will be more than happy to help you.

In an effort to reach constituents quicker and do our part to help the environment, my newsletter is now available electronically. You can register for the email version at [senatorrafferty.com/email.htm](http://senatorrafferty.com/email.htm). There is also a link to register on the main page of our Web site.



### State Senator John Rafferty

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### Office Hours



Monday through Friday  
9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday evening until 7 p.m.  
in the Pottstown office only

First Saturday of the month  
9 a.m. to noon  
in the Collegeville office