



# STATE REPRESENTATIVE Ronald G. Waters

191ST LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

## REPORT TO THE PEOPLE

WINTER 2007

CONSTITUENT SERVICE OFFICE: 6027 Ludlow St., Unit A • Philadelphia, PA 19139 ..... (215) 748-6712  
CAPITOL OFFICE: G-11 Irvis Office Building • P.O. Box 202191 • Harrisburg, PA 17120-2191 ..... (717) 772-9850

WEB SITE: [www.pahouse.com/Waters](http://www.pahouse.com/Waters) E-MAIL: [rwaters@pahouse.net](mailto:rwaters@pahouse.net)

Dear friends,

I hope this newsletter finds you and your loved ones well. Before the legislature's break in session, I'd like to take this opportunity to update you on some key pieces of legislation I've been diligently working on – bills aimed at protecting our children, seniors and communities, and making health care for Pennsylvanians more affordable and accessible. Please take a moment to read through the list and peruse the pictures and articles from some recent events I've held in the 191st Legislative District. And remember, as your state representative, I am committed to moving Pennsylvania forward.

Sincerely,

*Ronald G. Waters*  
Representative Ronald G. Waters



## Waters health-care reform bill now law

Now Act 50 of 2007, legislation introduced by Rep. Waters improves health care in Pennsylvania by allowing nurse midwives to prescribe prenatal vitamins and other prescriptions that are vital for healthy pregnancies. The bill was signed into law by Governor Rendell on July 20.

Rep. Waters said midwives already have been trained to perform these duties but have not been able to carry them out under old Pennsylvania law. "This fixes an outdated law to allow midwives to practice to the full extent of their training and ability. It's a simple way for us to expand access to health care for millions of Pennsylvanians at no cost to taxpayers."

Before the bill was signed into law, Pennsylvania had been the only state in the nation where nurse midwives could not prescribe drugs. Nurse midwives deliver approximately 10 percent of the babies who are born in the state, a number that is much higher in rural areas.

"Maternity wards across the state are being forced to close, which makes it extremely difficult for pregnant women to receive health care," Waters

*Continued on page 4*



*Rep. Ron Waters, seated at left, joins fellow legislators and community members as Governor Ed Rendell signs H.B. 1255, now Act 50, into law during a ceremony at Philadelphia's University of Pennsylvania. Under the new law, which was sponsored by Rep. Waters, Pennsylvania joins the 49 other states that give nurse midwives prescriptive authority for patients in their care.*

## REP. WATERS' LEGISLATION

### **H.B. 606: Responsible Alcohol Management Program**

Would curb underage drinking and help keep alcohol out of the hands of those who are already intoxicated by requiring managers at restaurants, eating places, retail dispensers, hotel clubs and liquor distributor licensees to complete the Responsible Alcohol Management Program (RAMP) manager/owner training offered by the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board. This bill passed the House on June 26.

### **H.B. 608: Child Firearm Safety Lock Mechanisms**

Would make it illegal to sell or transfer any weapon without providing a locking device for it. Aims to promote safe use of firearms by authorized users and prevent use by unauthorized users and children.

### **H.B. 609: Taped Police Interrogations**

Would require the audio taping of custodial and noncustodial interrogations by a law enforcement officer of any person suspected of committing a felony with or without the consent of the person who is being interrogated.

### **H.B. 612: Written Jury Instructions**

Would require all instructions to a jury regarding applicable law and conduct of deliberations to be in plain and understandable language. Each juror would be provided with a written copy of the instructions for use during deliberations.

### **H.B. 1255 (Act 50): Nurse Midwives' Scope of Practice (became law – see separate article)**

### **H.R. 94: Violent Interactive Video Games**

A resolution directing the House Children and Youth Committee to investigate the effects of violent interactive video games on the children of this Commonwealth. (Unanimously adopted by the House)

### **H.R. 239: Rutgers Women's Basketball Team**

A resolution honoring the members of Rutgers University Scarlet Knights Women's Basketball Team, National Collegiate Athletic Association, Division I runners-up for their strength and dignity in the face of adversity and slander. (Unanimously adopted by the House)

### **H.R. 343: "N" Word Symbolic Moratorium**

A resolution discouraging the use of the "N" word. (Unanimously adopted by the House)

# Celebrating five years of community service

Rep. Waters held his fifth annual Celebration of Community Service Awards Banquet for constituents in the 191st District on Jan. 13 at the Renaissance Philadelphia Hotel Airport. The event celebrated and honored the investments and notable contributions of outstanding community members.

