



State Senator **JIM BREWSTER**

Serving the 45th Senatorial District

Reports JUNE 2014

◆ Senator Brewster Saves the 45th District; Supreme Court Rules in His Favor

Dear Friend,

The challenge to save the 45th Senatorial District was historical. In past redistricting, which occurs every 10 years, many districts were moved or reconfigured by the majority party at the time the redistricting was due. Appeals to the Supreme Court were always met with denial and the real losers were the taxpayers who live in the communities affected. When I was faced with the decision to appeal the redistricting map of 2012, I recognized that the representation in Harrisburg would be reduced for those who live in the 45th district. This would result in reduced representation for republicans, democrats, independents, senior citizens, businesses and so on. The original map moved my seat to the Pocono Mountain area. As a retired banker and not a career politician, the decision for me was easy. While other elected officials spoke of the last 30 years where appeals have failed, I relied on a cross section of people to testify and other community activists who had a stake in preserving the 45th district in its current format. While some may say I was simply protecting my job, I turned down very lucrative offers in the private sector to continue my work in the 45th district. I'm proud of the fact that we won the appeal and the 45th Senatorial District remains basically the same with a few additional communities which moves our total population in the district to approximately 260,000 people. Having won an historical appeal, it is now time to get down to business and deal with job creation, tax reform and business development.

Throughout this newsletter you will find a brief description of my legislative priorities regarding education, veterans, job creation and economic development. You will see that my staff and I are working throughout the district to hear your thoughts and concerns while bringing our services to the communities that I represent.

Never hesitate to contact me with questions or concerns. You may stop into one of my offices for help, or visit my online office at www.senatorbrewster.com. We have a wide variety of brochures and pamphlets on Pennsylvania government programs and services. We can also assist in getting answers from any of the state agencies if you are encountering problems.

The people in this district continue to be my top priority. I would like to thank you for your encouragement and support, and I look forward to working to make our region an even better place to work, do business and raise families.



Senator Brewster warms up before going to bat at the first-ever Capitol All-Stars Softball Game to Help Strike Out Hunger.



Senator Brewster receives Auberle's 2014 Community Partner Award from Auberle's CEO John Lydon and Board Chair Vince Locher.



Photo courtesy of The Daily News

Senator Brewster thanks the first responders for their service within the 45th Senatorial District at his annual First Responders Picnic.

SAVE THE DATE

State Senator Jim Brewster's

First RESPONDERS *Picnic*

Sunday, July 13, 2014

Blue Top Pavilion at Renziehausen Park • McKeesport, PA 15132 • 1 p.m.-5 p.m.

Invitation to First Responders to follow



◆ Senator Brewster's Education Reform Package

■ SB 1203 Prepare All Kids

This program would ensure that eligible children have increased access to high-quality early education. The bill would create a partnership vehicle to accept federal funds from a proposal now being pursued on the federal level by Sen. Bob Casey to expand pre-Kindergarten opportunities for children. The program development on the state level is contingent on passage of the federal law.

The Prepare All Kids program would use federal dollars to provide grants to enhance voluntary, high-quality full day pre-kindergarten programs.

■ SB 302 Cost Analysis of Pennsylvania's Public School Assessment System

This legislation will direct the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a comprehensive cost analysis of school assessments to determine if the current system for student assessment is efficient for all costs incurred.

■ SB 823 Student Performance Advisory Commission

This legislation would create an 11-member Commission that will review all school assessment tests for their strengths and weaknesses. The Commission will make findings and recommendations to improve the measure of performance in the Commonwealth to more fairly and accurately measure the academic performance of students, schools, school districts and educators.

■ SB 1201 Duquesne Teacher Transfers

This legislation would create a pool of teachers and education support personnel who would be offered employment in one of the accepting districts, located within ten miles, when a vacancy exists and qualified personnel from the pool is available.

This relocation is subject to collective bargaining agreements.

◆ Charter and Cyber Charter Reform

■ SB 1202 Teacher Certification

This legislation would require any individual who is hired as a teacher or on professional staff of a charter school to hold appropriate state certification.

Teachers who currently are employed by charter schools, yet do not have state teaching certification, are not required to obtain the certification in order to continue teaching at the charter school.

