

Malady & Wooten, LLP

Legislative Report
September 27, 2013

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Pennsylvania Golf Course Owners Association

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Session Schedule:

2013 HOUSE SESSION SCHEDULE

September 30
October 1, 2, 15, 16, 17 (NV), 21, 22, 23
November 12, 13, 18, 19, 20
December 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18 (NV)

2013 SENATE SESSION SCHEDULE

September 30
October 1, 2, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23
November 12, 13, 18, 19, 20
December 3, 4, 9, 10, 11

TAXPAYERS, LAWMAKERS RALLY FOR PROPERTY TAX ELIMINATION

A host of lawmakers and taxpayers from across Pennsylvania gathered on the Capitol Steps this afternoon to call for the elimination of property taxes through HB 76 and SB 76.

James Rodkey, speaking on behalf of the Pennsylvania Coalition of Taxpayer Associations, discussed the historical significance of eliminating property taxes. "We have come together and crossed party lines, political ideologies to come together on a simple principle: the principle of property ownership," he stated. "The founders believed that property ownership was to be treated as a sacred institute. The founders said the prime responsibility was to protect the property of the people."

Rep. Thomas Caltagirone (D-Berks) emphasized both bills have bipartisan support. "We must eliminate this burden on our seniors, our families, and our children," he stated. "Let us forego the egos and bring life changing property tax elimination by working together. It's time to rid Pennsylvania of the burden of this property tax."

David Baldinger, speaking on behalf of the Pennsylvania Coalition of Taxpayer Associations, spoke about the positive aspects of passing the Property Tax Independence Act. "It will ensure brighter educational future for our children, release families from the chains of an unjust property tax, build Pennsylvania's economy and attract jobs to Pennsylvania," he stated. "I am so very proud of all of you who become involved, dedicated activists in the fight to guarantee that this tax will never again have the power to leave anyone homeless."

Rep. Jim Cox (R-Berks), prime sponsor of HB 76, urged the crowd to continue reaching out to lawmakers. "Commonsense is right here on the steps of the Capitol," he stated. "Our job today is to get it through the doors of the Capitol and into the chambers. I can't do it without you, the people behind me can't do it without you. I appreciate you coming out today. Don't forget why you're here. You're here to bring additional cosponsors onto HB 76 and additional cosponsors onto SB 76."

Rep. Rosemary Brown (R-Monroe) spoke in support of the legislation. "The fact of the matter is there are many areas of our state that have unsustainable school property tax rates that are destroying our communities and our way of life," she stated. "Changing to a system that does not base your school tax on the real estate value of your home would infuse dollars into the economy, encourage home improvements, and stabilize our family environment and local communities."

Sen. David Argall (R-Schuylkill), prime sponsor of SB 76, explained that the Senate legislation has 24 cosponsors and the House bill has 90 cosponsors. "We need 26 solid votes in the Senate, 102 votes in the House and we can all gather together and watch the governor turn this idea into a law," he stated. "The way that we fund our public schools today is based on an unfair model from the 1830s. That's nuts and that's the way we fund our public schools. Thank you so much for what you've done. Don't give up yet. We've never been this close but we still have a way to go."

Sen. Mike Folmer (R-Lebanon) argued that the property tax goes against the Pennsylvania's constitution. "It says 'all men are born equally free and independent and have certain inherent and indivisible rights among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty of acquiring, possessing, protecting property,'" he stated. "How in the world can we protect and possess our property if we're only paying rent to our school districts?"

Sen. Judy Schwank (D-Berks) also expressed support for the legislation. "It's not easy to sit across from a senior who comes in for their property tax rebate and you know that check is not enough," she stated. "These are people making the decision of whether they are going to fill their prescription or pay their property tax. That breaks my heart."

Sen. Jim Brewster (D-Allegheny) spoke in support of eliminating property taxes. "This is a dollar for dollar program so public schools will not be harmed by this," he stated. "It will level the field and everyone gets to pay, not just the people who own property."

Sen. Lisa Boscola (D-Lehigh) noted that Sen. Andrew Dinniman (D-Chester) recently signed on as a cosponsor and urged the crowd to reach out to legislators. "We've got a game plan," she stated. "We're going to target the senators who we know are open-minded but it's only going to happen with you all out there never giving up."