"Each year the banquet continues to grow and again, we had to move the banquet to a larger facility," Waters said. "It's an opportunity to recognize a variety of people from a variety of backgrounds and applaud them for their excellent work."

This year's 2007 Community Service Award honorees, in alphabetical order, were: Rev. Audrey Bronson, pastor at Sanctuary Church of the Open Door; Jeffrey Brown, owner of Brown's Family Shoprite supermarkets; community activist Elaine Carter; Glenda Christopher of Title Insurance Company; Dr. Vivian Ford, Yeadon Borough Council president; Carolyn Harris, president and founder of Young Entrepreneurs of the Future; Ricky Hill of Self, INC.; Voffee Jabateh, CEO of the African Cultural Alliance of North America; Steven Panky with the city of Philadelphia; and Philadelphia Parking Authority's Edward Thornton.

Also, Michael Rashid, executive vice president and chief operating officer of Keystone Mercy, was awarded the 2007 "Trailblazer Award."

The 2008 honorees for the upcoming sixth Annual Celebration of the Community Service Awards Banquet are: Bishop Keith Reed; Julia Chinn; Helen Divers; Steven King; Leslie Lewis; Paul Moore; Amedio Pantoni, Jr.; Nathaniel Robinson; Samuel Staten, Jr.; and Carol Williams-Green. The 2008 "Trailblazer Award" honoree is Samuel Staten, Sr.

**Attend the 2008 Community Awards Banquet!**

**Jan. 12, 2008 at the Renaissance Hotel**

**Reception at 5 p.m. and program at 6 p.m.**

**For more information please contact  
Rep. Waters' constituent service office.**

# Waters gives students a Fresh Start

At the urging of Leslie Lewis, a Yeadon mother whose son was struggling in school, Rep. Waters reached out to troubled teens with a relatively new program to keep them off the streets and help them do better in school. The program, which began in February 2007, is called Fresh Start and offers kids just that – a fresh start in life through tutoring, mentoring, counseling and advocacy.

Troubled teens 13 and older who are experiencing problems in their school or home life can come to the program after school to get help in the areas where they need it the most. Waters says it is doing so well, other communities like West Philadelphia, Lansdowne and Darby are interested in forming programs of their own.

"Students in Yeadon who were getting Fs and Ds are now getting As and Bs," Waters said. "They come after school, they are given something to eat, and they play games, do their homework and are supervised by people who are really taking an interest in their lives. I am glad neighboring communities and their students want similar programs that offer those same building blocks for life."

So far, 20 teens have voluntarily enrolled in Yeadon. The Fresh Start students are expected to show up daily, wear proper attire and commit to maintaining good grades. Waters said organizers work hard to instill an attitude of success in the students.

"They have to learn to believe in themselves, and believe that they will not only make it in this world but excel in it," he said.

Waters also said there is a lot more work that needs to be done, but thanks to one concerned and persistent mother, Fresh Start is already well on its way to improving the lives of many area students.

# New charter school a formula for success!

The Southwest Leadership Academy is a new school in the area that was recently established as an answer to the need for quality educational opportunities for children in southwest Philadelphia. The school's mission is to cultivate future community leaders and strong individuals capable of dealing with peer pressure and life's negative influences. The charter school, which opened in September, instructs grades K-3, with 220 students enrolled. Teachers and a principal committed to fulfilling the school's mission are dedicated to educating the students. As a founding member and board member of the Southwest Leadership Academy, Rep. Waters helped secure the new desks and chairs that fill the classrooms from a grant through the state Department of Community and Economic Development.



