



State Representative

Frank Burns

72nd Legislative District

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Dear Neighbor,

It is my pleasure to serve as your new state representative.

My constituent service offices, located at 535 Fairfield Ave. in Johnstown, 1605 Graham Ave. in Windber and 119 South Center St. in Ebensburg, are open and fully staffed to assist you with various state-related needs.

Please take a moment to read through this newsletter and learn more about services available to you through my offices, find information on state programs, and learn more about what I'm working on in Harrisburg and at home.

For regular legislative updates, please visit www.pahouse.com/Burns to send me a message and to sign up for my e-mail alerts.

Sincerely,

Frank Burns
State Representative
72nd Legislative District

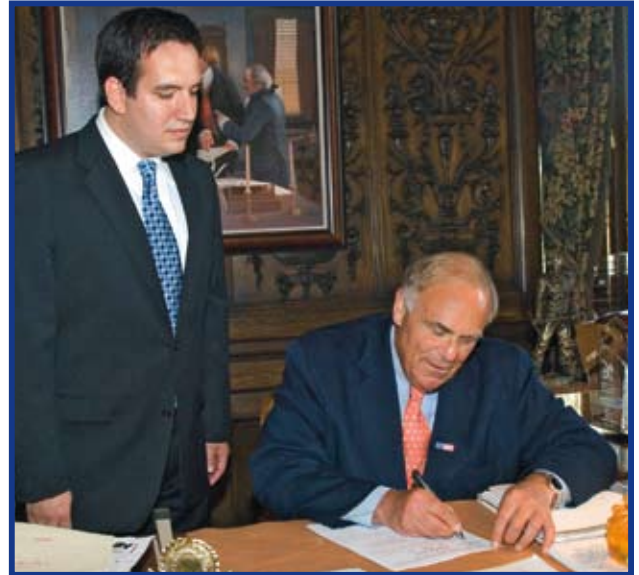


Rep. Burns was sworn in to his first term as state Representative to the 72nd Legislative District on Jan. 6, 2009.

Burns writes new law in first six months as legislator

Legislation (Act 24 of 2009) authored by Rep. Burns to strengthen registration requirements for landscape architects in Pennsylvania was signed into law by Gov. Ed Rendell in July.

The bill became law within Burns' first six months in office. That is a major accomplishment for any legislator, but especially for one in his first term.



Gov. Ed Rendell signs Rep. Burns' legislation, Act 24 of 2009, which strengthens landscape architect registration in Pennsylvania.

The law requires all landscape architects seeking registration in Pennsylvania to undergo examination regardless of their years of active experience, and expands requirements for the continuing education of licensees.

The new requirements protect consumers by ensuring that landscape architects who work in Pennsylvania are registering with the most up-to-date information. Consumers can visit www.licensepa.state.pa.us to verify whether a landscape architect working for you is licensed and in good standing.

Act 24 also eliminates the option for landscape architects with prior experience and/or education to register without examination and increases the number of required continuing education credits per biennial renewal period from 10 to 24.

Burns helps secure more than \$5.9 million in state funding for local projects

- \$500,000 in Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program funding for construction of the Jackson Township Business Park.
- \$390,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection for the Jackson Township Water Authority to extend municipal water to eligible homes located along Swigle Mountain Road.
- \$78,959 for Cambria County under the Pennsylvania DEP's Mosquito Surveillance Program to implement a mosquito monitoring and a virus surveillance program to determine if West Nile virus is present and to assist in alerting residents about the potential threat from West Nile virus.
- \$60,179 for Somerset County under the DEP's Mosquito Surveillance Program to determine and mitigate the presence of West Nile virus.
- \$600,000 grant to assist the Conemaugh Township Municipal Authority with water system improvements, including extending a water line to a community that is not currently served by the authority.
- \$985,680 grant for Jenner Township to construct two sewage pump stations and a well pump facility to assist with sewage force main and water system improvements.



Rep. Burns presents Jackson Township officials with funding for the Jackson Township Business Park. Pictured from left to right are Dave Bracken, Rep. Burns, Bruce Baker, Dave Hirko and John Wallet.

- \$36,886 grant for Shade-Central Joint Authority sewage system improvements project in Central City borough.
- \$1.7 million low-interest loan through the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority for Jackson Township Water Authority to fund a water system improvement project along Swigle Mountain Road.
- \$3,000 grant through the state DEP under the Environmental Education Grant Program for a day-long elementary field trip to a youth camp at Conemaugh Valley Conservancy, Inc.
- \$1 million low-interest loan under the Renewable Energy Program for Gamesa Technology Corp. to purchase and install wind turbine blade manufacturing equipment for the Fiberblade LLC facility located in Ebensburg.
- \$512,009 state contract with the DEP for Earth Shapers LLC of Ebensburg to replace an inefficient and ineffective chemical treatment system in Jenner Township, Somerset County.

Burns promotes 72nd Legislative District as film-friendly region

When most people think of Johnstown they think of floods, coal and steel. But if you're a lifelong resident of the area, you know that Johnstown has another claim to fame – the backdrop for arguably the greatest hockey movie ever made.

Slapshot, based on the real experiences of the North American Hockey League team the Johnstown Jets, was filmed in Johnstown in 1977. Just a few years after Slapshot's success, Hollywood came calling again when All the Right Moves, starring Tom Cruise as a high school football standout in a small town, was filmed in 1983.