The names of all the co-sponsors on both bills were then read.

Rep. Margo Davidson (D-Delaware) also spoke in favor of the legislation and emphasized that it would not harm public education. "I say to opponents of this bill that we can do, in this great commonwealth, more than one thing at a time," she stated. "We eliminate property taxes and we can fund our schools."

Rodkey thanked the crowd for attending the rally and legislators for supporting both pieces of legislation. "We came here not to be talked at but to do the talking," he stated. "I do have this to say to those non-sponsors: you either hear us this September or you fear us in November. This will be an election issue. We're tired of waiting."

BENNINGHOFF PROPERTY TAX RELIEF BILL AND THREE OTHERS APPROVED BY STATE HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

HARRISBURG – The state House Finance Committee today approved one bill introduced by state Rep. Kerry Benninghoff (R-Centre/Mifflin) and three others, all of which aim to reduce the burden of property taxes on homeowners across Pennsylvania.

"We took action on a group of bills that could deliver meaningful relief for property taxpayers across the Commonwealth," said Benninghoff, who serves as chairman of the House Finance Committee. "These bills would make a real difference in the life of taxpayers."

Benninghoff's [House Bill 1685](#) – one of the four bills approved today – would allow school districts to increase their Earned Income Tax (EIT) rate in order to provide dollar-for-dollar property tax relief. The bill would allow school districts to do this without seeking voter approval through a referendum, but they could only use those dollars exclusively to reduce or eliminate property taxes.

[House Bill 1189](#) would empower school districts to reduce or eliminate school district property taxes by replacing the revenues through the enactment of an Earned Income and Net Profits Tax, Mercantile Tax or Business Tax, or a combination of any of these taxes.

[House Bill 1677](#) would ensure the definition of a homestead is in line with language in the Pennsylvania Constitution.

[House Bill 125](#) would amend the state Constitution to allow for the complete elimination of school district property taxes through existing homestead exclusions. Current property tax relief – such as money generated through gaming and the state's highly popular Property Tax and Rent Rebate program – is delivered to homeowners through homestead exclusions. However, the state constitution limits the amount of relief that can be delivered. Currently, relief cannot exceed one-half of the median assessed value of all homestead property within the school district.

"Property tax relief is a complex issue and that is why we are taking a multi-pronged approach to it," Benninghoff said. "We moved forward a package of bills that have the support of committee members and can realistically deliver on the promise of property tax relief."

The four bills now head to the full House for consideration.

COSPONSOR MEMOS

Rep. Snyder
- [HOTEL TAX EXPANSION](#)

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

House Agriculture and Rural Affairs

FRIDAY - 9/27/13

**11:00 a.m., Bloomsburg University, Assembly Room, Upper Campus, 400 E
Second St, Bloomsburg**

Joint public meeting with House Tourism and Recreational Development
Committee to discuss the impact of the Bloomsburg Fair on agriculture and
tourism

House Tourism and Recreational Development (PUBLIC HEARING)

TUESDAY - 10/29/13

1:00 p.m., National Constitution Center, 525 Arch Street, Philadelphia

Public hearing on:

- | | | |
|---------------|------------------|---|
| HB 871 | Day, Gary | Amends Title 53 (Municipalities Generally), in other subjects of taxation, further providing for excise tax on hotel room rental. |
| HB 872 | Day, Gary | Amends the Tax Reform Code, in sales and use tax, further providing for definitions. |
| HB 873 | Day, Gary | Amends the County Code, in fiscal affairs, further providing for authorization of certain hotel room rental taxes; & in grounds & buildings, further providing for certain hotel room rental taxes. |
| HB 874 | Day, Gary | Amends the Community and Economic Improvement Act further providing for definitions relating to tourism and marketing tax. |

COMMITTEE NEWS

House Finance Committee

9/23/13, 11:00 a.m., Room 205 Ryan Office Building

Chairman Kerry Benninghoff (R-Centre) told the committee members, "As you know we are here again to try to address the issue of property taxes." He said, "This issue has been batted around for a long time with a multitude of opportunities to try to do something." Chairman Benninghoff observed, "The reality is any proposal we pass or try to pass is going to be a tax shift. The audience and those members here need to keep that in mind." He remarked, "The only taxes people generally like are the ones they don't pay." Chairman Benninghoff acknowledged that school property taxes are a burden, especially, on the senior population but pointed out the General Assembly has a constitutional responsibility to fund schools.

