



State Representative

BILL KORTZ SOUTH HILLS UPDATE

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Summer 2014

CORBETT BUDGET HITS FEW HIGH NOTES, MANY LOW NOTES



The governor's 2014-15 budget failed to gain any Democratic support because it continues to ignore the realities of life in Pennsylvania.

- Education funding, which was reduced in Gov. Corbett's first budget by nearly \$1 billion, has not been restored. Accumulated loss continues to negatively impact schools.
- Our schools are increasing property taxes the maximum amount allowed by law and still need to cut programs, staff and even teachers just to survive.
- More than 400 of the 500 public school systems in Pennsylvania have had to raise property taxes during the past three years.
- Failure of the state to pay its share to the school and public employee retirement funds has forced schools to use money that should be spent on teaching our children to try to make up for years of unpaid retirement funds instead.
- 20,000 teachers and staff have been laid off statewide; many right here in the Mon Valley.
- Fewer teachers mean larger class sizes and fewer opportunities for students.
- Valuable programs such as art, music and foreign languages have been cut in some schools.
- Schools are also considering eliminating or reducing kindergarten programs and even physical education.

Article III Section 14 of the Pennsylvania Constitution states:

The General Assembly shall provide for the maintenance and support of a thorough and efficient system of public education to serve the needs of the Commonwealth.

This budget, like the governor's previous budgets, fails this basic constitutional test.

Higher education also continues to suffer under this governor.

- Pennsylvania ranks 47th in per-capita spending on higher education.
- State-related schools such as Pitt, Penn State, Temple and Lincoln incurred a 19% cut three years ago.
- State-related schools like Pitt and State System of Higher Education schools received no additional funding, forcing tuition increases of about 3%.
- Pitt and Penn State both cost more than \$16,000 per year and are already the two most-expensive public universities in the country. Temple is the sixth most-expensive.
- The national average annual tuition for an in-state resident at a public university is about \$7,400.
- Funding for State System schools such as IUP, Slippery Rock, Clarion and Edinboro were cut by 18% three years ago. This funding shortage has been locked in with no increases since Gov. Corbett's cuts were enacted, forcing them to reduce programs and staff, including professors.

School funding lost under Gov. Corbett's education policies (pre-stimulus)

SCHOOL	2008-09 FUNDING	CUMULATIVE LOSS	LOSS PER STUDENT
Baldwin-Whitehall	\$37.4 million	\$562,509	\$133
South Park	\$25.3 million	\$459,672	\$221
West Jefferson Hills	\$21.9 million	\$459,044	\$160
South Allegheny	\$39 million	\$1.34 million	\$812
West Mifflin	\$28.2 million	\$1.5 million	\$532
McKeesport	\$101.7 million	\$7.2 million	\$1,817

GOOD LUCK TO LUKE SMOREY AND ALL RECENT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

In June, I was honored to be invited to local student-athlete Luke Smorey's graduation party in South Park. Luke graduated from Baldwin High School with outstanding grades and he left a lasting mark, both on the football field and in the javelin throw.

A member of the National Honor Society with a 3.85 GPA, Smorey led the WPIAL in receiving during the 2013 season and was the WPIAL javelin champion his last two seasons at Baldwin, as well as the PIAA runner-up this past season.

Yet, his athletic and academic prowess pale in comparison to his personal story.

Smorey contracted a bacterial infection in his right (non-throwing) elbow in 2012. The illness damaged his elbow enough that he was recognized as one of the 100 finalists in the Air National Guard/*USA Today* High School Sports Inspiration Contest. In the second round of online voting, he encouraged voters to support his opponent, Dominique Cooks, a Washington State student-athlete who had been suffering from an inoperable brain tumor. Cooks died on April 15, the day the voting ended, but thanks in part to Smorey's push for him, Cooks finished third in the final vote.

Smorey's selflessness deserved to be recognized and at his graduation party, I presented him with a citation recognizing his achievements.

He will continue his academic and athletic careers at California University of PA.



Luke Smorey holds his citation, presented by Rep. Kortz at Luke's graduation party in South Park. Smorey's family joined in this photo. Luke's grandmother is former Baldwin Borough Council President Marian Joseph.

UPMC/HIGHMARK AGREEMENT STILL SHORTCHANGES PUBLIC NEEDS

The good news is that UPMC and Highmark have decided not to burn their bridges with each other and their affected patients. The bad news is they have not announced a definitive long-term agreement to guarantee that all those with quality medical insurance will not be forced to change either their doctor or their insurance carrier.

