

THE CORMAN REPORT

FROM STATE SENATOR JAKE CORMAN

34TH DISTRICT • FALL 2006



CORMAN SECURES FUNDING FOR NEW BERLIN COMMUNITY CENTER

Five years ago the historic New Berlin Community Center was closed because the poor condition of the roof and floor presented safety concerns.

Today, the borough is proceeding with a major restoration of its community center, thanks in part to a \$35,000 state grant. When borough officials came to

me about the project, I worked with state officials to obtain money for Phase II efforts, including interior upgrades.

The borough crew and students from SUN Area Career & Technology have done an outstanding job renovating the facility. The community center was the former Presbyterian church (built in 1844)

before being deeded to the borough in 1951.

When the work is finished, it is hoped that the center can be used as a gathering hall for local organizations. I am pleased that we were able to work with the borough to help restore this important and historic facility.



Senator Corman presents a \$35,000 state grant to New Berlin Borough officials to aid in the restoration of the community center.

EMINENT DOMAIN LAW PROTECTS PROPERTY OWNERS FROM LAND SEIZURES

Last year, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that local officials in New London, Connecticut, could condemn private property for redevelopment using eminent domain laws.

The decision raised major concerns that government could use its powers to take over private property to boost economic development – meaning that private landowners had little or no ability to protect their land.

I helped to lead the passage of new laws that will prohibit the use of eminent domain to benefit private businesses. The Private Property Protection Act would still allow government to condemn abandoned, dangerous, or severely tax-delinquent properties.

The bill would also prohibit any local government from taking land from an adjacent township without an agreement from both local governments.

The idea that a citizen's home or property can be taken by the government and turned over to another citizen for non-governmental use is outrageous. This new law will protect Pennsylvania homeowners, small businesses, farms, and churches from land seizures for private development.

CAPITOL CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION SLATED FOR SEPT. 30 - OCT. 4

Pennsylvania's Capitol is a priceless, architectural and artistic treasure, a majestic symbol of history and power, and an icon of democracy and freedom. This year marks the centennial celebration of the Capitol, and a number of events and activities are scheduled from September 30 to October 4 to mark this historic event.

Among them are a treasure hunt and expo for kids, an arts and architecture tour of the Capitol, a parade featuring the state's 67 counties and a rededication ceremony on Wednesday, October 4. The Centennial is a perfect time to visit the state Capitol. To find out more about the celebration and the schedule of events, go to <http://www.pacapitol.com>.

“JESSICA’S LAW” CRACKS DOWN ON CHILD SEXUAL PREDATORS

The State Senate recently approved legislation I cosponsored to impose a mandatory minimum sentence of 25 years for convicted child molesters and require them to wear a monitoring device for life.

“Jessica’s Law” is named for Jessica Lunsford, a 9-year old Florida girl who was kidnapped and murdered by a convicted sex offender.

I am especially proud that Pennsylvania is leading a national effort to crack down on child sexual predators, more comprehensively monitor offenders, and ensure that all offenders register under

the current Megan’s Law.

Senate Bill 944 would impose a minimum of 25 years in prison for anyone over 18 years who is convicted

harboring or aiding a sex offender who has failed to register under Megan’s Law. It also enhances the current Megan’s Law website and offender reporting require-

ments by mandating more specific residence information and reducing the time permitted for an offender to register after his or her release or relocation.

Our hope is that Jessica Lunsford did not die in vain and that other states will join in a national effort to more closely monitor sex offenders and strengthen our laws to protect our children.

MEGAN’S LAW WEBSITE IMPROVED

The Pennsylvania State Police has established a web page to provide timely information, free of charge, to the public on Sexually Violent Predators residing in the Commonwealth. The Pennsylvania Megan’s Law website is www.pameganslaw.state.pa.us.

of sexually assaulting a child, mandatory GPS monitoring for life, and a life sentence for anyone convicted of a second offense.

The bill provides additional penalties for anyone convicted of knowingly

CORMAN PUSHING FOR GAMING REFORMS

For several months, I have been working with my colleagues to develop a gambling reform agenda. We recently unveiled our comprehensive plan to make major structural reforms to the two-year-old gambling law. The 21-bill package is designed to close loopholes in the law; enhance the accountability of the Gaming Control Board; improve the administration of the law; and strengthen oversight by the Attorney General and the General Assembly over the conduct of gaming in Pennsylvania.

Efforts to reform the gambling law extend back over one year when Governor Rendell vetoed legislation that would have made a number of reforms to the law including revisions pertaining to slot machine suppliers and granting power to the Attorney General to prosecute gambling-related crime.

These reforms are needed to restore public trust and confidence in the process

being used to award the casino licenses, and to guard against fraud, influence peddling and criminal activity. Although I did not support the gambling expansion, now that it is in effect, the priority is to

strengthen the law and ensure the integrity and accountability of the process.

These are important, common sense and necessary reforms that even gaming proponents can support.

Senator Corman announces his gaming reform package at a Capitol news conference.



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