



# LISA



*Independent, Effective, Working to Make a Difference.*

*Senator Lisa M. Boscola*

A collage background featuring a doctor in a white coat, a woman on a telephone, a power line tower, and a residential house.

## The *road* to **RECOVERY**

**What about my bailout  
my job  
my retirement  
my investments  
my benefits  
my health care  
my electric bill**



# Keeping Electric Rates Under Control

## *Governor Signs Historic Law in Bethlehem.*

A few months ago, Governor Ed Rendell traveled to Bethlehem to sign an historic energy bill into law. He came here to sign the bill because of all of the hard work I've been doing to protect electric customers from being "ripped off" when rate caps come off at the end of this year.



This new law will save electric customers over **\$500 million** over the next five years and puts Pennsylvania among the leading states that mandate utilities to conserve energy. It requires electric companies to reduce electricity consumption – particularly at times of peak demand when electricity rates are highest. Electric utilities that fail to meet the law's requirements would face steep financial penalties.

This act also establishes new "least-cost" and "competitive procurement" requirements, new requirements for long-term contracts that will be reviewed by the Public Utility Commission,

*Governor Rendell came to the Lehigh Valley so Senator Boscola could be at his side when he signed a new law that will help electric customers lower their bills.*

demand-side targets of 2.5% reduction in consumption in five years, reduction of peak demand by 4.5% by 2013 and eventual phase-in of new "smart meter" technology.

I am also proud that the Governor officially signed this bill into law at B. Braun's Lehigh Valley manufacturing plant. B. Braun is a global leader in incorporating "green" business practices into its daily operations.

Thanks to this new law, Pennsylvanians will have the power – and the tools – to reduce the amount of energy they use and lower the cost of using that power whenever they choose. These are good, solid protections for electric customers – and that's why our state Consumer Advocate worked with us in support of this bill.

# Budget Deficit Grows to \$2 Billion

## *Boscola supports budget cuts – no new taxes on working families.*

Governor Rendell's proposed 2009 - 2010 general fund budget completely eliminates 101 line items that received funding in previous years, and reduces another 346 out of 500 line items.

As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I believe we must reduce government spending rather than raise taxes during these difficult economic times.

While legislators must still consider the Governor's proposal and may restore money in some areas, many other programs could also experience funding cuts.

The overall size of the general fund budget, considering just state expenditures, is approximately **\$26.6 billion**, or about the same size as the current year's budget after including cuts that the Governor is making in response to the declining economy.

Thanks largely to the influx of money from the federal stimulus package, two parts of the budget with significant growth are education and social services, especially medical assistance for the elderly and disabled.

With the rise of the state's prison

inmate population, a hike in the Department of Corrections budget was also necessary.

***The Governor's proposed budget completely eliminates 101 line items that were funded in previous years, and reduces another 346 out of 500 line items.***

# STATE BUDGET SURVEY

1. How have you (or your family) been affected by the national recession?

CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:

- Taken a pay cut
- Working reduced hours
- Lost your job
- Lost your health care benefits
- Worried about losing your home (foreclosure)
- None of the above

2. Are you (or someone in your family) now receiving unemployment benefits?

- Yes
- No

3. Do you feel that the President's \$787 billion federal economic stimulus package will help to improve our economy in Pennsylvania?

- Yes
- No

4. Pennsylvania's general fund budget will have a projected deficit of \$2 billion at the end of this fiscal year. How would you offset these lost revenues in order to bring the state budget into balance by June 30th?

- Cut state programs and avoid tax increase
- Lay off state workers
- Increase taxes to fund current state services
- Reduce state services

5. Governor Rendell included a proposal in his state budget address to generate \$700 million to help 70,000 more students receive financial aid to attend college by legalizing (and taxing) video poker machines in private clubs and taverns. Do you support or oppose this proposal?

- Support
- Oppose

6. Governor Rendell has also proposed adding an additional tax on cigarettes of 10-cents a pack. This would come on top of a new 62-cent per pack federal cigarette tax that takes effect in April. Do you support or oppose this proposal?

