



# State Senator **JIM BREWSTER**

*Serving the 45th Senatorial District*



## **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**



### ***Legislative Packages***

**Making School Safety a Top Priority • Improving Charter School Accountability  
Fighting Opioid and Heroin Abuse • Promoting and Protecting American Jobs**

- **Since 2010, Senator Brewster has been the prime sponsor of 120 bills, and co-sponsored 2321 pieces of legislation.**

# KEY LEGISLATION

“ There are a number of ways to protect children in schools. My three-bill package takes a multi-layered approach to school safety, including forcing safety changes in school building construction.

– Sen. Jim Brewster ”

## Making School Safety a Top Priority

There have been multiple school shootings thus far in 2018. Each have been horrific. Families, students, teachers, administrators and communities from Parkland, Florida to Sante Fe, Texas have been impacted. These tragedies must stop.

Our children deserve to learn in safe and secure school buildings. Lawmakers need to act now to protect our children.

Sen. Brewster's three-bill package would engage multiple initiatives to keep our children safe. His proposal would create a School Safety Commission ([Senate Bill 1107](#)) to advise lawmakers and school officials on best practices related to school safety. The commission would include school safety experts, educators, architects, parents, students and law enforcement.

A second bill in the package would mandate the placement of resource officers ([Senate Bill 1108](#)) in school buildings. The third bill ([Senate Bill 1109](#)) would prohibit state reimbursement for school building construction that does not incorporate safety measures.



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## Improving Charter School Accountability

The relationship between school districts, charter schools, students and taxpayers must be fundamentally realigned and restructured. Sen. Brewster's comprehensive charter school reform legislation would ensure accountability to the taxpayers.

The legislation ([Senate Bill 670](#)) includes financial reforms, charter accountability and significant changes to membership and operations of the Charter Appeal Board.

### Reforms and Accountability Measures:

- Force charter schools to gain the approval of the host school board for the financing of new charter school construction greater than \$1 million;
- Compel charter schools to include a detailed financial impact statement as part of a charter school application;
- Prohibit lease payments to charter school board members;
- Waive the requirement that charter school students be bussed by a school district if the host district does not transport its own students;
- Ban the use of taxpayer dollars in charter school advertising;
- Require charter schools to get approval from multiple school districts if their students are drawn from outside the host district, as a part of the application process;
- Mandate that charter schools report quarterly - and in person - to the host school district, with copies of the report sent to all school districts from which students are drawn; and
- Increase the percentage of certified charter school teachers from the current 75 percent to 90 percent.



# ON INTRODUCED

## Fighting Opioid and Heroin Abuse Mandatory Treatment, Prescription Limits, Tough Sentences for Dealers

Ten Pennsylvanians die each day from opioids and heroin abuse. Among all states, Pennsylvania has the highest number of drug overdoses of 12 to 25-year-old men and the eighth highest among all individuals.

To deal with this problem, Sen. Brewster has introduced the "Prevention Recovery Enforcement Act" plan. His legislative package is straightforward (*Senate Bills 710-712*) and would help prevent drug addiction and death.

One bill would limit the amount that may be prescribed to 100 morphine milligram equivalents (i.e. opioids) per day. The limitation is aligned with Centers for Disease Control and State

“There are too many deaths. Families are being destroyed and communities turned upside down by heroin and opioid abuse. Strong and decisive action is needed.”

– Sen. Jim Brewster

Board of Medicine recommendations.

Short-term treatment often fails to reduce recidivism. That's why the second bill in the plan requires persons charged with a non-violent criminal act who are treated by first responders to be committed to a drug treatment facility – if the court agrees they have an addiction. The initial treatment period



would be 12-months. If the treatment regimen is completed, the underlying criminal charges could be dismissed.

Lastly, tougher drug sentences are needed for dealers to get them off our streets. The final bill in the plan would stiffen penalties against heroin pushers – who are not addicts – that possess illegal guns while dealing drugs.

