

# LEGISLATIVE REPORT

from State Representative

# Scott Conklin



**CAPITOL OFFICE:**

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## CALL FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

The most recent Pennsylvania Constitutional Convention was held Dec. 1, 1967 through Feb. 28, 1968.

And that convention was limited in scope. The last time the Commonwealth took a comprehensive look at its constitution, Ulysses Grant was in the White House, Queen Victoria reigned in Britain, and the Wright Brothers' first flight was still three decades in the future.

To say we need to look at how we do business as a government is an understatement. We are overdue.

A constitutional convention is the most important reform this

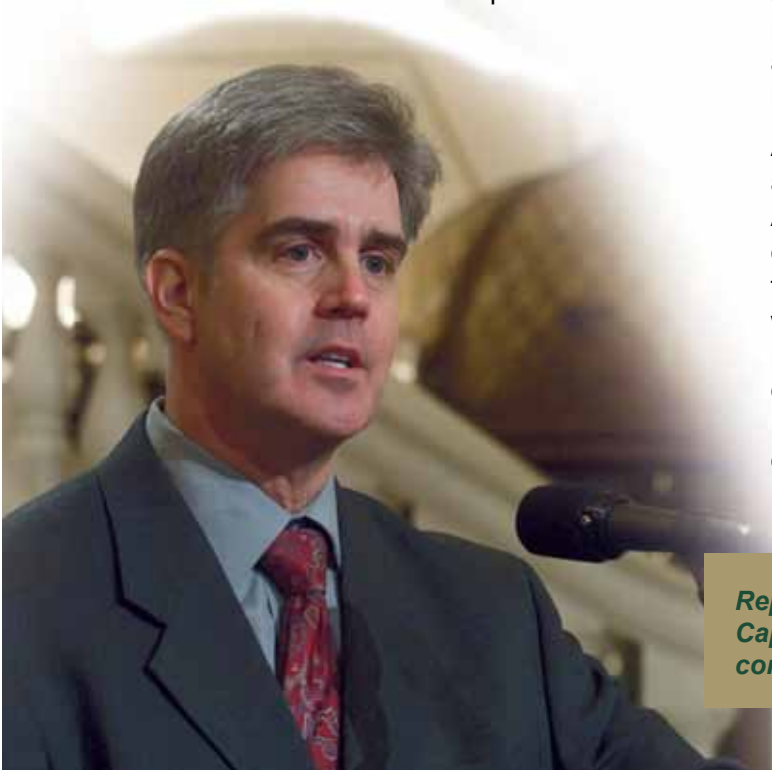
Commonwealth could undertake at this time. It would fulfill the self-governance prophecy upon which this country was built, 'government of the people, by the people, for the people.'

Fundamental changes to our government as a business should be reflected in revisions to our entire constitution. That is why I am sponsoring a bill calling for a constitutional convention to be held in Pennsylvania.

A referendum would be presented to voters on Nov. 8, 2011 and according to the bill, the convention would open on April 2, 2012 to elect officers and form committees. Elected delegates would be prohibited from serving in public office for two years after their term of service expired. They would receive a salary equal to legislative base pay and reimbursement for mileage and lodging. Lobbying of individual delegates by registered lobbyists would not be permitted and proposed constitutional changes would be presented to voters during the Nov. 6, 2012 general election.



Scan this code with your smartphone to watch me discussing the importance of state government reform with some of the bill's top supporters.



*Rep. Conklin at his news conference in the state Capitol urging support for his constitutional convention bill.*

## **1-855-CALL-4GAS: CONKLIN INTRODUCES BILL ON REPORTING OIL AND GAS VIOLATIONS**

I have introduced a bill calling for a statewide toll-free telephone number to be established regarding oil and natural gas violations.

The state Department of Environmental Protection currently provides phone numbers for emergency purposes or to generally report violations. I think it's time to narrow the focus, streamline the process and provide one, easily accessible telephone number.

My bill would create the toll-free number 1-855-CALL-4GAS for you to call if you suspect an oil or natural gas drilling violation has occurred. It would be administered through the DEP.

Especially when dealing with the Marcellus Shale natural gas extraction, this is such a new industry in the state with a lot of unknowns and even the slightest question of a violation should be addressed quickly and directly.

The ultimate goal here is to safeguard the public's health, and to protect the welfare of our environment.

## **CONKLIN TARGETS ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY AT SHOOTING RANGES**

Shooting ranges are undoubtedly popular places for many sportsmen. Keeping these areas environmentally sound benefits all of us and allows these facilities to remain a popular destination for Pennsylvania's sportsmen and other outdoor enthusiasts.



