

State Senator ROB TEPLITZ

FALL 2013

Shaking up the Status Quo in the Capitol

Since taking office in January, Sen. Rob Teplitz has emerged as a leader to reform state government. *Story Inside.*



INSIDE:



FIGHTING FOR HARRISBURG

City Finally Gets Full Funding for Emergency Services to State Buildings

AROUND THE DISTRICT

Join One of My Citizen Advisory Committees
Internship Opportunities
What Issues Matter to You?

Taking the Lead on Government Reform



Sen. Teplitz announces the creation of the Government Reform Caucus during a March 18 news conference at the Capitol.



▲ Sen. Teplitz joins human services workers at a rally urging Gov. Corbett to adequately fund human services programs. During the state budget process, Teplitz successfully negotiated a compromise on controversial efforts to expand the Human Services Development Block Grant pilot program. As part of the compromise, he will be authoring a resolution requiring an independent study of the pilot program to determine whether the needs of the most vulnerable members of our community are being met.

➤ Sen. Teplitz picks up litter from a vacant lot in the Allison Hill section of the city as part of the Great Harrisburg Cleanup. Volunteers from across the city came together to remove trash from alleys, parks and lots.



Pennsylvania faces critical substantive challenges, including the need for great schools, good jobs, low taxes and safe roads and bridges. I also believe that we need to improve the way government operates. An open, transparent, and inclusive government would not only restore the public's trust, but it would also allow elected officials to work together more efficiently and effectively in order to move Pennsylvania forward.

I have introduced several measures that would significantly improve the way our government operates. I've also co-sponsored many other reform bills promoted by my colleagues.

Recently, I collaborated with state Rep. Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster) to create and lead a new Government Reform Caucus to develop and promote reform legislation. This caucus consists of several dozen Democratic and Republican Senate and House members from across the state.

In addition, I have taken steps toward greater accountability in my own office. Transparency is key to ensuring that your tax dollars are spent wisely and effectively, so I have posted my office expenses on my website, which will be updated on a quarterly basis. Finally, to be clear, I do not accept mid-term cost-of-living raises (COLAs), per diems or mileage reimbursement, and I do not use a state-owned or state-leased vehicle. ■

Teplitz Government Reform Bills

- **AUDIT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:** **Senate Bill 690** authorizes an independent audit of the General Assembly and its accounts by the Auditor General. **Senate Bill 691** requires that those audits be conducted annually.
- **ELIMINATE AUTOMATIC RAISES:** **Senate Bill 692** eliminates the automatic annual mid-term cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) for legislators. **Senate Bill 693** clarifies that no legislator can receive a COLA in the middle of a term.
- **SUSPEND PAY FOR LATE BUDGET:** **Senate Bill 694** suspends pay for both the governor and state lawmakers if the state budget is not passed by the June 30 deadline.
- **END LAME-DUCK SESSIONS:** **Senate Bill 695** prohibits the General Assembly from holding votes in even-numbered years during the period of time between the general election and the swearing in of the new legislature.
- **OPEN PRIMARIES:** **Senate Bill 696** allows registered Independents to temporarily change their registration status so that they can vote in primary elections.
- **LOBBYING REFORM:** **Senate Bill 697** prohibits the use of taxpayer dollars to hire outside lobbyists to lobby other state government agencies.

Visit
www.senatorteplitz.com/legislation
for a full list of bills
authored by Senator Teplitz

Around the 15th District



ROB TEPLITZ



Sen. Teplitz, along with his wife Randi and sons Ben and Adam, check out the fresh produce at the 97th Pennsylvania Farm Show.



Halifax High School wrestling standout Joey Kaufman (right) receives a Senate citation. Kaufman, who graduated in June, gave his District 3 Double-A Championship medal to a rival who is battling cancer and could not compete in the district championship.



Team Teplitz took to the plate at Metro Bank Park in Harrisburg to Take a Swing Against Breast Cancer, an annual home run derby sponsored by the Pennsylvania Breast Cancer Coalition.



Chemistry Manager Tim Alvey (center) provides Sen. Teplitz (right) and his chief of staff, Victor Wills, with a tour of Three Mile Island.



Dozens of volunteers, including Sen. Teplitz, participate in the annual spring trout stocking in Halifax with the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission.

Moving Harrisburg Forward



As Harrisburg's newly elected state senator, I am making it a priority to help lift the city out of its financial woes. The city's future impacts the prosperity of the entire region.