## Promoting and Protecting American Jobs

Creating and protecting jobs is essential. Southwestern Pennsylvania has a long tradition of steelmaking and is a leader in the energy industry. Now, with the development of the Marcellus Shale industry, it is critical that jobs are created and promoted.

Ensuring that the steel used in the shale drilling industry is American-made is a critical part of helping our region bolster employment in steelmaking and energy. Sen. Brewster has introduced legislation to create and promote jobs in the steel industry.

The legislative package includes a measure requiring the use of American-made steel in shale gathering lines (*Senate Bill 451*). Another bill (*Senate Bill 450*) specifies that domestic steel be used in shale well safety devices.

A third measure relates to transparency and anti-steel dumping. The legislation (*Senate Bill 452*) would require the state Department of Environmental Protection to maintain and update a searchable database of the country of origin for products used in shale drilling.

“Creating more jobs in steelmaking and energy production can be achieved if we ensure that American-made steel is used in shale drilling.”

– Sen. Jim Brewster





# STATE SENATOR JIM BREWSTER

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## Brewster Legislation

In addition to the packages of legislation described in the update, there are other measures authored by Sen. Brewster. The short summary of the measure is listed. The committee where it was referred is noted.

- **SB 453** Sunday Hunting (Game and Fisheries Committee)
- **SB 454** Police Body Cameras (Judiciary Committee)
- **SB 455** Protecting Adults in Care Facilities (Aging and Youth Committee)
- **SB 456** PA Low-Income Water and Wastewater Assistance Act (Health and Human Services Committee)
- **SB 460** Fishing License Fee Increase (Game and Fisheries Committee)
- **SB 536** Addiction Treatment Professional Loan Forgiveness Program (Education Committee)
- **SB 609** Liquor Distributor Sales Changes (Law and Justice Committee)
- **SB 657** Complying with Steel Procurement Act (State Government Committee)
- **SB 659** Use of Standardized Tests (ESSA) (Education Committee)
- **SB 735** Optional County Demolition and Rehabilitation Fund (Urban Affairs and Housing Committee)
- **SB 755** Amending the Heart & Lung Act – adds law enforcement who work for a local government (Labor & Industry Committee)
- **SB 1081** Limited Sunday Hunting in State Game Lands (Game and Fisheries Committee)
- **SB 1151** Lobbyist Discrimination and Harassment Training (State Government Committee)

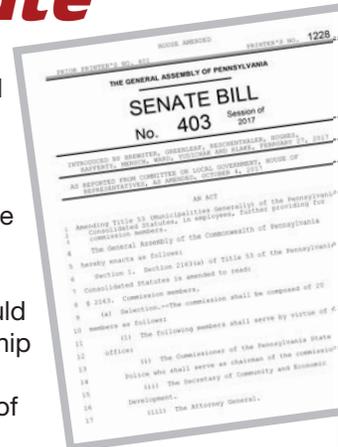
### Government Reform Package

- **SB 731** Eliminates Cost of Living Increases (State Government Committee)
- **SB 732** Ends Per Diems (State Government Committee)
- **SB 733** Eliminates leasing of vehicles (State Government Committee)
- **SB 734** Gift Ban (State Government Committee)



## Police Training Bill Approved by Senate

The Senate unanimously approved legislation sponsored by Sen. Brewster that would make changes to the Municipal Police Officers Training Commission. The bill (**Senate Bill 403**) would change the membership of the commission by adding an appointee of the Fraternal Order of Police. The seat, formerly given to an appointee of the FBI, has been vacant since 2007. The Brewster bill is now under consideration in the House of Representatives.



## Brewster Backs Firefighters, First Responders

Given the steep challenges facing our firefighters and first responders – loss of volunteer first responders, exorbitant costs of apparatus, training needs etc. – it is critical that a thorough examination be undertaken to study how help can be provided. Sen. Brewster cosponsored **Senate Resolution 6** which established a commission to examine issues and make recommendations to aid firefighters and first responders.

### Offices to Serve You

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