



State Senator **Pat Vance** Legislative Report

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Information on committee meetings, sessions and background on individual members can be found on the Internet at www.legis.state.pa.us

Vance Sworn In to Senate

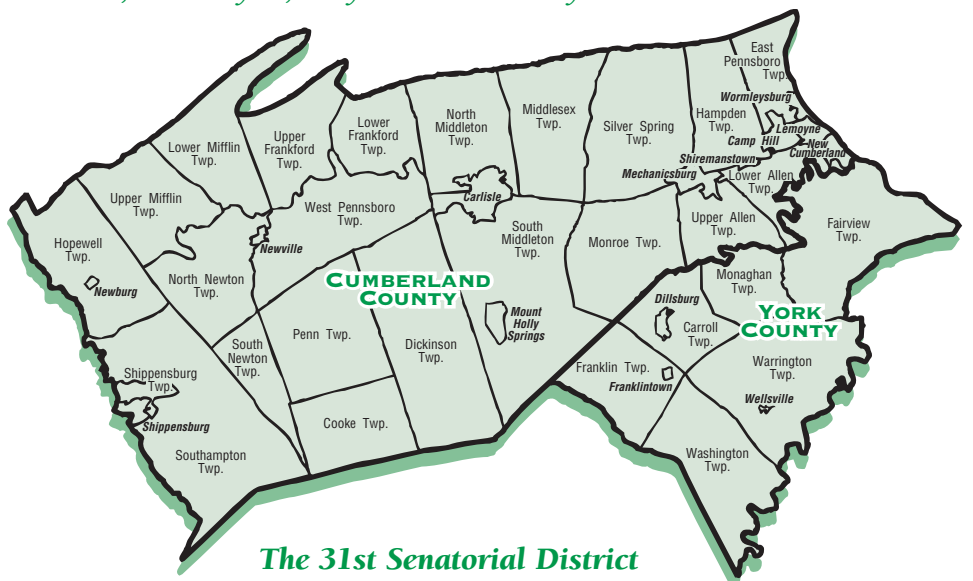
The Pennsylvania Senate began its new session on Jan. 4 as I was sworn in replacing Hal Mowery, who retired.

Sen. Robert Jubelirer appointed me to be vice chair of the Senate Aging and Youth Committee and a member of the following Senate committees – Public Health and Welfare, Finance, Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Community and Economic Development, Policy, and Law and Justice – along with the Capitol Preservation Committee. My committee assignments will help me better represent your interests in serving the needs of seniors and children, improving health care, promoting economic development, reducing the tax burden and preserving family farms.

I look forward to working with you. If my staff or I can assist you with any state-related issue, please do not hesitate to contact us.



Sen. Patricia Vance's staff is, from left, Amy Bolze, Cara Phillips, Li Kohr, Mark Ryan, Amy Rowe and Tracy Polovick.



The 31st Senatorial District

31st District Survey

I am interested in your views on issues that may be addressed later this year. Please take a moment to read and answer the following questions; two spaces have been provided for responses so that two people per household may reply. Thank you very much for your participation.

1. Do you use public transportation?

- Yes No

2. If so, what type of public transportation do you use most frequently?

- Bus Train
 Para-transit Other

3. If you use public transportation, how often do you use it?

- Less than once a week
 More than once a week
 More than once a month
 Occasionally

4. This fiscal year, the state budget included \$838.5 million for public transportation, including \$527 million to the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority (SEPTA). On Feb. 22, 2005, the governor proposed increasing taxes and fees to provide an additional \$207 million yearly for public transportation. Do you support an increase in taxes and fees for public transportation?

- Yes No

5. If yes, which tax should be increased?

- Realty Transfer
 Vehicle Title and Plate Fee
 Gas Tax
 Income Tax
 Other

6. Do you favor a gas tax increase with revenues dedicated exclusively to roads and bridges throughout the Commonwealth? For every 1 cent of the gas tax, about \$67 million annually goes toward road and bridge projects.

- Yes No

7. Legislation recently was introduced that would hold state spending increases to the rate of inflation. In addition to restricting growth of state spending, the Taxpayer Fairness Act would set aside all surplus revenues into the state's Rainy Day Fund for use in times of economic necessity. Are you in favor of this bill?