One of my first successful efforts since taking office this year was ensuring that the City of Harrisburg finally receives full reimbursement from the state for providing fire protection and emergency services to the 40 tax-exempt state-owned buildings located in the city.

Under this year's new state budget, Harrisburg will receive **\$5 million**, which covers the city's annual cost of providing these services at the Capitol Complex.

The state has historically underfunded the fire and emergency services provided by the city, despite their value for the safety of the thousands of state employees and visitors who frequent the capital every day, not to mention the protection of millions of dollars worth of taxpayer-owned buildings.

I am now drafting legislation to permanently require full funding in all future state budgets. ■

Addressing the Sinkholes

The city's infrastructure also needs significant attention. It has been plagued with nearly 40 sinkholes, including several that just opened on the 2100 block of North 4th Street since last December.

I helped the city and its receiver apply for state funding to repair those sinkholes. In July, Harrisburg received a **\$900,000** low-interest loan through PENNVEST toward repairing water and sewer infrastructure on North 4th Street.

Additionally, I have submitted a **\$24 million** capital budget request for comprehensive and permanent repairs to the sinkholes across the city. ■



Sen. Teplitz and state Rep. Patty Kim (D-Harrisburg) discuss ways to assist the neighborhood and the city after two sinkholes opened up last December in the middle of the 2100 block of North 4th Street.

Improving Oversight of Risky Financing Deals

I am proud to have played a supporting role in the receiver's efforts at negotiating a settlement to the debt on the Harrisburg incinerator, which is one of the main culprits of the city's financial troubles.

Due to insufficient oversight of the deal to modernize and expand the incinerator, residents across the Harrisburg region were at risk of being required to pay hundreds of millions of dollars for an incinerator project that, despite multiple setbacks, kept moving forward thanks to a tangled web of risky deals that simply went unmonitored. The debt settlement deal announced by the receiver in August is a critical step forward in resolving the city's financial crisis.

Local officials and I were also able to press law enforcement authorities to commence a criminal investigation of the individuals responsible for the costly incinerator project.

Harrisburg's story is not unique. Small municipalities across the state are struggling to deal with the consequences of precarious borrowing.

Several of my Senate colleagues and I introduced a bipartisan package of bills last spring that would help provide better state oversight of municipal financing deals.

The bills would make several important reforms to the Local Government Unit Debt Act (*Senate Bill 901*), allow the State Ethics Commission to investigate alleged ethical violations by individuals involved in financial transactions by municipal authorities (*Senate Bill 902*), and ban the use of risky financial investments such as interest-rate swap agreements for municipalities (*Senate Bills 903 and 904*). ■



Sen. Teplitz, along with his colleagues (left to right) Sens. John Blake, John Eichelberger, and Mike Folmer, unveil their bipartisan package of municipal financing reform measures during a news conference at the Harrisburg incinerator.



OFFICES TO SERVE YOU

CAPITOL OFFICE

Senate Box 203015
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3015
(717) 787-6801 • Fax: (717) 783-3722

HARRISBURG DISTRICT OFFICE

46 Kline Village
Harrisburg, PA 17104
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HALIFAX DISTRICT OFFICE

916-B North River Road • Park Plaza
Halifax, PA 17032
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Newberry Township Building
1915 Old Trail Road
Etters, PA 17319
(717) 938-6229 • Fax: (717) 938-0421
Thursdays 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

