



State Senator **JIM BREWSTER**

Serving the 45th Senatorial District

JUNE 2013

Welcome to Pennsylvania's 45th Senatorial District

Pennsylvania's legislative districts have been recently updated in accordance with the law, and your home is now part of Pennsylvania's 45th Senatorial District, which I have the pleasure of representing. Although you will not officially become constituents until December 2014, I wanted to take this opportunity to advise you of the change and to say that I look forward to the opportunity to serve you.

The battle to save the 45th Senatorial District was challenging. Despite aggressive efforts on the part of some politicians to move the district to the New York border, we worked with local officials and Caucus members to make sure that these constituents retained their voices in our government and that no resident was disenfranchised.

I am providing this map of the new district, which in Allegheny County will add Forward Township and the Boroughs of Baldwin, Brentwood, Elizabeth, West Elizabeth, and West Mifflin, and in Westmoreland County, Allegheny Township and the Boroughs of Vandergrift, East Vandergrift, Hyde Park, and West Leechburg. I'm looking forward to meeting all of you and to spending time in your communities.

In this newsletter, you will find my biography, a brief description of some of my legislative priorities, and contact information for my offices.

Please feel free to contact me with questions or concerns. Whether I'm in Harrisburg or in the district, I'm committed to making our great state and neighborhoods better and safer places to live, work, and raise a family.

SENATOR JIM BREWSTER

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





Introducing . . .

State Senator Jim Brewster



- Senator Brewster serves as chairman of the Senate Urban Affairs and Housing Committee and is a member of the committees on Banking and Insurance; Community, Economic and Recreational Development; Game and Fisheries; Intergovernmental Operations; Democratic Policy; and Transportation.
- He is a graduate of California University of Pennsylvania with a degree in education.
- Prior to his election to the Senate, Jim was vice-president with Mellon Bank. Jim is also a licensed private investigator.
- Jim became a McKeesport City Councilman in 1995, and served as council president for nine years prior to being elected mayor in 2004. During his years as McKeesport mayor, Jim was credited for bringing \$27 million in state, county and federal dollars to the city. He also helped develop the Palisades, McKeesport Point Marina and Greater Allegheny Passage Trail at the Waterfront.
- Jim has served as a director or board member for: the Allegheny League of Municipalities; Pennsylvania League of Cities and Municipalities; McKeesport Optimist Club; Municipal Risk Management; Allegheny County Air Quality Control; McKeesport Development Corporation; McKeesport Recreation Board; Penn State Greater Allegheny. He was recently appointed to the board of directors at Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall & Museum Trust, Inc. and Long Run Children's Learning Center and is Chairman of the McKeesport Housing Authority and McKeesport Democratic Committee.
- Jim was elected to both the McKeesport Area School District Hall of Fame and McKeesport Athletic Hall of Fame in 2009. He was also honored as "Mayor of the Year" in 2010 by the Pennsylvania Mayor's Association, and "Friend of Youth" by the McKeesport Optimist Club for founding the "Toys for Tots" program and starting a youth basketball program at the McKeesport Salvation Army.
- He is married to the former Linda Harding. They have three daughters and six grandchildren.

▶ *Sen. Jim Brewster was elected to the Pennsylvania Senate in November 2010 to represent the 45th Senatorial District in parts of Allegheny and Westmoreland counties.*

▶ *The new 45th Senatorial District is comprised of Allegheny (part) and Westmoreland (part) counties. New communities include 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.*

▶ **Legislative Priorities**

- ◆ Protect our Senior Citizens
- ◆ Eliminate Property Taxes
- ◆ Eliminate Property Assessments
- ◆ Support Local Government
- ◆ Support Local School Districts
- ◆ Job Retention and Creation
- ◆ Business Development
- ◆ Public Safety
- ◆ Support First Responders

▶ **Constituent Outreach – We Can Help!**

Assistance with State Agency Information, Questions, Problems or Complaints:

- ◆ Attorney General's Office—Consumer Complaint Forms
- ◆ Birth Certificate Applications
- ◆ Citations—Senate Recognition for Outstanding Accomplishments, Awards and Special Occasions
- ◆ Criminal Record Check Applications
- ◆ Child Abuse Clearance Applications
- ◆ Death Certificate Applications
- ◆ Insurance Department—Complaints or Problems with Insurance Companies
- ◆ Labor and Industry—Unemployment & Workers' Comp Questions/Problems
- ◆ Literature/Publications—Bills, Regulations, PA Maps, and more
- ◆ Notary Public Applications
- ◆ PACE/PACENET—Pharmaceutical Assistance for Eligible Seniors, Applications and Problems
- ◆ PennDOT—Drivers License, Vehicle Registration, Disability Parking Placard/Plates, and State Highway and Bridge Issues
- ◆ PHEAA—Financial Assistance for Higher Education
- ◆ Public Utility Commission—Utility Complaints
- ◆ Department of Revenue—PA Income Tax and Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program, Applications and Inquiries
- ◆ Tours—Capitol Building Tours for School Groups, Families or Organizations
- ◆ Voter Assistance—Registration and Absentee Ballot Applications
- ◆ Welfare—Energy Assistance (LIHEAP), Food Stamps (SNAP)