The highlights of the recent agreement include:

Highmark cardholders will continue to have in-network access to the following UPMC facilities:

- Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh
- Hillman Cancer Center
- UPMC Mercy
- Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic
- UPMC Hamot and Kane Hospital
- UPMC Horizon
- UPMC Northwest
- UPMC Bedford
- UPMC Altoona

With certain exceptions, effective Jan. 1, 2015, the following UPMC hospitals will be out-of-network for Highmark cardholders:

- Magee-Women's Hospital
- UPMC Presbyterian-Shadyside
- UPMC Passavant
- UPMC St. Margaret
- UPMC McKeesport
- UPMC East

Some provisions of the agreement include:

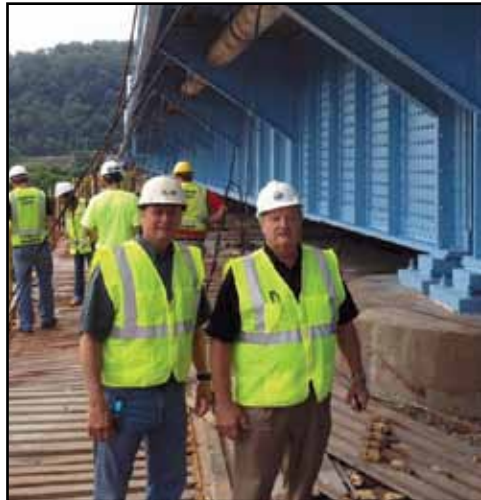
- Allowing continuity of care for those currently receiving treatment for any illness at any UPMC facility for as long as the patient and doctor deem necessary
- Vulnerable populations including those on Medicare, Medicaid, CHIP, Medigap, and Signature 65 will have continued in-network access
- Patients undergoing oncology treatment will maintain in-network access, including the treatment of illnesses resulting from cancer
- In-network access for emergency room visits

While these are generally positive steps, the fact that some people with good insurance plans will be excluded from a number of quality medical centers **MUST** be addressed. My Western Pennsylvania colleagues and I will continue to look for a permanent, fair agreement to ensure all who have insurance maintain access to their current physicians.

ROAD AND BRIDGE UPDATES

W.D. Mansfield Bridge – Dravosburg

- \$35 million project is nearing completion; final phase under way
- All ramps leading on and off bridge complete
- Underpass to Glassport complete
- Two-lane traffic limit remains, so continue to use caution
- Expected to fully open to traffic October 2014
- Railing installations expected to be completed December 2014



Rep. Kortz and County Councilman Bob Macey review the under-deck construction on the Mansfield Bridge.

Homeville (Thompson Run) Bridge – West Mifflin

- County bridge project scheduled to close summer 2015 through end of 2016
- Cost estimate \$12 million

Route 51/88 intersection

- A recent traffic switch was just completed, allowing for phased construction of culvert and bridge replacements on Rt. 51
- Major utility relocations continue; next phase changes to be announced at a later date
- Final cost: \$19 million

Skyline Drive, West Mifflin

- Shoring up and repaving section of Skyline Drive at crest of hill; associated guiderails to be repaired
- Engineering study to be initiated soon

Prospect Bridge – Baldwin

- Newly completed pavement markings at the intersection of Streets Run and Prospect Road



S.R. 885 Bridge over Union Railroad in West Mifflin

- Replacement of concrete arch bridge over Union Railroad with a single-span bridge
- Cost estimate \$4.6 million
- Expected completion date: April 2015

PennDOT Road Tour 38th District

- Dan Cessna, PennDOT District 11 Director, and Dean Schmitt, PennDOT Bridgeville Manager, join Rep. Kortz on a tour of Rt. 51 in July.



38TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT CHANGES TAKE EFFECT DEC. 1



The new 38th District will be comprised of all or part of the following communities:

Whitehall, Baldwin, Pleasant Hills, South Park, West Mifflin, Dravosburg, Glassport, Port Vue and Liberty.

McKeesport and two districts in West Mifflin will be leaving as of Dec. 1.

I wish to thank all the officials and constituents from the areas leaving for your kindness and support and for allowing me to serve you since January 2007.

REP. KORTZ'S CURRENT LEGISLATION

Below is a list highlighting some of the important bills and resolutions Rep. Kortz authored or co-sponsored this session. For a complete list of bills Rep. Kortz has authored and co-sponsored, please visit <http://www.legis.state.pa.us>.

- **H.B. 2332** – Would require home inspectors to be licensed in Pennsylvania. Currently, home inspectors do not need a license and are generally not held liable for errors in their reports. This bill is currently being considered by the House Professional Licensure Committee.
- **H.R. 150** – Adopted unanimously April 16, 2013 – Urged the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to protect police by building in a time delay before dissemination of information about arrest warrants. The Supreme Court has announced it will follow this protocol.
- **H.B. 1272** – Would permit municipal police departments to use radar for speed enforcement. Pennsylvania is the only state that prohibits local police departments from using radar. Whitehall Borough Mayor Jim Nowalk and Police Chief Donald Dolfi both endorse this proposal. This bill is currently under consideration in the House Transportation Committee.

Mark your calendars:

2nd annual Shred-It event

Saturday, Sept. 20, 10 a.m. to noon – West Mifflin #3 VFC, 3722 Rodeo Drive, West Mifflin PA 15122

8th annual Senior Fair

Thursday, Oct. 9, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. – Homeville VFC #1, 3900 Greensprings Ave., West Mifflin PA 15122

VETERANS CORNER

New veterans designation available on driver's licenses



I wanted to let you know that veterans can now have their veteran status recognized on their driver's license.