E-MAIL

SenatorTeplitz@pasenate.com

FACEBOOK

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WEBSITE

www.SenatorTeplitz.com

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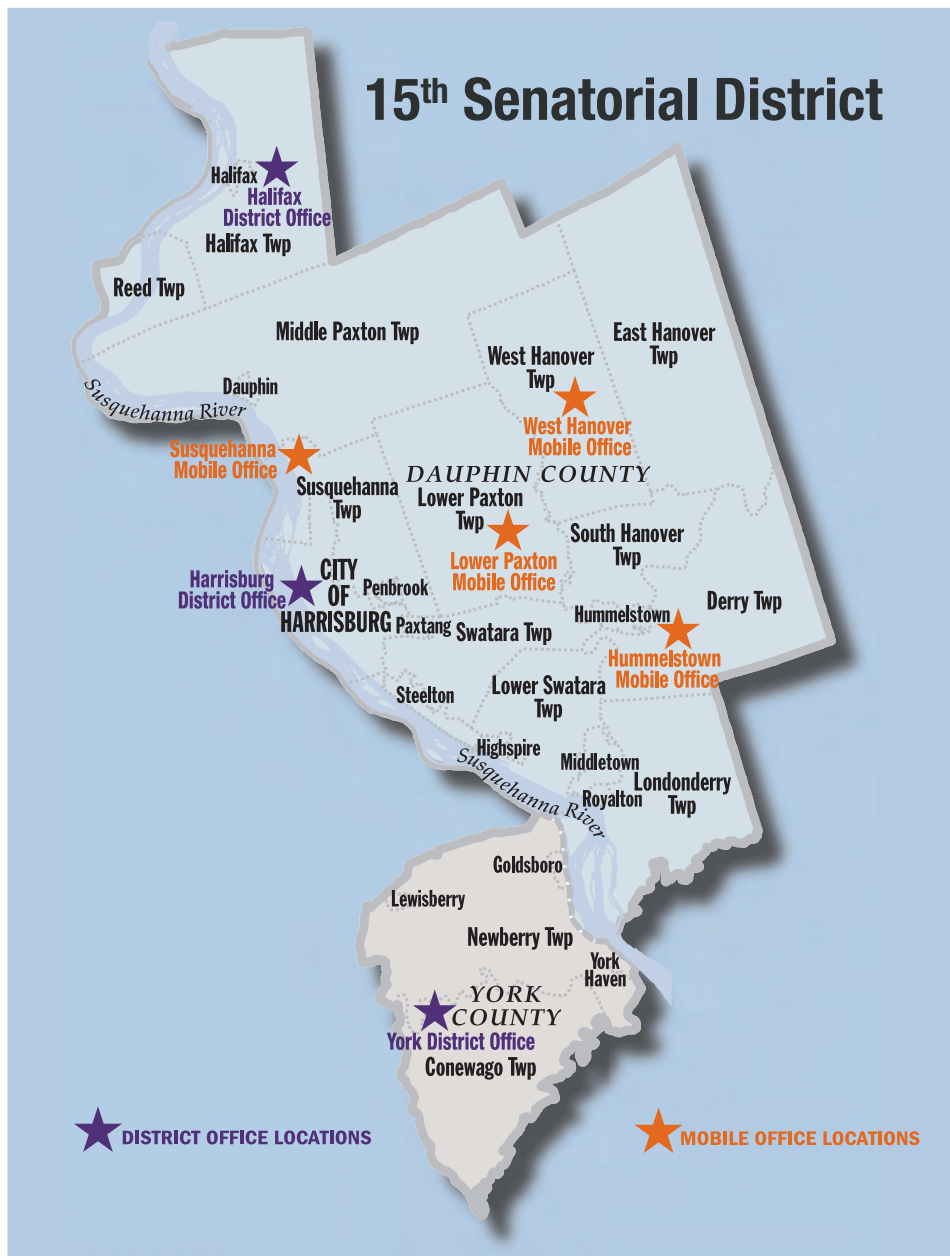
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Constituents Invited to Join Citizen Advisory Committees

I am forming three citizen advisory committees that will focus on issues facing sportsmen/women, small business owners, and veterans. The committees will give constituents and my office the opportunity to work together on specific issues and learn about policies and legislation.

I welcome residents of the 15th Senatorial District who are experienced in these areas to participate and share their knowledge with us. Once the membership of each advisory committee is set, the committees will meet quarterly. Sign up online at www.senatorteplitz.com/cac or by contacting my Capitol office at 717-787-6801. ■

College Students: Internship opportunities are available with my office. Gain valuable experience by working alongside Team Teplitz. Contact my office for more information!



STATE SENATOR
ROB TEPLITZ

Senate Box 203015
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3015

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Your Opinion is Important to Me!

As your state senator, it's my privilege and duty to represent you and to make our community a better place. Your input is important to me. Please let me know what issues are important to you by taking a moment to rank them from 1-10 and mailing this card back to me.

- Civil Rights
- Education
- Environment / Conservation
- Government Reform
- Healthcare
- Job Creation / Economic Development
- Social Services / Poverty
- Taxes
- Transportation / Infrastructure
- Veterans

Comments / Other: _____

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Thank you for taking the time to let me know your thoughts!