



State Representative • 154th Legislative District

Lawrence H. Curry

Democratic Chairman, House Aging and Older Adult Services Committee



AGING & OLDER ADULT SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT SUMMER 2011

CAPITOL OFFICE: 26 East Wing, P.O. Box 202154, Harrisburg, PA 17120-2154 • (717) 783-1079

CONSTITUENT SERVICE OFFICE: One Jenkintown Station, Suite 211, 115 West Ave., Jenkintown, PA 19046 • (215) 572-5210

EMAIL: lcurry@pahouse.net • **WEBSITE:** www.pahouse.com/Curry



Curry - standing up for seniors

As the Democratic chairman of the House Aging and Older Adult Services Committee, protecting your rights and services is my priority. I also served on Gov. Milton Shapp's Council on Aging when I was a county

commissioner. As a senior citizen myself, I understand your challenges and concerns, and I will be your voice on the House Aging and Older Adult Services Committee.

Curry calls for lottery check-up

Study needed to ensure lottery can keep supporting senior programs

As Democratic chairman of the House Aging and Older Adult Services Committee, I helped to move House Resolution 106 to the House floor, where it was unanimously adopted on June 14.

This resolution calls for a financial check-up of the Pennsylvania Lottery to make sure it can continue providing important services and programs to senior citizens.

The last time we examined the financial solvency of the lottery was in 1994.

Things have changed since then. The Pennsylvania Lottery now has competition from state gaming facilities and out-of-state lotteries while demand for services and programs is increasing.

Under H.R. 106, the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee will prepare a report that will include a sales forecast with long- and short-term projections of net-collections and an analysis of projected future program demand. The information will be used to determine if State Lottery Fund revenues are sufficient to sustain lottery-funded programs and services.

Since the first game went on sale in 1972, the Pennsylvania Lottery has contributed more than \$20.6 billion to a wide variety of programs, including:

- Property Tax/Rent Rebate
- Free transit and reduced fare shared-ride services
- Prescription drug help through PACE, PACENET and PACE Plus Medicare
- Long-term living services
- Pennsylvania's 52 Area Agencies on Aging

House Aging & Older Adult Services Committee action

Curry helps to advance important bills

H.B. 92 would include people acting under a power of attorney as among those who may be reported and investigated for suspected exploitation of an older adult or their resources.

H.B. 210 would permit reimbursements to non-relative caregivers and increase the reimbursement for a caregiver's expenses:

- \$600/month for out-of-pocket purchases of supplies and goods –

up from \$200/month

- \$6,000 one-time grant for home modifications or assistive devices – up from \$2,000

H.B. 511 would prohibit your health-care provider from imposing fees or other restrictions on your community pharmacy not imposed for mail-order prescriptions.

I am a co-sponsor of **H.B. 1019**, which would establish a uniform statewide system for hospitals

to report suspected cases of abuse, neglect, exploitation or abandonment, serious physical or bodily injury, or a suspicious death of a senior citizen.

I also intend to support **H.B. 893** when it is scheduled for committee action. This bill would require background checks for people taking care of our seniors in long-term and adult daily living facilities, assisted-living residences, or as personal care home workers.



Curry calls for immediate protection of seniors' access to PACE & PACENET

Act 21, signed by the governor in June, will allow PACE and PACENET enrollees to maintain their income eligibility despite any Social Security cost-of-living adjustment.

I amended this bill in committee to change the effective date from 60 days after it was signed to immediately.

A Pennsylvania law maintaining seniors' eligibility for the PACE and PACENET prescription assistance programs, even if a Social Security cost-of-living adjustment put them over the income limit, expired on Dec. 31. This law extends the Social Security COLA exemption until Dec. 31, 2013.

“Governor Tom Corbett has declared war on senior citizens with this 2011/12 state budget!”

New budget is bad news for seniors

Spending cuts Gov. Corbett and House and Senate Republicans made in the 2011-12 state budget unfairly target senior citizens.

Education cuts are likely to result in increased local property taxes, which is especially hard on senior citizens living on fixed incomes.

The budget cuts funding for the Health Services Development Fund, which provides counties with money for such programs as:

- Adult and aging services
- Community mental health/mental retardation programs
- Drug and alcohol programs

The budget also cut \$339,000 from the State Food Purchase Program that helps needy seniors, families and others put food on the table.

Visit my website at www.pahouse.com/Curry to read more about this bad news budget.

Need a helping hand?

Area Agencies on Aging offer a wide range of programs and services for senior citizens, including:

- Adult day care and home health care
- Counseling and legal assistance
- Assisted transportation
- Protective services
- Family caregiver support
- Senior centers and volunteer services

Montgomery County:

visit www.montcopa.org/mcaas or call 610-278-3601

Philadelphia:

visit www.pcaCares.org or call 215-765-9040

PACE & PACENET programs

PACE Eligibility:

- Age 65 or older
- Pennsylvania resident for at least 90 days prior to applying for PACE
- NOT enrolled in the Department of Public Welfare's Medicaid prescription benefit
- Income limits: \$14,500 or less for a single person; \$17,700 or less for a married couple

PACENET Eligibility:

- Age 65 or older
- A Pennsylvania resident for at least 90 days prior to applying for PACENET
- NOT enrolled in the Department of Public Welfare's Medicaid prescription benefit
- Income limits: \$14,500 to \$23,500 for a single person; \$17,700 to \$31,500 for a married couple

If you need information on these programs, please visit my website at www.pahouse.com/Curry.



