



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
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 58TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

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REPORT TO THE PEOPLE

MESSAGE FROM REP. HARHAI

Dear Friends,

It has been – and continues to be – an honor for me to serve as the state representative for the 58th Legislative District. The boundaries of the 58th District are changing – as they do in all districts every 10 years following the U.S. Census – but that doesn't alter the challenges we face or issues I hold dear as your public servant.

This newsletter is designed to provide you with an update on some legislative initiatives that have had, or will have, significant impact on the 58th District. As someone who grew up in Monessen, and who later served the city as a councilman and mayor, I take great pride in staying connected to the people I serve. It helps me learn about, understand and work to solve problems and issues that are foremost on your minds.

Rest assured that I will continue fighting for additional and appropriate state funding for education, so that many of you – particularly our seniors on fixed incomes – will not have to bear the burden of ever-increasing property taxes. I also recognize the key role that state government can play in the public-private partnership that stokes economic development, and I will continue my efforts to obtain funding for such projects.

As I continue doing the work I was elected to perform, I want to hear from you, so please feel free to contact my offices at (724) 684-2939 or (724) 446-4288, or visit my website at www.pahouse.com/Harhai.

Yours in public service,


 Ted



HARHAI ANNOUNCES \$2.2 MILLION STATE GRANT FOR WESTMORELAND COUNTY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORP.

I recently announced a \$2.2 million state grant to extend public sewage service to a site that will enable a planned 150-acre industrial and business park in Westmoreland County to move forward.

The grant to Westmoreland County will help the Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corp. engineer and construct 14,400 linear feet of 10-inch line and two sewage pump stations in Sewickley Township. The project will enable public sewage service to be extended to the proposed

Westinghouse Waltz Mill Rail Park, which will be situated in both Sewickley and Hempfield townships.

This important state grant, supplied by the Commonwealth Financing Authority through its Water Supply and Wastewater Infrastructure Program known as PennWorks, represents a prudent return of tax dollars to benefit economic development and create jobs.

When completed, this business park will help create as many as 1,500 jobs by making the park acreage more

marketable.

The sewer extension also will help retain 800 existing jobs at the adjacent Westinghouse Waltz Mill Research and Testing facility, and perhaps 200 existing jobs at nearby Menasha Paper Company.

Public sewage service is critical to land development, so this project will sustain and create jobs, and ultimately enable Westmoreland County to continue to prosper.



Rep. Ted Harhai commemorates the 100th anniversary of St. Michael Antiochian Orthodox Church in Monessen by presenting a citation to George Essey, Arch Priest Fred Pfeil and retired Rev. Bishop Thomas Joseph, who is seated.

HARHAI BILL TO LET GRANDCHILDREN QUALIFY FOR FUNERAL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT PASSES HOUSE

The House in November unanimously approved H.B. 1662, my legislation that paves the way for grandchildren to become eligible for funeral expense reimbursement. My bill merely adds “grandchild” to the list of relatives – currently parents, children, siblings or a spouse – who can be reimbursed for funeral expenses from a deceased person’s bank account.

I took up this cause after discovering the case of an elderly woman who passed away but had no remaining relatives except grandchildren, who paid for her funeral but were ineligible to receive any payments from her meager bank account.

H.B. 1662 would permit the grandchild of a decedent to be reimbursed up to \$10,000 from a deceased grandparent’s bank account, the same threshold currently in effect for parents, children, siblings or a spouse.

The legislation is currently before the state Senate for consideration.



HARHAI: LET LOTTERY WINNERS DECIDE WHETHER TO GO PUBLIC

I introduced a bill in December that would permit lottery winners in Pennsylvania to remain anonymous.

Under H.B. 1893, any person awarded a lottery prize – including prizes for multistate lottery games such as Powerball and Mega Millions – could decide whether or not to release his or her name and other personal information, but the city and county of the winner would not be considered confidential information.

I think providing this option is necessary, because it lets lottery winners protect themselves from those who come out of the woodwork with the intent of preying upon them. With multistate jackpots that reach hundreds of millions of dollars, this threat is very real.

News reports have documented the perils that have befallen big lottery winners, from alleged poisonings and murder to theft, burglary and swindles.

If my bill is enacted into law, Pennsylvania would join Delaware, Maryland, Ohio, South Carolina, Kansas and North Dakota in allowing lottery winners to remain anonymous.



Rep. Ted Harhai presents a citation to John Kerlicker Jr. for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout. Kerlicker is the son of John Kerlicker and Susan Kimberly, and is a member of Troop 1560 in Rostraver. John cleaned, repaired and painted the bleachers at the West Newton Crosby Ball Field to earn his Eagle Scout promotion. Rep. Harhai takes great pleasure in recognizing outstanding youth for accomplishments such as this.