- Yes No

8. With most school districts declining to adopt Act 72, which was intended to provide homeowners with property tax relief derived from expanded gaming, what step should the General Assembly take next?

- Mandate that school districts participate under Act 72.
 Require a public referendum in each school district on adopting Act 72.
 Revise Act 72 to remove the "back-end referendum" on future property tax increases and give school districts another opportunity to opt-in.
 Design a new plan that alleviates the property tax burden specifically for senior citizens on fixed incomes.
 Other (please specify) _____

9. What would you say are the most important problems facing Pennsylvania today?

- Crime
 Economy
 Education
 Environment
 Growth
 Health Issues
 Taxes
 Transportation/highways
 Other _____

10. In the May primary, the voters approved borrowing \$625 million to fund government spending on environmental initiatives known as Growing Greener II. Some of the money may be designated for each county. How would you like the county where you reside to spend this money?

- Maintenance and protection of the environment
 Open space preservation
 Farmland preservation
 Watershed protection, including meeting water quality goals under the Chesapeake Bay Agreement
 Clean up of hazardous sites
 Other environmental initiatives

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SENATOR PATRICIA VANCE
3806 Market Street
Camp Hill, PA 17011

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Pennsylvania Facts

Do you know?

1. Why was Harrisburg named for John Harris?
2. On what date did Pennsylvania gain statehood?
3. What Harrisburg-born actor portrayed Sergeant Gorman in the 1970 movie M*A*S*H?
4. How many Pennsylvanians were unemployed in 1931 during the Great Depression?
5. Under the election law of 1799, what item was introduced into Pennsylvania voting?
6. In what year was the first Philadelphia-Pittsburgh Turnpike completed?
7. How many Pennsylvanians signed the Declaration of Independence?
8. When the Pennsylvania Turnpike first opened in 1940, what was the fixed speed limit?
9. During World War I, how many Pennsylvanians served in the military?
10. According to the first federal census, what was the population of Pennsylvania in 1790?

Answers

1. He refused to sell the needed land to the Legislature until the name was changed from Louisborg, for Louis XVI.
2. Dec. 12, 1787
3. Bobby Troup
4. Almost 900,000
5. The printed ballot
6. 1818
7. Nine
8. None
9. 370,961
10. 434,373

HEALTH BEAT

State Hospital Closure Raises Concerns

The governor announced in early January that he planned to close the Harrisburg State Hospital by the end of this year.

A number of questions arose regarding the speed with which the closure would occur, the impact on the continuity of care for consumers of mental health services, and the amount of funding that would be available to the counties to provide mental health services.

Sen. Jeff Piccola and I, along with Reps. Jerry Nailor and Ron Buxton, began work to address these issues. We introduced legislation in both the Senate and House that would provide for a temporary moratorium on the closure of any state hospital until after the completion of a report by the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee. The report would assess the mental health service infrastructure and needs in each county and the funding necessary to successfully place patients safely in their home community. This bill has passed the Senate.

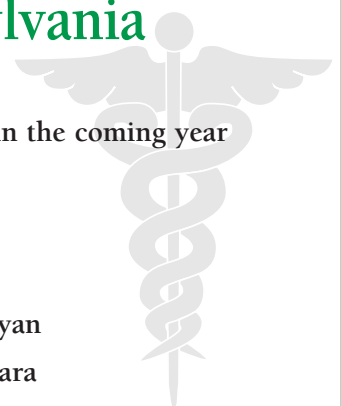
We support the concept of more community-based care. However, the abrupt and unexpected closure announcement does not provide sufficient time to build the programs and infrastructure needed to provide services to the 135 people who are expected to be placed in the community. The counties served by Harrisburg State Hospital currently have waiting lists for community and residential services as well as supported services. Resources for acute care are already strained and an extended acute care facility will be needed to fill a service gap created by the closure.



Sen. Patricia Vance and her staff recently visited Susquehanna View Apartments in Camp Hill to help residents fill out Pennsylvania's Property Tax or Rent Rebate forms. The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program gives seniors up to a \$500 rebate on their property taxes or rent paid in the prior year. Vance, left, stands with resident Meriam Wiker while resident Donna Dawkins, seated, receives help filling out her form from Tracy Polovick, a member of Vance's staff.