HB 125 Maloney, David - (PN 124) Joint Resolution to the Pennsylvania Constitution allowing a local taxing authority to exclude 100 percent of the assessed value of a homestead in determining property tax. Constitutional amendments require approval in two consecutive legislative sessions and then approval by the voters through a referendum. - The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**,

Tammy Fox, the committee's executive director, provided a brief overview of the bill. Minority Chairman Phyllis Mundy (D-Luzerne) asked if the legislation is similar to legislation approved by the House during the last session. Fox responded, "Yes."

Rep. Mary Jo Daley (D-Montgomery) wanted to know how the homestead property exemption is currently funded. Fox explained that currently the homestead exemption is funded through the gaming money received by the school districts. She further explained that the school district has the ability to raise their earned income tax via voter referendum to provide for additional homestead exclusion. Fox pointed out the homestead exemption is 50 percent of the median assessed value in the district and it is not 50 percent of the actual homestead that a person may be living in.

HB 1677 Heffley, Doyle - (PN 2311) Amends Title 53 (Municipalities Generally), in assessments of persons and property, further providing for limitations by repealing existing law and adding that a governing body of a political subdivision may not authorize an exclusion for homestead property in excess of the limit established on the exclusion for homestead property in the Pennsylvania Constitution. If a limit on an exclusion for homestead property is imposed based on the median assessed value of a homestead property, the median assessed value of homestead property shall be determined from the information provided to the governing body under section 8584(i) (relating to administration and procedure) and a political subdivision that is located in more than one county shall determine the median assessed value of homestead property for the entire political subdivision after dividing the assessed value of each homestead property by the common level ratio of the county in which the homestead property is located. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

HB 1189 Grove, Seth - (PN 1485) Amends the Local Tax Enabling Act authorizing a school district to implement an additional earned income tax, mercantile tax or business privilege tax with the additional revenues used solely for the reduction or elimination of school district property taxes. Revenues generated will be used on a dollar-for-dollar basis to reduce the school district millage rate. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was **reported as amended** with Representatives Mary Jo Daley (D-Montgomery), Madeleine Dean (D-Montgomery), Gordon Denlinger (R-Lancaster), Jordan Harris (D-Philadelphia), William Kortz (D-Allegheny), Rick Mirabito (D-Lycoming) and Adam Ravenstahl (D-Allegheny) voting "No".

A03395 by Greiner, adds language providing the rate of the mercantile or business privilege tax imposed under section 613 of the bill shall not generate revenues in excess of 50 percent of the total elimination tax revenues generated under the new chapter created by the legislation. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Rep. Davidson asked if the legislation will create a funding gap. Fox said no. She explained that the legislation gives school districts the option of three different taxes: the earned income tax; the mercantile tax; and the business privilege tax. Fox further explained that the amendment says a school district is not allowed to rely solely on the business privilege tax or the mercantile tax but the revenues from those taxes can only be a maximum of 50 percent of the total elimination tax revenues. She added that the remaining 50 percent would have to come from earned income tax revenues.

Rep. Daley asked if it correct that under current law a school district that currently does not have a business privilege tax or mercantile tax is prohibited from enacting those taxes. Fox responded, "That is correct." She explained that in 1988 the General Assembly enacted legislation that prohibited any taxing jurisdiction that did not have a business privilege tax or mercantile tax at that time from implementing a new business privilege tax or mercantile tax. Fox pointed out that this legislation would allow a school district to enact these taxes for the sole purpose of reducing property tax millage rates.

Minority Chairman Phyllis Mundy (D-Luzerne) observed, "We each have a perfect version of the property tax relief bill and I certainly have mine." She expressed concern with the Grove proposal because she said "it is passing the buck to local school districts and I don't think that is appropriate." Chairman Mundy also expressed concern with the current earned income tax as opposed to a personal income tax. According to Chairman Mundy, "There are numerous wealthy individuals who do not earn wages who would now be exempt from paying any taxes to our school districts at all even though as a society we benefit greatly from public education." She added, "However, I am going to vote in favor of the Grove bill today because I believe we need to discuss how we fund our public schools appropriately and we need to move the discussion forward."