Currently, charter schools must have at least seventy-five percent of professional teacher staff certified. This measure would require all new teachers to be certified.

■ SB 1204 Charter School Moratorium

This legislation would impose a moratorium on the approval of any new charter or cyber charter school by the State Charter School Appeal Board or any new cyber charter school by the Department of Education effective within sixty days of the act.

The moratorium shall expire on June 30, 2015 or on June 30 of the school year following the implementation of a new testing procedure that more fairly or accurately measures the academic performance of students, schools, school districts or educators.



Senator Brewster discusses the importance of a good public school education for all children during the Pennsylvania School Boards Association's Legislative Panel discussion.

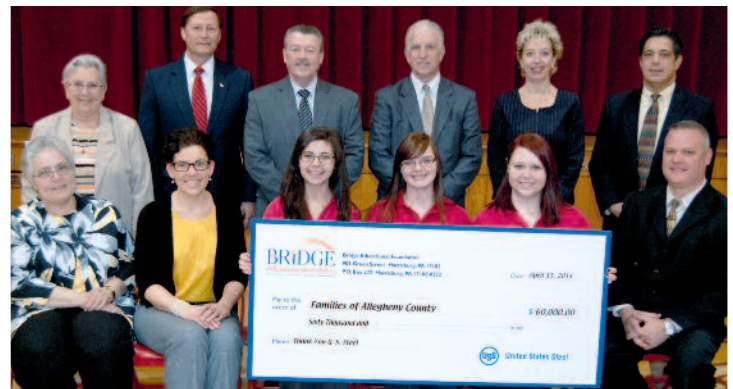


Senator Brewster reads a story to students at an AIU Pre-K Counts & Head Start classroom in North Versailles.



Senator Brewster discusses the process of passing state legislation with high school students at his Student Government Day event that was held on May 9, 2014.

▶
Senator Brewster attends check presentation at Serra Catholic High School - The Bridge Educational Foundation and U. S. Steel donated \$60,000 of scholarship money to the families of Allegheny County.



Around the 45th District • Around the 45th District • Around the 45th District • Around the 45th District • Around the 45th District
Around The 45th District



Photo courtesy of The Daily News

▲ Senator Brewster listens while UPMC McKeesport pharmacy director Bill Niccolai discusses medication concerns at the Glassport Senior Citizen Center as part of the Senator's senior outreach program this past fall.



◀ Senator Brewster visits Plum Senior Center before making Meals on Wheels deliveries.



▲ Senator Brewster along with Senators Costa and Solobay welcome Barry J. Schoch, PA Secretary of Transportation, on behalf of the Mon Yough Area Chamber of Commerce at their Annual Legislative Luncheon.



◀ Senator Brewster along with Sen. Kasunic and Rep. Kortz, assist state Game Commission biologists conducting studies of the population, health and well-being of black bears in Westmoreland County.

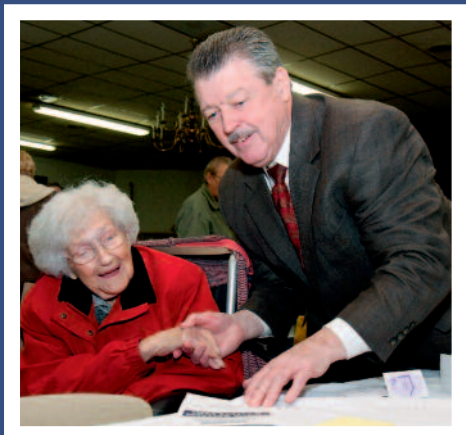
New Kensington Senior Health & Wellness Expo



▲ Senator Brewster tours Elizabeth Forward School District and discusses their new programming with Superintendent Dr. Bart Rocco and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Todd Keruskin.



▲ Senator Brewster in partnership with Allegheny Valley Hospital, part of the Allegheny Health Network, held a senior expo in New Kensington where seniors were able to take advantage of a wide variety of screenings and information.



▲ Senator Brewster visits with Frances Massimini, Arnold resident, who recently turned 100 years old.

District Satellite Offices



Photo courtesy of The Daily News

Senator Brewster and Clairton city manager Howard Bednar explain state and local services to a resident at one of the Senator's satellite office hours at Clairton City Hall.

