



**State Senator  
Mike Brubaker**

# Reports

*36th Senatorial District*



*Dear Friend:*

*The General Assembly has been a very busy and productive body this summer, as we addressed a wide variety of important issues. We worked together to create a state budget for 2007-2008, and passed several pieces of legislation that focus on Pennsylvania's health care, energy and transportation needs.*

*However, many matters still need attention, even in these areas, and my colleagues and I returned to session in September with an ambitious agenda for the fall. Some of our top priorities include strengthening the state's Right-To-Know Law, improving the Uniform Construction Code and funding the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Act, as well as election and campaign reform.*

*Another top priority will be to update our state's energy policies. Pennsylvania has already taken major steps to develop cleaner energy sources and renewable fuel sources such as ethanol and biodiesel. I believe we can build on these advances, thus protecting the environment, reducing our dependence on foreign sources of energy, and ultimately using energy more wisely.*

*The Governor has called a Special Session of the General Assembly on energy this fall, and the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee has already held two hearings in*

*September to discuss alternative fuel mandates. As a member of this Committee, I am very much looking forward to being an active part of these discussions and debates in the coming months.*

*Things have been very busy in the 36th District – on August 8, the district office was relocated to a new home at 301 E. Main Street, Lititz, which is very convenient and accessible to the District. The Lititz office can be reached by calling 627-0036, or by using the toll-free number at 866-738-1601.*

*It is very important to me that the people I represent have readily available access to the services provided by their district office, which is why I have also begun offering extended office hours on Tuesday evenings until 8 p.m. The office will also be open from 9 a.m. to noon on the first Saturday of each month beginning October 6. For those who are unable to travel to Lititz, I have arranged several possible meeting locations in local municipal buildings which are available by appointment.*

*Please continue to share your thoughts and concerns with me – your input is invaluable to me as your state Senator.*

## Introduced Legislation

I have had the opportunity to introduce several new pieces of legislation in the state Senate during my first term.

- Senate Bills 1002, 1003 and 1004 will allow boroughs and first and second class townships to work with nonprofit organizations to create, operate or maintain certain recreation projects in their communities. Such projects could include a park, playground, swimming pool or recreation center.
- Senate Bill 1017 will phase out the use of phosphorus in household automatic

dishwashing detergents by July 1, 2010. Under the federal Clean Water Act, municipalities must reduce the phosphorus discharges from their wastewater treatment plants, which in some cases may require the installation of expensive nutrient removal technology. However, since about seven to 12 percent of the phosphorus entering these plants comes from automatic dishwashing detergents, my bill will help communities make progress toward their phosphorous reduction goals in a cost-effective manner.

- I am also part of a 16-bill package that would increase the bid limit thresholds for local government units from \$10,000 to \$25,000, with an annual adjustment for inflation thereafter. The thresholds indicate at what point municipalities must go through the entire competitive bidding process to make purchases or enter into contracts, and have not been changed since 1990. I have agreed to introduce the changes to the State Public School Building Authority Act and the Political Subdivision Joint Purchases Law, and will be cosponsoring the remaining 14 bills in the package as well.

## Senatorial Offices of Senator Mike Brubaker

### 36th District

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## Fair Season

Every year, the autumn season is marked by several indicators: children go back to school, the weather turns cooler, and a number of fairs in our region promise plenty of rides, games, food and fun.

There are four agricultural fairs in the 36th District alone in September and October, and seven across Lancaster County. In addition to being an enjoyable and inexpensive experience for people of all ages, local fairs are a great educational opportunity for learning about agriculture, horticulture and more.

Each year, more than six million people attend fairs throughout the Commonwealth to see exhibits of livestock, produce, flowers, and needlework and other crafts. If you were not able to visit the Denver or Ephrata Fairs, I encourage you to visit the upcoming fairs in New Holland (Oct. 3-6) and Manheim (Oct. 8-12).



*While visiting the Denver Fair, Dennis Worley, president of the Fair, presented the Senator with an afghan commemorating the Fair's 25th anniversary in 2006.*

## Ag Committee Update

Agriculture is Pennsylvania's number one industry and affects all of us, from farm to fork.

As Chairman of the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, I have been working with my colleagues this year to identify the issues that farmers, consumers and other industry officials feel require the most attention in our Commonwealth. We held a series of statewide listening sessions during the spring that were very productive, and from that, the Committee has developed a comprehensive list of priorities and is working to build a comprehensive agenda of action for the fall and beyond.

For instance, we have already held two hearings on milk and dairy issues after repeatedly hearing about the crisis dairy farmers faced in recent years when milk prices were not keeping pace with the costs of feed and other inputs, although those prices have recovered this summer. In a May hearing, the Committee took a deeper look into milk pricing and dairy policy in Pennsylvania and received suggestions about ways this complex subject can be addressed.

Just recently, the Committee also held a hearing on the sale and production of raw milk and raw milk products. Producers had told us about their desire to have the freedom to develop new and more prof-



*Senator Brubaker visited the Lancaster facility of Air Products and Chemicals Inc., located in East Hempfield Township. Air Products produces liquid nitrogen, oxygen and argon from air to supply to other manufacturers and producers.*

itable marketing practices, such as taking advantage of the premiums generated by the sale of raw milk and its products. At the same time, recent recalls by the Department of Agriculture have highlighted the health risks that can and do accompany these products. The hearing provided us with a chance to have an open, balanced discussion on if

and how Pennsylvania's policies should be changed on this matter.

I am proud to be the chairman of this Committee, and I look forward to holding further hearings on the issues raised in the listening sessions and using that information to develop sound policy that will maintain the success and viability of our agriculture industry.