



PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
HARRISBURG, PA
PERMIT NO. 432

Summer 2011

Mission Accomplished: Oberlander-Enhanced Home Sprinkler Mandate Repeal Bill Now Law

Dear Friends:

Welcome to my Summer 2011 newsletter. Thanks once again for another opportunity to serve you both at home and in Harrisburg.

On April 25, I had the privilege of attending the official bill signing of **House Bill 377** that without question represented my top economic and legislative priority for the current legislative session.

The first bill enacted by the Pennsylvania General Assembly and signed into law by Gov. Tom Corbett, **Act No. 1 of 2011** makes several substantial changes to Pennsylvania's **Uniform Construction Code (UCC)**. The most notable revision is the **immediate repeal** of the code's **sprinkler mandate** for all newly constructed single-family and duplex homes.

Despite estimated **building cost increases** ranging between **\$3,000** and **\$15,000 per newly constructed home**, depending on the size and design, in December 2009, Pennsylvania became only the second state in the nation to implement this non-voluntary compliance measure as part of the triennial adoption of the **International Codes Council (ICC)** family of technical building codes.

As I argued several times during the committee process and on the House floor, the major issue surrounding this overkill mandate comes down to both personal and economic freedom.

Individual homeowners should make the decision regarding whether or not to invest tens of thousands of dollars to install a home sprinkler system, not government, and, especially, not an unaccountable, foreign International Codes Council.

Best of all, this new law does not preclude anyone from building to gold-star standards, it empowers individual homeowners to make that choice.

Make no mistake, both new home building, which represents no less than **14 percent** of our state's **Gross Domestic Product**, and ultimately the dream of home ownership remained in severe jeopardy throughout Pennsylvania until the governor signed this repeal legislation into law.

Fully supported by the **Pennsylvania Builders Association**, the Senate-amended version of House Bill 377 added several provisions that were contained in my original **Sprinkler Repeal legislation (House Bill 725)**, including:



Representative Oberlander attends the official signing of legislation to repeal Pennsylvania's Home Sprinkler mandate. House Bill 377 was the first bill sent and signed into law by Gov. Tom Corbett.

- Requiring the **UCC Review and Advisory Council (RAC)** to hold public hearings across the state to determine the impact new provisions may have, including health, safety and public welfare; economic and financial impact; and technical feasibility.
- Requiring a two-thirds affirmative vote by the RAC to accept any updates to the code in the future.

Much like my original proposal, this new law goes much further than accomplishing the most pressing objective of permanently extinguishing Pennsylvania's residential sprinkler mandate. In the bigger picture, we now have much greater flexibility to accept and implement only those building standards that match the overall home-construction and home-buying blueprint for this Commonwealth.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns relating to state government issues, please do not hesitate to stop by or contact my Clarion or NuMine district offices. My staff and I are here to work for you.

Serving the 63rd District,

Oberlander Receives Four High Profile Committee Assignments

Speaker of the House Sam Smith (R-Jefferson) has appointed me to serve on the following House committees during the 2011-12 legislative session:

- ◆ **Commerce:** This committee is responsible for originating legislation and overseeing the implementation of economic and technical assistance programs that directly impact Pennsylvania companies and consumers.
- ◆ **Gaming Oversight:** This committee has jurisdiction over legislation regulating Pennsylvania's licensed casinos and all other matters involving expanded gaming, including small games of chance.
- ◆ **Liquor Control:** This committee is responsible for all legislative issues relating to the administration, licensing, sale and distribution of alcoholic beverages throughout the Commonwealth.
- ◆ **Professional Licensure:** This committee is responsible for overseeing legislation and regulations dealing with each of Pennsylvania's 29 professional licensing boards.



Representative Oberlander participates in Pennsylvania's Civil War 150th celebration in the Capitol rotunda.



For the second time, in well under a year, Representative Oberlander cast a vote to enact the Castle Doctrine. Signed into law on June 28, House Bill 40 fully restores the legal ability of law abiding Commonwealth residents to use lethal force to defend themselves against violent criminals.



Like

Legislation I Like

Following is a list of legislative proposals I have either voted for or have co-sponsored.

FAIR SHARE ACT NOW LAW

Senate Bill 1131 (Fair Share Act) reforms the state's joint and several liability law by ensuring that defendants found negligent or liable for an injury are responsible for only their share of the damages. Aimed at protecting taxpayers, job creators and the medical community from frivolous lawsuits, the **Fair Share Act** was twice adopted in the House and signed into law on June 28.

CASTLE DOCTRINE NOW LAW

House Bill 40 makes Pennsylvania the **24th state** to adopt the **Castle Doctrine** to fully restore the legal ability of law abiding Commonwealth residents to use **lethal force** to defend themselves outside their homes, businesses, automobiles or in state parks against violent criminals. Also signed into law on June 28, the **Castle Doctrine** passed the House by a margin of 164 to 37.

PROTECTING THE RIGHT TO LIFE

House Bill 574 would hold abortions facilities accountable to the same high standards as other health care facilities in order to make sure patients who go to these clinics for abortion procedures and other gynecological services are treated by trained personnel in a safe and sanitary manner.