Rep. Daley commented, "My concern with the property tax bills is when I look at the overall funding for education in Pennsylvania." She expressed reluctance in voting for the bill because "our school districts have to raise 57 percent of the total burden for K-12 education. Rep. Daley said she would like to see the discussion on funding education move forward but she would also like to see the state pay its fair share of it.

Rep. William Kortz (D-Allegheny) said he had serious concerns with the bill as it relates to the Pittsburgh city schools. He noted that under the 1988 law a school district cannot add a business privilege tax or mercantile tax. Rep. Kortz wanted to know if this bill removes that prohibition. Fox explained that under the House Bill 1189 a school district cannot enact those taxes except for the purpose of property tax reduction. Rep. Kortz told the committee he is concerned that school districts would file lawsuits to allow them to use the revenue from those taxes for other purposes than property tax reduction.

Rep. Jordan Harris (D-Philadelphia) asked if it is correct that the legislation does not apply to the Philadelphia School District. Fox responded, "I believe that is correct."

Rep. Madeleine Dean (D-Montgomery) wanted to know the difference between a business privilege tax versus a mercantile tax. Fox explained that a business privilege tax is a tax on the gross receipts of services and the mercantile tax is on the gross receipts of the goods. Rep. Dean then wanted to know why the legislation allows for an earned income tax and a net profits tax as opposed to a personal income tax. Rep. Seth Grove (R-York) responded, "When we were looking at this we were trying to find stable funding sources to replace a stable funding source, the realty property tax." He explained that with the personal income tax there are greater inflationary deviations in the investment portions of the personal income tax versus the earned income tax. Rep. Grove added, "It was simply a policy decision to how best fund our school districts." According to Rep. Grove, the personal income tax is an option under Act 1 through a voter referendum but no school district has tried it. Rep. Dean asked if there is any estimates on how much these taxes would increase. Rep. Grove said it is "near impossible" to determine because there are 499 school districts and there is no way of know what blend of taxes a school district would employ. Rep. Dean responded that it is needed to be done in order to determine what the shortfall may be. She reiterated her concern that the legislation does not address inadequate state funding to the school districts.

Rep. Brad Roae (R-Crawford) said the issue is not the state share of education funding. He pointed out that state funding has increased and the shortfall is because the federal stimulus money is not longer available. Rep. Roae argued that the issue is not state funding but misspending by school districts. He said the legislation puts control at the local level.

Rep. Rick Mirabito (D-Lycoming) expressed his concern about the bill's impact on rural communities. He noted the bill could lead to shifting taxes to small business that do not have real property but lease office space. Rep. Mirabito argued that there are places where property taxes should be imposed such as gas drilling sites. He said that there are other ways to solve the property tax issue without the shifting of taxes included in this legislation.

Rep. Sid Kavulich (D-Lackawanna) said he would vote to report the bill in hopes to continue further discussion of the issue of real property tax reduction.

Rep. Stephen Bloom (R-Cumberland) commented that he is a long time supporter of eliminating the death tax and the real property tax. He said he learned during his efforts to eliminate the death tax as it relates to family farms that "progress is more important than doing nothing."

HB 1685 Benninghoff, Kerry - (PN 2333) Amends the Taxpayer Relief Act, in taxation by school districts, authorizing school districts to increase in their earned income tax (EIT) rate for the purpose of providing homestead exclusions without seeking voter approval. A school district may still opt to utilize the voter referendum process if they so choose. Also allows a school district to utilize any property tax reduction allocations received under the provisions of Act 1 for general operations if the school district's millage rate equals zero. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

BILL REPORT

ATTACHED TO THE REPORT

STATE NEWS

HOUSE SPEAKER NAMES THREE NEW COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Rep. Mauree Gingrich (R-Lebanon) is the new chair of the House Gaming Oversight Committee. House Speaker Sam Smith on Tuesday announced her appointment, along with naming Rep. Nicholas Micozzie (R-Delaware) as chairman of the House Transportation Committee and Rep. Tina Pickett (R-Bradford) as chairwoman of the House Insurance Committee. Pickett had been chair of the gaming oversight committee.