Anyone who served in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces or National Guard and was released or discharged

with anything other than a dishonorable discharge is eligible to receive the veteran designation added to their photo license for no charge. You will need to provide proof of discharge such as a DD214 or similar documentation.

Once the designation has been added to your license, it will remain on your license through future renewals.

There are many instances when proof of veteran status may be valuable. This will allow you to provide the necessary proof without carrying valuable documents with you at all times.

To learn more, go to PennDOT's website, www.dmv.state.pa.us and click on the flag image at the bottom of the page, or stop by my office for more information.

AROUND THE 38TH DISTRICT

Rep. Kortz poses beside his soap box racer along with his driver Evan Airhart, during the annual Father's Day Soap Box Derby regional qualifier in McKeesport.



Rep. Kortz, left, participated in Pleasant Hills' 21st National Night Out celebration in July. Joining him, from left, are: Fire Chief Todd Pritchard, Council President Dan Soltesz, Mayor Rob Bootay, Sen. Matt Smith and Councilman Joe Esper.



Rep. Kortz is joined by Mayor James Nowalk and Councilman Phil Labr at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the newly remodeled Eat'n Park in Whitehall in February.



Rep. Kortz was chosen by Rep. Harry Readshaw to be Ride Marshall for his annual motorcycle ride from Harrisburg to Gettysburg to support Pennsylvania battlefield memorials. This year's ride will take place on Sat., Sept. 27. Contact Kortz' office if you would like to join in the ride.



Girl Government Day was held in Harrisburg on June 17. Legislators and women participating in the day pose for a photo on the Capitol Rotunda steps. Julia Sakalik, a student at City Charter High School, shadowed Rep. Kortz for the day.



Rep. Kortz participated in the Baldwin Community Day on Aug. 2. Community officials participating included: (seated from left) Rep. Kortz, Rep. Harry Readshaw, Sen. James Brewster and Baldwin Police Chief Mike Scott. (standing from left) Baldwin Mayor Dave Depretis, Council President Mike Stelmaczyk and Councilman Kevin Fischer.



Rep. Harry Readshaw and Rep. Kortz's son Jason join Rep. Kortz at the 2014 Brentwood 4th of July Parade.



Rep. Kortz speaks at the Whitehall Memorial Day celebration.

In June, the House unanimously adopted H.R. 655, which honors the life and service of Rocco, a Pittsburgh Police Canine Officer killed in the line of duty. From left are: Rep. Paul Costa; Rep. Kortz; Pittsburgh Deputy Police Chief Paul Donaldson, Rocco's handler and partner; Pittsburgh Police Officer Phil Lerza; and Reps. Tony DeLuca, Dom Costa and Ed Gainey.



Rep. Kortz honored Dave and Joan Buchewicz for their 54th wedding anniversary and their July birthdays.

State Representative
BILL KORTZ

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**UPCOMING EVENTS
IN THE 38TH DISTRICT**

- Sept. 20 Shred-It event
- Oct. 9 Senior fair

More information inside!

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UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS HAPPENING IN THE 38TH

Whitehall: Fall Festival Carnival at Castle Village, Sept. 25 – 27, 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.
Rides, games, prizes, food.

Pleasant Hills: 2014 Electronic Recycling event, Oct. 6 – 10, 7 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Pleasant Hills Municipal Building, rear basement garage. Items being recycled - anything computer- or electronic-related, except for televisions. For questions call 412-655-3300.

South Park: South Park Township September 11th Ceremony (rain or shine), 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 11 at Sunny Slope in the Allegheny County Park. The tribute recognizes first responders: police, fire and EMS personnel, as well as active and veteran military personnel. The Windover Hills United Methodist Church across the street will be available for refreshments and will host the event in case of rain.

West Mifflin: West Mifflin Community Day, noon Sept. 13 at Century III Mall. This year's community day will feature Froggy Radio's Country Tour, including local country artists and Raelynn, Nashville recording artist and contestant on "The Voice". For more information, please contact Recreation Director Tony DiCenzo at 412-466-8170.

Dravosburg: Dravosburg VFD #1 annual gun bash, noon Sept. 20 at the Dravosburg ballfields on Rt. 837. Please call 412-466-2405 for more information.

Glassport: 2nd community car cruise and craft show, Sept. 6, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Monongahela Avenue from 5th Street to 8th Street. Live entertainment, arts, crafts, games and food for all. Vehicle traffic will be blocked, but merchants and restaurants will be open for business.

Port Vue: Children's Halloween Party, Oct. 25 at the Port Vue Borough Building, 1191 Romine Ave. Please call the borough at 412-664-9323 for more information.

Liberty: Liberty Borough VFD Craft Show & Fall Festival Oct. 11. The craft show will be held 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and the festival, 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. For more information, call 412-672-1820.

STAY IN THE KNOW

Please visit my website, www.pahouse.com/Kortz, to sign up for email alerts on important information, including legislation being considered in Harrisburg. On my website, click on the Email Alerts tab in the left-hand column and fill in your information.

You can also keep up-to-date with me through my Facebook page at www.facebook.com/RepKortz and follow me on Twitter at [@RepBillKortz](https://twitter.com/RepBillKortz).