The legislation was authored based upon revelations by the January 2011 Philadelphia County Investigating Grand Jury report that brought the murder charges against Dr. Kermit Gosnell, the head of the Women's Medical Society in West Philadelphia. **House Bill 574** passed the House by a margin of 148 to 43.

Oberlander Legislation to Rollback Medical Assistance Transportation Fraud Clears House

In early May, **WELFAIR reform** legislation I sponsored to implement new administrative guidelines and fraud-prevention restrictions for Pennsylvania's **Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP)** cleared the state House.

A recent audit from the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee revealed that the MATP program, especially relating to mileage reimbursement for methadone treatment, was fraught with waste, fraud and abuse. The Department of Public Welfare's (DPW) rule change limiting mileage reimbursement to one of the two closest methadone clinics is expected to produce \$1.3 million in annual savings.

Enactment of **House Bill 1301** can extend these taxpayer savings across the board by more than **\$7 million per year** by implementing even stronger fraud-prevention safeguards to protect the true purpose of this program, which is providing free or subsidized transportation to and from medical appointments to those truly in need.

Part of the **House Republican WelFair** reform package to rebuild public assistance through fairness, accountability, integrity and responsibility, **House Bill 1301** would require the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) to enforce the following regulatory parameters for the administration of the MATP:

- Transportation services or mileage reimbursement must be pre-authorized by the MATP office.
- Transportation services or mileage reimbursement can be authorized only to medical assistance providers.
- The MATP office will authorize transportation services or mileage reimbursement for the closest available medical service provider and the least expensive mode of transportation that is appropriate for the recipient's medical condition and physical capability.
- Mileage reimbursement will be calculated as equal to the lesser distance from the individual's residence to the closest available medical services provider or 50 miles.



- DPW is also required to develop a standard attestation form to ensure that MATP recipients actually attend their medical appointments.
- Transportation service providers will have to record and submit important tracking information, including name, address, pick-up and drop-off locations of MATP clients.
- In order to receive mileage reimbursement, MATP providers must record their name, address, odometer readings, vehicle make and model, and the names of any passengers on the completed and signed DPW attestation form.
- Future transportation services cannot be authorized unless the MATP recipient has submitted a completed and signed attestation form documenting all previous trips within 15 days.

House Bill 1301 will provide the MATP with new oversight and verification processes, revised mileage reimbursement calculations, increased program integration into fraud detection and cost-saving restrictions on future benefit increases. With these changes, Pennsylvania can squeeze the waste and fraud out of this program, while preserving it for those who need this assistance most.

My Facebook Page Keeps You Connected 24/7

As your State Representative, I strive to keep you informed about how I am representing you and our district in Harrisburg.

By using resources such as **Facebook**, I am able to share news and information virtually as it happens.

For example, I can post legislative updates from the House floor, district event photos, videos and much more.

These posts, which are timely and unfiltered, allow me to keep you informed, in many cases, as news and events are unfolding.

Signing up for **Facebook** is free and easy.

Simply log in and follow this link to get started:

[Facebook.com/RepOberlander](https://www.facebook.com/RepOberlander)



SAVE THE DATES!

2011 Senior Expos

Clarion Nifty Sixty Expo
Friday, August 5, 2011
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Clarion Mall (New Location)

Kittanning Senior Expo
Wednesday, Sept. 7, 2011
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
St. Mary's Parish Hall



I look forward to seeing you there!

Oberlander To Honor District 63 Vietnam War Veterans During Special Recognition Ceremony

SATURDAY, OCT. 29, 2011

1 - 3 P.M.

REDBANK VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

This October, I want to honor every Vietnam War veteran residing in the 63rd Legislative District. If you, or someone you know is a Vietnam War veteran please contact either my Clarion district office at (814) 226-9000 or my NuMine district office at (723) 783-6166 by Friday, Sept. 9, to register.

The 63rd Legislative District includes all of Clarion County and the Armstrong County communities of Boggs, Bradys Bend, Cowanshannock, Hovey, Madison, Mahoning, Perry, Pine, Plumcreek, Sugarcreek, Washington and Wayne townships and Atwood, Dayton, Elderton, Rural Valley and South

Ice Cream Socials

Cool off with some refreshing ice cream and discuss your most important concerns both at home and in Harrisburg.

CLARION COUNTY

Wednesday, July 27

11:30 a.m to 1 p.m.

or

6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m

Clarion Memorial Park

ARMSTRONG COUNTY

Thursday, July 28

6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m

Cowanshannock Park



Representative Oberlander presents Gene Harmon and Margery Terwilliger with official House citations in commemoration of their induction into the Armstrong County 50-year Voter Hall of Fame.

Contact Information

CLARION OFFICE: 160 South 2nd Ave., Suite C, Clarion, PA 16214 Phone: (814) 226-9000 / FAX: (814) 226-1614
NUMINE OFFICE: 1373 State Route 1042, Suite A, NuMine, PA 16249 Phone: (724) 783-6166 / FAX: (724) 783-6177

HARRISBURG OFFICE: 160A East Wing, PO Box 202063, Harrisburg, PA 17120-2063
Phone: (717) 772-9908 / FAX: (717) 260-6516

Email: Doberlan@pahousegop.com

Visit RepOberlander.com and [FACEBOOK.COM/REPOBERLANDER](https://www.facebook.com/REPOBERLANDER)