Sensational Centennial; Rep.

Curry presents local resident Florence Web Wallis a House Citation commemorating her 100th birthday. Please contact Curry's office at 215-572-5210 if you would like him to help you or a loved one celebrate an important milestone.



Could that soup make you sick?

BPA is dangerous, and it's nearly everywhere

Bisphenol-A, or BPA, is an estrogen-like chemical that is used in many hard clear plastic products and in the linings of some food and beverage containers. It has been used for several decades, but recent research is raising concern that the chemical may be bad for our health.

You may have heard about BPA in baby bottles. But BPA can also be found in:

- Reusable plastic bottles and food containers;
- Drink and food cans;
- Dental sealants;
- Cash-register receipts.

When a container made with BPA is heated, the chemical leaches into the food. When you eat that food the chemical goes into your body, where it can cause a range of health problems, including:

- Breast and prostate cancer,
- Heart disease and diabetes,
- Obesity, and
- Autism, learning disorders and early puberty in children.

New research suggests that we have underestimated our dietary exposure to BPA.

- A University of Missouri study found that when a person consumes BPA through food, the active form of the chemical may remain in the body for longer than expected.
- A report in Environmental Health Perspectives stated that the average



Curry holds a hearing on the dangers of BPA in baby bottles.

person is exposed to at least eight times the daily amount of BPA that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency considers "safe."

- The Centers for Disease Control has shown that BPA is in the urine of 93 percent of Americans.

At its annual meeting in June, the American Medical Association adopted a resolution recognizing BPA as an endocrine-disrupting agent and urging that BPA-containing products be clearly identified. The new policy also supports ongoing industry actions to stop producing BPA-containing baby bottles and infant feeding cups and support a ban on the sale of such products.

Public outcry has led some manufacturers to remove BPA from baby products. Unfortunately, we don't know if the chemical they replace it with would cause the same health risks.

My H.B. 192 would ban BPA from infant and toddler bottles and cups manufactured or sold in Pennsylvania, and prohibit manufacturers from replacing it with any other chemical that could cause birth defects or health problems for children.

The chairman of the House Health Committee refuses to move the bill out of committee and to the full House for a vote.

I focused my bill on children because the federal Food and Drug Administration estimates that babies have 12.5 times more BPA exposure than adults. But everyone should avoid BPA-laced containers and products.

Please visit my website at www.pahouse.com/Curry for more information and updates on BPA.

To reduce the amount of BPA in your body:

- Use fresh foods instead of canned products whenever possible
- Avoid polycarbonates – plastics marked with recycling code #7 or the letters "PC"
- Look for plastics with recycling labels #1, #2, and #4 as they do not contain BPA
- Avoid putting any plastic containers in the microwave
- Wash all plastic containers on the top shelf of your dishwasher or by hand
- Look for stainless steel reusable water bottles that do not have a liner as some metal bottles lined with an epoxy-based enamel coating could leach BPA





State Rep. Lawrence H. Curry

26 East Wing
P.O. Box 202154
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2154

Aging and Older Adult Services Committee Report

lpo.ts.0711



Rep. Larry Curry, Democratic Chairman of the House Aging and Older Adult Services Committee; here to serve senior citizens.

MY OFFICE CAN HELP YOU WITH ANY STATE GOVERNMENT-RELATED QUESTION YOU MAY HAVE, INCLUDING:

- Property Tax/Rent Rebate
- PACE/PACENET
- PennDOT problems or questions
- Living will information
- Help for veterans

Phone: (215) 572-5210

Website: www.pahouse.com/Curry



Scan this QR Code with your smart phone to link to my website and find information that could help you.

Pennsylvania seniors – our greatest resource

You can keep active by volunteering your time, expertise and education:

- **RSVP** – Retired and Senior Volunteer Program matches people over the age of 55 who want to volunteer with programs that best suit their interests, experience and schedules. In Montgomery County, call 610-272-8997; in Philadelphia, call 215-685-3627.
- **Foster Grandparent Program** – Volunteers age 60 and over share their love and life experiences with handicapped and/or special needs children. Visit www.seniorcorps.org for more information.
- **Philadelphia Reads** – Volunteers are paired with pre-school and school-aged children from Philadelphia's most needy communities who need help improving their reading skills. For more information, call 215-851-1748.
- **League of Women Voters** – Helps to educate voters on candidates and issues. Call 215-829-9495 for more information.



Information on other volunteer opportunities is available through local senior centers.