**Rep. Waters stands on the front steps of the brand-new Southwest Leadership Academy in Southwest Philadelphia with school administrators and two of the 220 enrolled students. The picture was taken the day of the academy's official dedication ceremony.**

**Rep. Waters makes a point as he talks about the rise in handgun violence plaguing the City of Brotherly Love at a hearing in April. The Health and Human Services Committee hosted the hearing at Temple University in Philadelphia.**



# Waters 'call-out' for public safety initiative a success

Rep. Waters' "Old School-New School Call-out," a groundbreaking event focusing on Philadelphia's crime and violence, was a tremendous success. Waters helped to coordinate the program, held Jan. 15 at the Community College of Philadelphia in conjunction with Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The program drew more than 2,200 people who answered a call from the inmates of Graterford State Correctional Facility about the devastating consequences of crime and violence.

The prison inmates, a group known as the Lifers United Community Action Network, communicated with the audience on two large screens via satellite – a first of its kind forum – and spoke to the people about "the Return of the Missing Men," their description

of reasons behind the continuous cycle of crime and violence so that those on the verge of trouble with the law could truly understand the consequence of crime and what life is like in the inmates' shoes.

"We need to end that cycle so that our children can enjoy life safely," Waters said. "We need responsible father figures for our kids, and this was a strong call-out to those men to take back their village and restore that safety and security for our future generations."

The public safety initiative drew people concerned about ending the culture of crime that is so prevalent throughout neighborhoods, along with parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles who came to support their children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews at an event so compelling as the call-out.



**Rep. Waters at the mic during the Old School-New School Call-out. Joining the representative for the anti-crime and violence forum were, behind Rep. Waters, Sam Staten, Jr. of Laborers' Union – Local #332 and fellow legislators Tony Payton, middle, and Dwight Evans, right.**

## Waters presents check for police bicycles

On Aug. 10, Rep. Waters delivered a check to the Philadelphia Police Department's 12th District, which was used to purchase four new patrol bicycles.

"Bike patrols can go where most vehicles can't," Waters said. "At a time when crime and violence in our city have risen to unprecedented levels, more officers on bikes will help guard our streets and give law enforcement a much-needed upper hand."

The check was in the amount of \$2,475, and came from the state Department of Community and Economic Development. The bikes were purchased from Bustleton Bikes on Roosevelt Avenue in Philadelphia. In attendance at the presentation with Waters were Police Commissioner Sylvester Johnson, 12th District Capt. Daniel MacDonald, and community relations officer Joseph Young.

"I'm so glad we were able to give our police officers an edge on fighting crime, and in fact, no time was wasted before using the bicycles once the presentation ended," Waters said. "One officer rode his new bike straight from the roll call room out on patrol."



**Rep. Waters and Philadelphia Police Commissioner Sylvester Johnson stand with officers of the Philadelphia Police Department's 12th District and their Commanding Officer, Captain Daniel MacDonald, left, after helping deliver four new patrol bicycles, which were funded by the state Department of Community and Economic Development.**

## Waters serves up Sixth Annual Senior Adults Turkey Dinner

Rep. Waters, along with Kingsessing CDC and 40th Ward leader Anne Brown, helped treat nearly 200 senior residents to a special afternoon of music, prizes and good food on November 17th for the sixth Annual Senior Adults Pre-Thanksgiving Dinner at Francis Myers Recreation Center.

"I look forward to this Pre-Thanksgiving Dinner hosted by Kingsessing CDC," Waters said. "I'm so happy to be here and see the wonderful job my staff and Kingsessing CDC did in putting this together." Waters would like to thank Pauline Lloyd, Maxine McCleary and other members of Kingsessing CDC for organizing the event and give special thanks to the band, the Grace Notes, sponsored by Bravo, and DJ Brian Evans for providing music, along with caterer Rick Hill of The Outley House who did outstanding work preparing an array of tasty, traditional Thanksgiving treats.

The afternoon dinner at Myers was just one of many occasions Waters helped feed people this Thanksgiving. In addition to yearly turkey giveaways, he joined Philadelphia Police Commissioner Sylvester Johnson on Thanksgiving Day to feed the homeless on behalf of WURD AM radio station at Sacaree Rhodes organization African Daughters of Fine Lineage.