In the coming months, the Senator's office will be traveling to all 38 communities in the district, to bring their services to you. Be sure to keep a look out for when his office will be visiting your community!

PA Works

◆ Senator Brewster's Small Business First Fund (SB 217) legislation is part of the "PA Works" strategy by the Senate Democratic Caucus to create jobs and spark economic development.

The Small Business First Fund will provide loan funds to assist in the start-up and expansion of small businesses. For each \$25,000 loaned, one full-time equivalent job must be created. Also, this legislation would increase the maximum loan amounts and repayment periods, while decreasing the maximum interest rates to make the program more attractive.

There are six components to PA Works:

- ◆ Small Business;
- ◆ Workforce Training;
- ◆ Critical State Investments;
- ◆ Clean and Green Energy;
- ◆ Infrastructure Investment; and
- ◆ Tax Fairness.

◆ Brewster's Proposed Hunting Heritage License Plate Clears Senate

State Sen. Jim Brewster's proposal that would create a hunting heritage license plate was amended into legislation that cleared the Senate unanimously and is now under consideration in the House of Representatives. "I am pleased that provisions of my legislation were included in this bill," Brewster said. "This puts a license plate for hunters one step closer to reality." Brewster introduced legislation to create the hunter heritage license plate as Senate Bill 773. His bill would require a \$35 fee for the plate, in addition to the annual registration, with \$15 of the fee dedicated to the Pennsylvania Hunting Heritage Fund.

The fund supports nonprofit groups that promote ecosystem conservation and charitable donations of game taken by hunters. The language in Brewster's bill was amended into related legislation (Senate Bill 1187) that would establish a license plate for recipients of the Combat Infantry Badge. Brewster's original bill was reported from the Senate Transportation Committee last June, but progress has stalled following its referral to the Senate Appropriations Committee.

"Hunters should be able to have a license plate that acknowledges Pennsylvania's heritage of hunting," Brewster said. "The plate is an excellent way to support the more than one million hunters in Pennsylvania." Under the proposal, the Game Commission would work with PennDOT on the design of the plate.

2014 ADULT TROUT STOCKING

Schedules are available at my district offices.

**For more information visit:
<http://www.fishandboat.com>**



Property Tax/Rent Rebate Applications Available in Sen. Brewster's Offices

Senator Jim Brewster urges individuals to see if they are eligible for this Lottery funded rebate program. All homeowners and renters who received rebates last year should have received their 2013 application form in the mail by now. If you have not received your application in the mail or are not sure if you qualify, contact one of his local offices today and they will help you determine your eligibility. If you have received your application and need help with filing, don't hesitate to stop by any of his district offices, with required paperwork, for assistance.

The rebate program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians age 65 and older; widows and widowers age 50 and older; and people with disabilities age 18 and older. The income limit is \$35,000 a year for homeowners and \$15,000 annually for renters. Only half of Social Security is included in total yearly income.

PROPERTY TAX & RENT REBATE INCOME REBATE SCHEDULE

Income	Homeowner's Rebate	Renter's Rebate
\$0-\$8,000	\$650	\$650
\$8,001-\$15,000	\$500	\$500
\$15,001-\$18,000	\$300	—
\$18,001-\$35,000	\$250	—

The rebate filing deadline for Property Tax/Rent Rebate applications is June 30th.

Applications are also available online at www.revenue.state.pa.us or by calling 1-888-222-9190

Senate Snapshot



Senator Brewster brought before the Senate a resolution designating February 7th-14th, 2014, as "Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Week" in Pennsylvania. This resolution was in recognition of Gregory Guzzo who had open heart surgery for Atrioventricular Septal Defect this past December.

◆ Brewster: Gov's Budget Falls Short

State Sen. Jim Brewster said that Gov. Tom Corbett's proposed \$29.4 billion budget for Fiscal Year 2014-15 falls short of the mark on education, jobs, human services funding and health care.

"I am very disappointed that the governor did not include a sustainable and responsible funding plan for schools so we can address the huge disparity that we now face as a result of his \$1 billion in cuts," Brewster said. "The governor also failed to include a real investment plan for job creation or human services that would help reverse the negative spiral that Pennsylvania is now experiencing."