COURT ORDER CONFIRMS HARRISBURG RECOVERY PLAN

A Commonwealth Court judge has signed an order approving the state-appointed receiver's financial recovery plan for the city of Harrisburg. Commonwealth Court Judge Bonnie Leadbetter had already signaled her intent at the conclusion of last week's two-hour hearing, but Harrisburg Receiver's Office spokesman Cory Angell says the confirmation allows for the details within the plan to be finalized.

TAXPAYERS, LAWMAKERS RALLY FOR PROPERTY TAX ELIMINATION

A host of lawmakers and taxpayers from across Pennsylvania gathered on the Capitol Steps to call for the elimination of property taxes through HB 76 and SB 76. Rep. Thomas Caltagirone (D-Berks) emphasized both bills have bipartisan support. "We must eliminate this burden on our seniors, our families, and our children," he stated. "Let us forego the egos and bring life changing property tax elimination by working together. It's time to rid Pennsylvania of the burden of this property tax."

IN THE NEWS

PENNVEST, DEP Announce Final Nutrient Credit Trading Auction for 2013

Harrisburg — The Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST) and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) today announced they will host an auction on Nov. 6, for the sale and purchase of nutrient credits in the Susquehanna and Potomac watersheds.

The auction will be a "spot" auction, where verified credits will be sold at auction, delivered and applied to the 2013 compliance year. The auction will afford wastewater treatment plants in these two watersheds the opportunity to purchase credits as a means of meeting their nitrogen and phosphorus discharge limits for the compliance year. Enrollment to participate in the auction will begin on Sept. 25 and close on Oct. 16.

DEP's nutrient credit trading program provides a cost-effective means for facilities that are subject to nitrogen and phosphorus limits to meet those limits by working with other facilities, non-point sources or both.

PENNVEST has chosen Markit Inc. to provide the platform for enrollment and eligibility, auctions and registry services. Markit, a financial information services company, has provided operations and infrastructure services to environmental programs worldwide.

PENNVEST anticipates charging buyers and sellers 2.5 cents per credit to offset administrative costs.

For more information, visit www.pennvest.state.pa.us and click on "nutrient credit trading" on the left side of the page; or call Robert Boos at 717-783-4493 (PENNVEST) or Veronica Kasi at 717-772-4053 (DEP)

- 09-27-2013 **Plenty of water for natural gas industry, but Pa. needs to refine rules**
PHILADELPHIA - Pennsylvania has plenty of water to serve the growing natural gas industry, said regulators, but they continue to refine how the industry draws water from creeks and streams. "We have plenty of water," assured Andrew Dehoff, executive director of... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 09-25-2013 **Sen. Dinniman calls for eliminating property taxes**
HARRISBURG — When supporters of legislation aimed at eliminating school property taxes stepped onto their Harrisburg-bound buses early Tuesday morning, they believed they were three senators away from achieving a majority. Before lunchtime, state Sen. Andrew Dinniman, D-19th Dist., told The... - [Pottstown Mercury](#)
- 09-25-2013 **How House legislators look to eliminate property taxes**
HARRISBURG — Lawmakers in the state House are moving on a plan to get rid of the property tax by letting local school districts decide how to make up the money by increasing the earned income tax and the taxes paid by businesses on the goods and services they sell.... - [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#)
- 09-24-2013 **House considers wills to lower property tax**
A package of bills designed to allow school districts to reduce property taxes is headed to the House floor after clearing a committee vote Monday. One proposal would let school districts increase their earned income tax rate to reduce property taxes; another would allow districts to replace... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-24-2013 **Wind behind alternative property tax bill**
HARRISBURG - A House Republican leader gave a strong plug Monday for a new optional school property tax reduction bill shortly after a key committee approved it. The statements by Majority Leader Mike Turzai, R-28, Pittsburgh, at the Pennsylvania Press Club reflect ongoing pressure on lawmakers from... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 09-24-2013 **Rep. Seth Grove: Property tax reform package provides options (letter)**
On Sept. 23 the House Finance Committee passed a four-bill package aimed at providing school districts with multiple options to deal with their property taxes and builds on a package of three bills already passed by the full House. The package provides two tracks of reform: millage rate track... - [York Daily](#)
- 09-24-2013 **Lawmakers pushing plan to do away with property tax**
MEADVILLE — Lawmakers in the state House are moving on a plan to get rid of the property tax by letting local school districts decide how to make up the money by increasing the earned income tax and the taxes paid by businesses on the goods and services they sell.... - [Meadville Tribune](#)
- 09-23-2013 **Pennsylvania Legislature mop-up session to consider pension, school taxes, more**
HARRISBURG — The General Assembly returns Monday after a 21?2-month recess to consider some priority bills that didn't make it past the finish line in June and some local tax issues. House Majority Leader Mike Turzai, R-Bradford Woods, said in an interview the top priority should be legislation to rein in costs of state pensions... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)