**Rep. Waters entertains the crowd at the Kingsessing CDC's 6th Annual Senior Adults Turkey Dinner.**

# Crime prevention tips for a safe & happy holiday season

Courtesy of Rep. Waters and the Philadelphia Police Department

## HOME SAFETY:

- Be extra cautious about locking doors and window when you leave, even if you will only be gone for a minute.
- Do not put large displays of holiday gifts in view of your windows or doors.
- When going on trips or out for evenings, use automatic timers to turn indoor lights on and off or leave a light on to make it appear you are home.
- Immediately after the holidays, mark new gifts with a unique personal identifier and keep a journal of the items and their identifier.
- Don't advertise what you got for Christmas by putting the boxes out on trash day. Break down the boxes or take them to the dump yourself.

## SHOPPING SAFETY:

- Lock packages in the trunk.
- Don't overload yourself with packages.
- If you must shop in the evening, shop with a friend.
- Park in well-lit areas, as close as possible to store entrances. Be particularly aware of persons in the parking lot, especially near your car.
- Lock your car and make sure the windows are closed.
- Carry only the charge cards you will need. Don't carry or flash large sums of cash.
- Women should carry their purse with the flap against their body. Men should carry their wallets in their front or inside pockets.
- Be aware of your surroundings and the people around you. Don't allow your attention to become distracted from your

purse or packages.

- Teach children to go to a store clerk or security guard and ask for help if they become separated in a store or shopping mall.
- Don't hesitate to notify store security if you see suspicious activity.
- If you have to wait for a ride, wait in a busy, well-lit area.
- If you become the victim of a crime, report it to police immediately.

## ATM SAFETY:

- Be aware of your surroundings, especially between dusk and dawn. If you notice anything suspicious – a security light out, someone loitering nearby – consider using an ATM inside a supermarket, convenience store or police station.
- If using the ATM at night, take someone with you.
- Park in a well-lit area as close as possible to the ATM.
- At a drive-through ATM, be sure the doors are locked and the passenger windows are rolled up.
- If you withdraw cash, put it away promptly; count it later, in private.
- Put your ATM card and receipt away promptly; never leave your receipt at the ATM.
- Keep your PIN secret – don't write it down, and don't share it with anyone you don't trust absolutely. Your PIN provides access to your account.
- Shield the keypad when entering your PIN to keep it from being observed.
- Avoid being too regular in your ATM use – don't repeatedly visit the same machine at the same time, the same day of the week.

## Property Tax/Rent Rebate application deadline is Dec. 31!

The deadline to apply for a rebate of up to \$650 on property taxes or rent paid in 2006 under the state's Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program is Dec. 31, 2007.

Pennsylvania's Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program benefits people who are 65 or older, widows and widowers 50 or older and people 18 or older with a permanent disability.

The household eligibility income limit for homeowners has been increased to \$35,000. The eligibility limit for renters is \$15,000.

The maximum rebate for homeowners and renters has been raised to \$650. Applicants can exclude half of their Social Security of federal railroad retirement benefits when determining their

income eligibility.

Residents who wish to apply for the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program for the first time may visit Waters' office at 6027A Ludlow St., Philadelphia. Residents may contact Waters' office with any questions at 215-748-6712.

## CONSTITUENT SERVICE OFFICE

Rep. Waters' office is available to help you with a variety of state government services such as PennDOT registrations, disability vehicle tags, birth certificates, the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program, the Children's Health Insurance Program and PACE/PACENET prescription drug cards, just to name a few.

6027A Ludlow St. • Philadelphia, PA 19139

Phone: 215-748-6712

You can also visit Rep. Waters' Web site: [www.pahouse.com/Waters](http://www.pahouse.com/Waters)



## Health-care reform bill

*Continued from page 1*

said, adding that having the alternative of a nurse midwife can solve that access problem. "However, if she has to go to a different doctor to get her prenatal medications, it nullifies the convenience of having a midwife in the first place."

Waters' legislation is part of a package of bills that make up Governor Rendell's Prescription for Pennsylvania – a plan to improve access to health care for all Pennsylvanians and make the health-care system more efficient and cost effective. Restrictions on dental hygienists, nurse practitioners and physician assistants have been lifted to expand their scopes of practice as well.