Brewster said Corbett's budget includes a new \$241 million Ready to Learn Block Grant, which is an increase over the current \$100 million, and he called for modest increases in special education, pre-kindergarten and hybrid learning.

According to the Mon Valley lawmaker, the proposed funding increase for education only marginally replaces the dollars that were slashed.

"I am very concerned that part of the plan for distributing the new education dollars through a new funding formula may not be balanced and will actually escalate the funding disparity and plight of economically-troubled schools," Brewster said. "I am for real investments and real dollars and finding the means to ensure that schools are adequately funded over the long haul."

As the former mayor of McKeesport, Brewster said he also wished Corbett would have focused more of his budget on local government by increasing local development options.

"The governor didn't focus on issues impacting economically hard-hit small towns and cities in Pennsylvania," Brewster said. "I am frustrated that he failed to fully outline programs and policies that would help these communities grow and prosper."

SENATE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS VETERANS LEGISLATION PACKAGE

The Democratic Senate Caucus has a 21-bill package to help soldiers returning to civilian life.

SB 1132 Operation Iraqi Freedom/Enduring Freedom Service Bonus Bond Issue

SB 1133 Peer to Peer Counseling

SB 1134 \$20 million RCAP carve out for vets housing

SB 1135 Vets priority for public housing

SB 1136 Homeless Veterans Initiative

SB 1137 Closing Cost and Down Payment Assistance

SB 1138 Veterans Emergency Assistance Program

SB 1139 Military Family Relief Assistance

SB 1140 Educational Gratuities Program

SB 1141 EMS training for PTSD and TBI

SB 1142 Subsidized child care priority for vets and active duty military

SB 1144 PTSD, MST, and TBI public service announcement fund

SB 1145 Disabled Vets Real Estate Tax Exemption

SR 262 Task Force on Women Veterans Health Issues

SR 263 Urging Congress to increase funding for Dept. of Veterans Affairs

■ Dedication of North Braddock Bridge Honors AMVETS

Senator Brewster introduced legislation, and supported a similar House Bill, renaming a bridge on Route 30 in North Braddock. The bridge spanning Electric Avenue is now known as the AMVETS Memorial Bridge. The name change is to honor all veterans, the AMVETS organization and specifically Post 60, for their efforts on behalf of their communities.

■ Brewster Bill Honoring Fallen McKeesport Police Officer Approved by Committee

Senator Brewster's legislation to honor the memory of McKeesport Police Officer Frank Miller, Jr., passed the Senate unanimously. The bill has moved to the House Transportation Committee for consideration.

Miller, 25, was killed in a gun battle while on duty in McKeesport on November 10, 1993. Brewster's bill would designate the McKeesport-Duquesne Bridge off-ramp leading to Route 148 in McKeesport as the "Officer Frank Miller, Jr. Memorial Ramp."

"Officer Miller was a good man and a great police officer," Brewster said. "I'm proud to have known him and proud to honor his name this way."

Miller was a 1986 graduate of Franklin Regional High School. He graduated with a degree in criminology from the University of Indiana of Pennsylvania in 1991, and also completed the Allegheny Police Academy.

"Frank Miller is still admired and respected by McKeesport's citizens, along with those who knew and worked with him," Brewster said.

■ Brewster Accepts Leadership Role on Allegheny County Port Authority Board of Directors.

Senator Brewster serves on the Allegheny County Port Authority Board of Directors as secretary of the board.

"I take my responsibilities as secretary seriously, and I'll work diligently to help the Port Authority serve the Pittsburgh area in the most efficient, useful ways possible."

Brewster was appointed to the board by Sen. Jay Costa as a representative from the Senate Democratic Caucus.

The Port Authority of Allegheny County serves approximately 230,000 riders daily throughout Pittsburgh and Allegheny County.