Health and Vital Statistics for Pennsylvania

- Birth Rates for 2004 – 11.5/1,000
- An estimated 75,375 Pennsylvanians will be diagnosed with an invasive cancer in the coming year
- Heart disease caused 30 percent of all deaths in 2004
- 33,000 medical physicians in Pennsylvania in 2004
- 8,357 dentists in Pennsylvania in 2004
- Top five birth names for males (2002): Michael, Jacob, Matthew, Nicholas and Ryan
- Top five birth names for females (2002): Emily, Madison, Hannah, Abigail and Sara



Vance Legislation Becomes Law

Employers who respond in good faith with reference information on current or former employees now have immunity from civil lawsuits under legislation I authored.

With this change, Pennsylvania is one of 37 states that provides statutory protection for employers who respond to reference requests.

The law allows employers to give an honest assessment of a current or former employee. Employees are protected, however, if the employer provides false or intentionally misleading information.



Sen. Patricia Vance, right, talks with Carlisle Borough Manager Fred Bean at a meeting she held recently for local government officials. Vance hosted similar events throughout the 31st Senatorial District in order to address municipal concerns.

31st District PENNDOT Update (www.penndot8.com)

For emissions information, contact: 1-800-265-0921 or www.drivecleanpa.state.pa.us

Carlisle area – Hanover Street from Route 74 to the borough line, East High Street and York Street from East Street to the borough line, and East High Street and Trindle Road from York Road in Carlisle Borough to Conrad Drive in South Middleton Township – Mill, base repair and overlay/Target Construction Spring 2006.

Dillsburg/Carroll – South Mountain Road and Route 15 – Intersection improvement / Target Construction 2006.

East Pennsboro/Camp Hill – Route 11 and 21st Street – Widening, adding turn lanes and improving intersection/Project to be completed in November 2005.

Fairview – Interstate 83 over Limekiln Road – Repair parapet/Target Construction 2006.

Fairview, Lewisberry/ Newberry – Route 177 from Route 382 to Route 392 and on Route 382 at the intersection with Route 177 – Resurface/Project to be completed in June 2005.

Franklin – Meadow View Bridge – Bridge replacement/Design phase 2005.

Hampden/Silver Spring – Interstate 81 interchanges at Wertzville Road and Route 114 – Remove and replace existing expansion dams/Target Construction Summer 2005.

Lemoyne – Market Street Bridge – Lane restrictions for deck work/Target Construction Labor Day 2005 through Spring 2006.

Lower Allen/Upper Allen – Interchange of Route 15 and the Pennsylvania Turnpike – Add two new bridges and a third weave lane along with rebuilding the existing interchange/Target construction – late summer or early fall.

Monroe Township – Williams Grove Road – Replace bridges over Yellow Breeches and Dogwood Run/Target Construction 2006.

North Newton – Cumberland Valley Rail Trail – Constructing 3.5 miles to complete the 4.7 mile Newville to Oakville link/Target Construction July 2005.

North Newton/South Newton/West Pennsboro/Penn/Southampton – Route 11 from Route 4003 to Newville Road – Resurfacing/Target Construction July through August.

Silver Spring – Route 114 – Resurfacing/Project to be completed in June 2006.

South Middleton – Intersection of routes 34 and 74 – Addition of traffic signal/Target Construction 2006.

South Middleton – Exit 44 of Interstate 81 – Improve interchange/Target Construction 2007.

Washington – Bermudian Creek Bridge – Bridge replacement/Target Construction 2006.

York County – Route 74 – Safety improvements/Design phase 2005.



Former Sen. Mowery, C. H. Sup. Kindler, Yost and Vance.

Camp Hill Teen Wins Medals at 2005 Australian Junior National Games

Kelsey Yost, who is a rising senior at Camp Hill High School, recently competed as part of Team USA in the 2005 Australian Junior National Games.

She won gold medals in the 50- and 100-meter freestyle events in swimming and the 1500- and 400-meter track events. She also won silver in the 200- and 800-meter track events. In addition, Kelsey was a member of the silver medal winning 4X400 meter track team and the 4X10 meter bronze team.