In 2006, the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources raised concerns that generations of lead left behind from trap shells fired on the properties of sport shooting and training ranges have polluted these sites. We cannot ignore those concerns and must dig deeper into this issue and enact a solution.

At the request of the Philipsburg Rod and Gun Club membership, I introduced House Bill 1428 to address lead management and lead remediation at firing ranges in Pennsylvania.

The intent of the bill is to aid the Pennsylvania Game Commission in cleaning up ammunition shells and targets that have accumulated in areas close to sport shooting and training ranges.

My bill would establish a task force made up of representatives from the Pennsylvania Game Commission and the state departments of Environmental Protection and Conservation and Natural Resources to study current lead remediation practices at firing ranges. The task force would be required to provide recommendations on a standard for lead remediation based on its findings.

The legislation also would establish the "Range Clean-up Trust Fund" to collect revenues gained from reclamation operations conducted by the Game Commission. These funds would be used as an operating budget for the task force.



*Rep. Conklin at Motorsports Day in Harrisburg, where this year's theme highlighted antique and modern-day tractors from locations throughout Pennsylvania. Motorsports Day at the Capitol officially acknowledges and celebrates a specific division of this important industry every year and the considerable impact it has throughout Pennsylvania.*



*Emily Zheng of State College, pictured left of Conklin, was honored at the state Capitol for being chosen as the 2011 Pennsylvania Outstanding Young Woman. Conklin presented her with a citation for the statewide achievement. Also pictured are Zheng's family and friends.*

## CONKLIN HOLDS PUBLIC FORUM ON HIGHER EDUCATION CUTS

In March, the governor unveiled his budget proposal for 2011-12. He proposed an overall state budget cut of about 3 percent, including a 50 percent reduction for higher education. This would have been devastating to say the least.

Education funding has a huge impact on each and every local community. It is of utmost importance to me to keep an open discussion going with you about your concerns.

Throughout the budget season, I held a public forum to hear what's at stake in Centre County when facing huge education cuts as proposed by Gov. Corbett.

Panelists joining Conklin included Richard DiEugenio, Ph.D., special assistant to Penn State President Graham Spanier; Jon Eich, chairman of the Centre County Board of Commissioners; Elizabeth Goreham, State College mayor; Jeffrey Ammerman, business administrator, State College Area School District; and Daniel Fisher, superintendent of schools, Bald Eagle Area School District.

It is important to get your questions answered now and to get all of the stakeholders on the same page about what could happen locally, especially with one of the country's largest universities in our backyard.

As a state-related institution Penn State will be greatly impacted by the 19 percent cut it received from the state. It is a major local employer and an overall economic engine for the state.

Cuts at the state level shift the burden of coming up with that money to the local level through higher taxes or decreased services. That is why I felt it necessary to bring everyone together under one roof to address all possible scenarios and concerns.



*Rep. Conklin throws a "Strike For Hunger" at a bowling event to raise money for food banks, and to raise awareness of Pennsylvania's 1.2 million hungry citizens.*

### CONKLIN ON LOCAL DONATION:

"Any way you can help, through the gift of time, food or financial support translates into help for more than 2,000 local residents each year, and I am humbled to be a part of that ongoing effort."

Conklin annually donates several turkeys to area food banks to help with their holiday drives.



State Representative  
**Scott Conklin**

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[www.pahouse.com/Conklin](http://www.pahouse.com/Conklin)

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## WORKING FOR YOU

The doors at my Philipsburg and State College service centers are open to you from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. My staff of professionals can help you with any state-related issues you may have including:

- PACE and PACENET prescription-drug cards for seniors;
- Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program;
- Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP);
- Tax program information;
- Other state-related program information.

#### Sign up to stay informed!

You can sign up for free email updates by visiting my website at [www.pahouse.com/Conklin](http://www.pahouse.com/Conklin) and clicking on the "Contact Me" button.

## MY OFFICE CAN HELP YOU WITH:

- Car registrations, special tags, handicap placards, titles and driver's license applications
- Information on financial assistance for higher education
- Voter registration and absentee ballot applications
- Unemployment compensation, disability and workers' compensation
- Requests for literature of all kinds – bills, regulations, statutes, Pennsylvania maps, senior citizen information
- Citations from the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for outstanding accomplishments and family milestones
- PACE prescription-drug cards for senior citizens
- Tours of the state Capitol for individuals or groups
- Information about federal, state and local government agencies