STATE SENATOR JIM BREWSTER

Senate Box 203045
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3045

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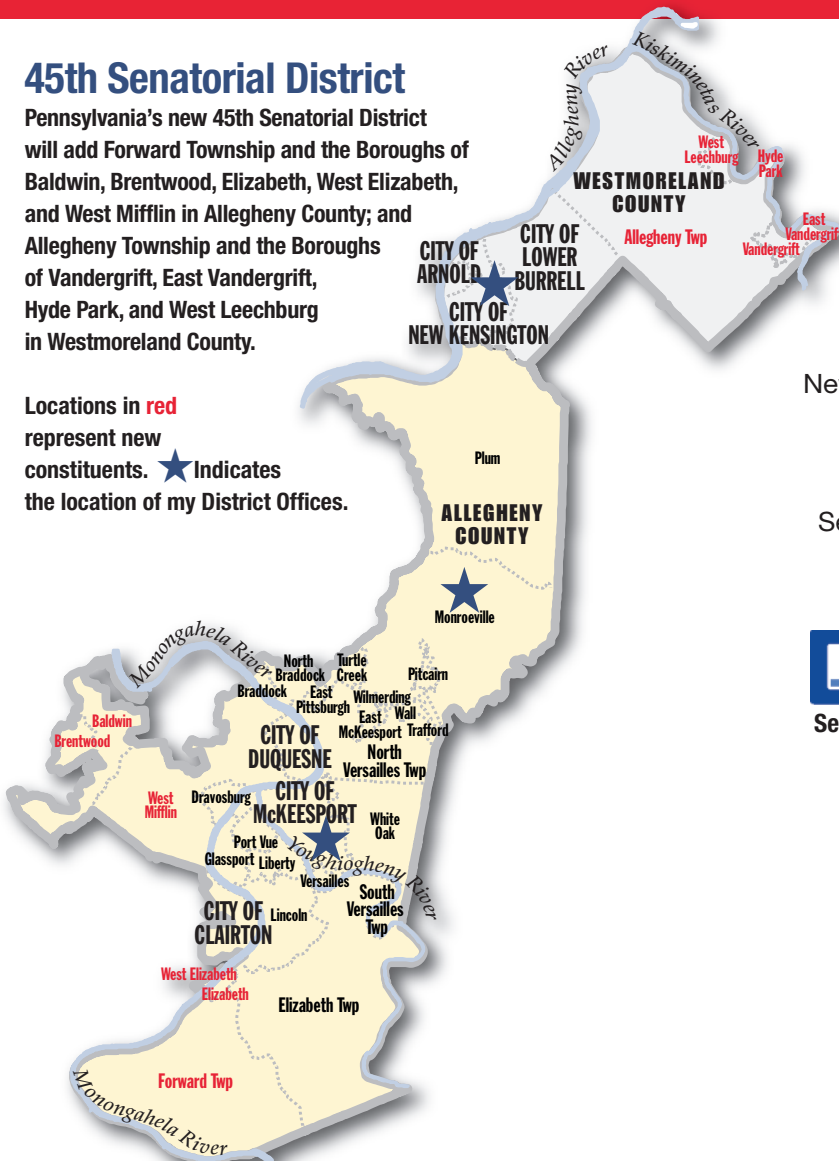
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OFFICES TO SERVE YOU

45th Senatorial District

Pennsylvania's new 45th Senatorial District will add Forward Township and the Boroughs of Baldwin, Brentwood, Elizabeth, West Elizabeth, and West Mifflin in Allegheny County; and Allegheny Township and the Boroughs of Vandergrift, East Vandergrift, Hyde Park, and West Leechburg in Westmoreland County.

Locations in red represent new constituents. ★ Indicates the location of my District Offices.



MONROEVILLE OFFICE

One Monroeville Center
3824 Northern Pike • Suite 1015
Monroeville, PA 15146
(412) 380-2242 • Fax: (412) 380-2249

McKEESPORT OFFICE

201 Lysle Boulevard • Suite 100
McKeesport, PA 15132
(412) 664-5200 • Fax: (412) 664-5202

NEW KENSINGTON OFFICE

New Kensington City Hall • 301 11th St. • Suite L
New Kensington, PA 15068
(724) 334-1143 • Fax: (724) 334-1152

HARRISBURG OFFICE

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(717) 787-5580 • Fax: (717) 772-3588

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Senator Jim Brewster



www.SenatorBrewster.com

Extended Office Hours
On the third Monday of June district offices will remain open until 7 p.m. to assist constituents in the District.