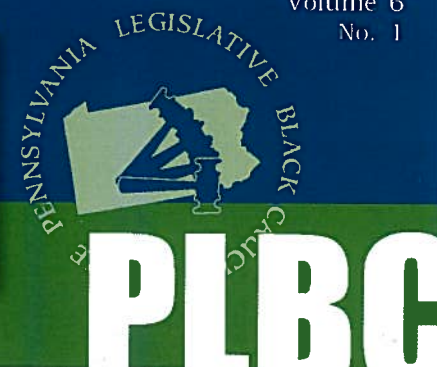


# THE Gavel



The Newsletter of the Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus

State Representative Ronald G. Waters, *Chairman*

Fall 2009

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the fall 2009 edition of *The Gavel*. We are happy to update you on our latest legislative initiatives as well as Pennsylvania's 2009-10 budget. Please take this opportunity to read about what our members are doing to make health care affordable and accessible for you and how we continue to work to ensure equality and fair treatment for all of our constituents.

I am also proud to announce that our Historically Black Colleges and Universities are finally receiving well-deserved recognition.

We have also updated our website and made it more accessible and user-friendly. You will now be able to view more photos and take our surveys. You can check it out at [www.pahouse.com/plbc](http://www.pahouse.com/plbc)

The work we do is with you in mind, so your feedback is valuable.

I, as well as all the PLBC members, look forward to continually serving you.

Kindest Regards,

**Ronald G. Waters**, Chairman  
Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus  
State Representative  
191st Legislative District

## A PUBLIC SERVANT IN OUR MIDST: THE PLBC SALUTES CHARTER MEMBER REPRESENTATIVE FRANK L. OLIVER

State Rep. Frank L. Oliver, D-Phila., has been a member of the House of Representatives since 1973, serving the residents of the 195th legislative district with honor and distinction. Rep. Oliver is a founding member of the Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus and was instrumental in helping to establish and carry out its mission. He is the last standing original member of the PLBC. Rep. Oliver has many notable accomplishments. To name a few:



- Chairman of the House Health and Human Services Committee. Rep. Oliver shepherded the bill which is now known as The Clean Indoor Air Act through his committee, which effectively prohibits smoking in public places.
- Rep. Oliver was the prime sponsor of H.B. 1401, now Act 22, which exempts felony ex-offender mothers who have been convicted of drug convictions from the Federal ban on welfare, cash assistance, and food stamps.
- Rep. Oliver's involvement with the Food Trust in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, led to public hearings centering on the lack of supermarkets in urban areas. An in depth study associated with H. R. 13 revealed the concerns of corporations that purchase parcels of land to utilize as supermarkets, the square footage required to have a successful supermarket, as well as the increase in episodes of hypertension and diabetes resulting from small corner stores essentially selling potato chips and other sodium laden high price foods in urban areas. As a result of Rep. Oliver's hearings and research, and subsequent work of the House Appropriations Committee Chairman Dwight Evans, the General Assembly ultimately passed The First Industries Program that authorized \$1.1 billion dollars for investment in economic development programs in urban and suburban areas of the Commonwealth causing an increase in jobs and the development of supermarkets in our communities.
- Rep. Oliver has been one of the last public figures standing to fight the dissolution of the Berean Institute, the venerable vocational training school that has fallen upon hard times. Rep. Oliver, along with other community leaders, fought hard to continue Berean as an institution or, failing that, a school to be integrated into an existing academic institution with the assistance of the Pennsylvania Department of Education.
- Rep. Oliver continues to assist non-profit organizations in our community by providing much needed funds to assist in community development.
- Rep. Oliver, recognizing that some families have loved ones down on their luck and incarcerated, prime sponsored H.B. 1402, which allows alternative payment methods for inmates calling their families to lower the financial impact of phone bills affecting them. This bill was supported by Gov. Rendell as well as the Department of Corrections and was passed into law. Similarly, Rep. Oliver has been extremely helpful in assisting families in having incarcerated loved ones transferred to closer state correctional facilities due to family emergencies.

This list could go on and on...but ONE THING IS FOR SURE: WE HAVE A PUBLIC SERVANT IN OUR MIDST!