WEEK IN REVIEW

- 09-27-2013 **Corbett, Pennsylvania legislators announce \$80 million fund to invest in startups**
Local organizations that invest in early-stage, high-tech startup companies are going to have a new pool of money soon. Republican Gov. Tom Corbett and a raft of legislators, both Democratic and Republican, announced a new fund Thursday that they expect to bring in \$80... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-27-2013 **Pennsylvania school test score release delayed**
Pennsylvania's new school accountability system has hit enough bumps that the state is delaying the public release of the first results. The release date has been moved from Monday to Friday of next week. Even when the results come out, some data for some schools -- primarily... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-26-2013 **Pennsylvania gears up for new health law**
Open enrollment for the health insurance marketplace plans being offered under the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act begins Tuesday, but don't expect a floodgate effect. "This is the largest policy change in a generation and it's very complex.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-26-2013 **PHEAA seeks more state funding to provide more aid to college students**
The state's student aid agency is hoping to do its part to help next year's college students cope with anticipated rising tuition bills by asking Gov. Tom Corbett for a 5 percent increase in funding for the state grant program in the 2014-15 state budget. The request, approved by the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- 09-25-2013 **Pa. to fight costly ruling in tobacco dispute**
HARRISBURG, Pa. — The state attorney general's office plans to challenge an arbitration decision related to payments from tobacco companies that threatens to blow a \$170 million hole in the state budget next year, officials said Tuesday... - [AP](#)
- 09-25-2013 **Panel OKs bills to reduce Pennsylvania Legislature**
HARRISBURG — When House Speaker Sam Smith pounded the gavel at 11 a.m. to bring the legislative session to order, nearly all the lawmakers in attendance did something they had rarely done during the spring session. They sat and listened to their Republican and Democratic colleagues issue... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 09-24-2013 **State Treasurer joins race for governor**
State Treasurer Rob McCord jumps into the Pennsylvania governor's race Tuesday, offering himself as a Democrat with business credentials who would reverse cuts that Gov. Corbett has made in public education and other institutions vital to the middle class. "It's personal for me because Pennsylvania was a place of immense... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 09-24-2013 **Pension reform, property tax shifts and cyber-schools top PA House leader's fall agenda**
House Majority Leader Mike Turzai is not the King of Pennsylvania. But he does run the state House's voting schedule, so it's worth noting that Turzai paid a lot of lip service in a Harrisburg speech Monday to modernizing the state's pension systems, property tax reform and... - [Harrisburg Patriot-News](#)
- 09-23-2013 **Pa. legislators face big, familiar agenda**
HARRISBURG -- Summer recess is over, but Pennsylvania lawmakers return to the Capitol today to many of the same assignments they left behind in June. The weeks before the end-of-June budget deadline were filled with much talk -- and some movement -- on proposals to allow private sales of wine and... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 09-23-2013 **State Sen. Mike Folmer wants to make it easier for third-party candidates to get on ballot in Pa.**
In most states, third-party and independent candidates have to jump some hurdles to get their names in front of voters. In Pennsylvania, the barriers are among the highest. State Sen. Mike Folmer is

trying to change that with legislation he says would even the playing field for everyone.... - [Lancaster
Intelligencer Journal](#)