HARHAI TO PROPOSE PAWN SHOP LICENSING OVERHAUL, HELPING STOLEN GOODS VICTIMS

In order to make it easier for victims to retrieve stolen property from pawn shops, I plan to introduce legislation to amend and tighten up the state's Pawnbrokers License Act.

We need to make the law more transparent and better educate victims of their rights to retrieve stolen property, while at the same time make it more difficult for those who traffic in illicitly obtained goods.

My proposal would:

- Require pawn shops to register with the Pennsylvania Department of Banking and Securities and pay \$300 per license, give written notice at least 30 days before moving to a new location, and prohibit anyone convicted of a felony within the past 10 years from applying to be a pawnbroker.
- Mandate that pawn shops comply with Pennsylvania regulations requiring records to be kept about every sale – including a transaction form that includes detailed information about the item, identifying information about the person pawning the item, and pawn finance terms.
- Make the pawnbroker keep all items for 30 days before selling, during which time records for all pledged and purchased goods would need to be made available for inspection by appropriate law enforcement during normal business hours.
- Add a section to the law providing for recovery of stolen property found in pawn shops, by giving the pawnbroker up to 10 days from notice to resolve the issue, then providing for the claimant to ask a court to order return of the property.



HARHAI ANNOUNCES \$300,000 GRANT FOR NATURAL GAS VEHICLES

In May, I was pleased to announce a \$300,000 state grant to a firm for the purchase of 12 natural gas-powered vehicles that will be fueled in Smithton.

Smith Transport Inc., headquartered in Blair County, plans to use the grant to buy the 2014 model Peterbilt trucks for work in its Well Service Division, using the publicly accessible PA Clean Energy station in Smithton.

The state funds used for this grant were derived from the state's impact fee on natural gas development, to aid

companies in making the switch from other forms of fuel to natural gas, which Pennsylvania is producing in great abundance. This move is not just symbolic; it portends a future where natural gas ends up powering more of our motor vehicles of all types.

Smith Transport was one of only 18 firms in Pennsylvania to benefit from the first round of funding through this Natural Gas Energy Development program, which awarded \$5 million.



Rep. Ted Harhai takes a moment to pose with the West Newton Community Festival Pageant Court on the "Gingerbread" float during the Sewickley Township Christmas Parade.



TED HARHAI

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HARHAI ATTENDS 17TH CONSECUTIVE VETERANS DAY CEREMONY

On Nov. 10, I proudly attended the Veterans Day remembrance at Monessen High School auditorium, marking the 17th straight year I have participated in the event.

Guest speaker Maj. Charles Kearns, who commands the Civil Engineering Squadron of the 171st Air Refueling Wing stationed at Pittsburgh International Airport, reminded us of the sacrifice and dedication that makes our veterans special and worthy of our thanks.

We owe our veterans a debt of gratitude that can never be fully repaid. I am always touched when the names of the 126 Monessen residents who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country are read by a member of American Legion Post #28.



You can see my comments in print at: bit.ly/1j7Mk13

HARHAI LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

In the past year, I have led the fight on these issues:

■ Family Center Funding

I introduced H.B. 1437, which sought to double state funding for family centers like the one in Monessen. Unfortunately, the final vote failed along party lines, 108-90. I will remain vigilant and proactive on this important issue.

■ Motor Vehicle Spyware

I reintroduced the Motor Vehicle Event Data Recorder Act, which would require manufacturers to disclose in the owner's manual the presence of devices that secretly collect information on such things as vehicle speed, seat belt use and brake application. My bill would make it a summary offense for unauthorized people to download or retrieve such data, and spells out the conditions under which doing so is legal.

■ Temporary Aid for School Districts When Losing a Major Employer

Seeking to ease sudden financial pain incurred by school districts when a large employer relocates, as happened to the Southmoreland School District when the Sony Corp. left its plant near New Stanton, I continued the fight for a bill that would provide two years of additional state financial aid when that occurs. My legislation would provide temporary aid through the state Department of Education whenever a school district experiences at least a 25 percent loss in payment in lieu of taxes caused by business relocations.

■ Halting Privatization of the Pennsylvania Lottery

I was an early and strong critic of the governor's attempt to put management of our state lottery in the hands of a firm from Great Britain. I believed the move would jeopardize a reliable funding stream for programs that benefit older Pennsylvanians – and I was glad to see this misguided effort finally abandoned.