Rep. Burns believes the greater Johnstown area still has a lot to offer to filmmakers. Through his position on the House Tourism and Recreational Development Committee, Burns has met with the Director of the Pennsylvania Film Office

and representatives from local visitors' bureaus to explore the creation of a regional film office in the area.

Film offices handle inquiries about the Pennsylvania Film Tax Credit, help filmmakers scout sites in the region, assist in obtaining permits for shoots and much more.

Burns has been networking to make contacts with people in the industry in an effort to recruit movies to be filmed in the area. In August, he met with a movie director looking for a site that includes coal towns and trains. He gave the director a guided tour of his legislative district, visiting sites in Windber and Central City, Somerset County and Nanty Glo and Ebensburg, Cambria County. The director is expected to send scouts to the area to find specific sites for filming.

Burns sponsors measures that benefit first responders and their families

Volunteer firefighter tax credit

Rep. Burns sponsored legislation that would allow local municipalities to institute a tax credit for volunteer firefighters and rescue personnel.

House Bill 250 would establish the Municipal Volunteer Incentive Act, which would allow local governments to adopt earned income tax credits for volunteers as a financial incentive for recruitment and retention. The legislation includes volunteer emergency medical services and rescue squad members as well as firefighters. Language was added to make sure the credit would apply on joint returns. A county property tax credit and/or a school property tax credit may also be applied up to 20 percent against the taxpayer's property tax liability.

Under the legislation, the State Fire Commissioner would be required to consider the following activities in developing the tax credit program:

- The number of emergency calls to which a volunteer firefighter responds;
- The level of training and participation in formal training and drills;
- The total amount of time expended on administrative and other support services, including fundraising and facility or equipment maintenance; and
- The involvement in other events or projects that aid the financial viability, emergency response or operational readiness of a volunteer fire company.

The chief of the volunteer fire company or a designee would be responsible for documenting the activities of volunteer firefighters in a service log and submitting the information to the State Fire Commissioner.

The bill unanimously passed the House in July and currently awaits consideration in the Senate.

Benefits for survivors of emergency first responders

Burns sponsored legislation that would provide for the families of first responders in the event of their death in the line of duty.

House Bill 1758 would amend the Emergency and Law Enforcement Personnel Death Benefits Act to provide for benefits to be paid to surviving spouses, minor children, or parents of deceased first responders and would increase the amount of the benefit from \$100,000 to \$250,000.

Overview of the 2009-10 Pennsylvania state budget

This year's budget process was history-making for more than one reason. Rep. Burns shares your concerns about the length of time it took for legislative leaders and the governor to come to an agreement on the state's spending and revenue plans.

However, Burns also wants to emphasize that he and other rank-and-file members banded together to stand up to the governor's planned increase in the Personal Income Tax and fought to kill the small games of chance tax, which would have hurt nonprofit clubs and volunteer fire companies.

When Pennsylvania residents are tightening their belts, so should their government.

In these challenging times for Pennsylvania, the legislature cut spending in this budget by more than \$2 billion, and started the work to identify where the government can cut costs and save taxpayer dollars in future budgets.

Burns does not consider this plan a perfect budget. However, a compromise needed to be reached in order to prevent local governments from shutting down and to fund the state's schools, senior programs and other vital services.

Burns and his colleagues were successful in providing a funding increase for education that will mean school districts won't have to shift the burden to you, the taxpayer, by raising property taxes. The basic education subsidy for 2009-10 is more than \$5.5 billion, which is an increase of almost \$300 million or 5.7 percent over last year's budget.

This budget also does not include WAMs, discretionary funds that weren't itemized in the budget and were controlled by legislative leaders. These grants that have been included in past state budgets funded projects in some legislators' districts.

Burns will continue to make sure the governor and leaders of both parties are aware of the priorities of residents who live in Somerset and Cambria counties.



Rep. Burns visits with fourth graders from Conemaugh Township Elementary School. He read to the children on March 2 for Read Across America Day.

Unemployment benefits extended for thousands of Pennsylvania workers

Legislation Rep. Frank Burns voted for in early August (Act. 30 of 2009) extends unemployment benefits to out-of-work Pennsylvanians for an additional seven weeks.

The law temporarily changes the mechanism Pennsylvania uses to trigger extended unemployment benefits, allowing the state to draw on \$145 million in federal stimulus money to offer seven weeks of additional emergency unemployment benefits. This is in addition to other federal extensions already approved or pending approval by Congress.

The state's toll-free phone number, where you can file a claim or have your unemployment compensation questions answered, is 1-888-313-7284.

Burns' resolution to observe Workers' Memorial Day adopted

Rep. Burns' resolution (H.R. 109) to designate April 28 as Workers' Memorial Day in Pennsylvania was unanimously adopted by the House.

Burns introduced the measure to recognize factory employees, coal miners and various other workers in his district and across the state.

Workers' Memorial Day has been acknowledged in workplaces and by public officials throughout the country since 1989.

April 28 is a significant day for workers because it is the anniversary of the creation of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in 1971. April 28 is also recognized by workers around the world as the international day of mourning for individuals killed while on the job.



Rep. Burns addresses the crowd at a rally on Workers' Memorial Day.