▶ Legislation Introduced

Following are some of the initiatives and legislation on which Senator Brewster is working:

■ Protecting Older Adults

Senator Brewster's legislation would protect residents living in facilities; an entity providing domiciliary care. Facilities will search for applicant's name(s) on the Pennsylvania State Police registry of offenders and sexually violent predators, prior to admission. If the applicant resided outside of the state, the facility will search the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public Website. In no case may a facility admit an applicant if their name appears on either the PSP or Dru Sjodin list of offenders. Also, within 30 days of the effective date, the facility shall search current residents' names. No administrator or facility shall be held civilly liable for any action directly related to good faith compliance with this chapter.

■ Education Reform Package

Senator Brewster's comprehensive education reform package includes an innovative plan to change how school districts function amid academic and fiscal distress.

School districts that fail to reach academic and financial benchmarks would be eligible to receive concentrated economic and academic support.

School districts, regardless of academic and fiscal position, would be required to enter into strategic partnership agreements with neighboring districts. This pre-planning would help jumpstart the response to academic or fiscal crisis and allow for planning to occur.

If the infusion of resources is unsuccessful, the schools would move to a transition phase where districts would have tools available to create new public education options for teachers, students and parents.

Senator Brewster's plan would also require that all teachers in charter schools be certified. The plan seeks a moratorium on the state's approval of new charters to give school districts time to plan.

Other measures include requiring that teachers in the Duquesne School District are placed in nearby districts. The package creates a vehicle to accept new federal dollars for full-day kindergarten and builds on a federal legislation now under consideration. Legislation creating a bi-partisan commission to examine and evaluate the utility of statewide testing is part of the package. Brewster's testing assessment commission has been introduced as SB 823.

The reform package would be funded by a new fee paid by shale drillers. All funds from the new fee would be earmarked for education.



Senator Brewster addresses the public at the Senate Game and Fisheries Committee hearing.

■ Hunting Heritage License Plate

The plate would be available for passenger cars, motor homes, trailers, or trucks with a registered gross weight of not more than 10,000 pounds to reflect their respect for the sport and to possibly pass it along to their children and grandchildren.

■ Direct Payments to Emergency Service Organizations

This legislation would require insurers that approve claims for emergency services to directly reimburse organizations that provide such services. Insurers would be exempt from this if the claimant has indicated that he has already reimbursed the emergency service provider. Entities

included in the definition of "emergency service organizations" include ambulance services, emergency and medical services and river rescue services.

■ Municipal Police Recruitment and Retention Program

Senator Brewster's legislation amends Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) and Title 75 (Vehicles) respectively. The addition to Title 53 will add a section to read: Municipal Police Recruitment and Retention Program. The commission shall administer this Fund, relating to a law enforcement surcharge, and make grants from the fund for recruitment and retention of a municipality's part-time police force in accordance with this section. The addition to Title 75 will add a section to read: Law Enforcement Enhancement Surcharge. A surcharge of \$10 will be levied or imposed as provided by law, exclusive of parking offenses, upon conviction for any violation of the provisions of this title or other statute of the Commonwealth. The purpose of the grants shall be used for the purpose of hiring and retaining part-time police officers in a municipality and shall be used to pay a portion of the salary of a part-time police officer. Grants shall not exceed \$5,000 per police officer position and shall be used to supplement the part-time police salary paid by the municipality up to a maximum of \$15 per hour of pay not to exceed 85 percent of a full-time base salary for a police officer in the municipality. Rate shall be calculated based on average salaries for 2011, as adjusted annually by the Consumer Price Index for the metropolitan area in which the municipality is located.



Sen. Brewster hosts a Senate Transportation Committee hearing at CCAC Boyce Campus - Monroeville. Joining him is Sen. Jay Costa (D-Pittsburgh).



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I hope you will take a moment to visit my website and sign up for any or all of these ways to stay in touch with me on current issues.

www.SenatorBrewster.com

Stay on top of all the happenings in Harrisburg and in the 45th District by subscribing to **District Digest**, an email update by Sen. Brewster. Sign up for **District Digest** at www.senatorbrewster.com.

Be the First to Know: Visit me on FACEBOOK and TWITTER



You can sign up to be a fan of mine and be one of the “first to know” about happenings in Harrisburg and throughout the 45th Senatorial District. You can find me on Facebook and Twitter by searching for **Senator Jim Brewster** or by visiting www.SenatorBrewster.com and clicking on the Facebook or Twitter icon.