- Support
- Oppose

7. When it comes to cutting state programs to save money and help reduce the state budget deficit, which one of the following areas do you feel should NOT be cut under any circumstances? CHOOSE ONLY ONE:

- State funding for basic education
- Economic development/job training programs
- Medical assistance for disabled, elderly and children
- Museums, parks and recreational
- Development of alternative energy (ethanol/solar/wind power)
- Homeland Security/State Police/Corrections

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete, cut out and return to:

State Senator Lisa M. Boscola • P.O. Box 203018 • Harrisburg, PA 17120-3018

# PA to Receive \$18 Billion in Economic Recovery Dollars

*The federal stimulus bill (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009) will provide \$18 billion to Pennsylvania through grants provided by federal formulas, as well as tax relief and other direct benefits to Commonwealth residents. That figure includes \$9.8 billion in economic recovery and reinvestment formula-driven grants that can be spent over the next 24 to 27 months.*

*The federal stimulus funding aims to create or preserve 3.5 million good-paying jobs over the next two years. The White House estimates that 143,000 of those jobs will be in Pennsylvania. Stimulus funding can be broken down by the following major spending categories:*

- ◆ **\$275 million** in new unemployment benefits, according to Department of Labor estimates.
- ◆ For transportation and infrastructure, **\$1 billion** for highways and bridges, **\$343 million** for mass transit, and **\$224 million** for clean water projects.
- ◆ **\$100 million** in state energy program funds, plus another **\$259 million** for weatherization for low-income homeowners.
- ◆ More than **\$400 million** for various housing and homeless prevention funds.
- ◆ For Medical Assistance, **\$4 billion** over two years. The state anticipates spending **\$1.1 billion** in the current fiscal year, **\$1.9 billion** in 2009-10, and will hold **\$1 billion** for 2010-11.
- ◆ **\$754 million** in supplemental nutritional assistance (food stamps).
- ◆ The state will receive about **\$1.9 billion** through the fiscal stabilization fund, at least 82 percent of which must go toward education and 18 percent of which can go to other high-priority budget needs.
- ◆ Other funds flow directly to school districts – **\$524 million** for Title 1 spending, **\$426 million** for special education, and **\$25 million** for educational technology.
- ◆ There will also be **\$878 million** for Pell grants for Pennsylvania low-income undergraduate college students, and \$128 million in job training program grants.
- ◆ Numerous competitive grants are also available to state and local governments in a variety of categories.



# NO PPL RATE HIKE!

Join the fight against higher electric rates. • call Senator Lisa Boscola • (610) 868-8667 • (570) 420-2938 • (610) 266-2117.

Cut and display on your car's dashboard or wherever you can be sure it will be seen.

# There is Help in These Tough Times

*I know that many working families are struggling today through no fault of their own. During these difficult times of economic turmoil, there are many state programs that are available to assist you and your family. If you are not sure whether you meet certain eligibility requirements to qualify for help under any of these programs, please contact one of my three local offices and let me find out what assistance you may be able to receive. I have an experienced staff that knows how to cut through the red tape of government bureaucracy and they pride themselves on "going that extra mile" to help you when you need it most.*

## ◆ HEALTH CARE/ ADULT COVERAGE:

If you are between the ages of 19 and 64 and have no health insurance, you may be eligible for coverage under Pennsylvania's adultBasic health insurance program. For an adult with a family of four (with an annual income of no more than \$44,100), the monthly premium is \$35. Recently, the Governor expanded this important program to extend coverage to another 16,000 adults who are already on the waiting list. Although the waiting list is very long (200,000 individuals), once you are added to the eligibility list, you can immediately buy the adultBasic coverage at the full cost (about \$330 a month).

**You may apply by calling  
1 (800) GO-BASIC.**



## ◆ HEALTH CARE/COVERAGE FOR CHILDREN:

All children living in Pennsylvania are eligible for free or low-cost health coverage – regardless of their parents' income – through the state's CHIP program.

**For eligibility and enrollment call  
1 (800) 986-KIDS or online at:  
www.chipcoverspakids.com**



## ◆ MORTGAGE ASSISTANCE:

If you've fallen behind on your home mortgage payments because you've been laid off or are unemployed, you can get a loan through the Homeowners' Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program. The help is

available two ways: A lump sum to help you "get current" on your mortgage payments, or an ongoing monthly mortgage payment supplement for as long as 36 months.

**The Homeowners' Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program, which falls under the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, can also be accessed online at:  
<http://tinyurl.com/c3724m>**

## ◆ FILING FOR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS:

Under new guidelines included in the Federal stimulus package, you may also be eligible for an additional \$25 per week and an additional 13 weeks of coverage. Pennsylvanians may now be eligible to receive unemployment benefits for up to 72 weeks. Prior to the 13-week extension, unemployed Pennsylvanians could claim up to 59

weeks of benefits – 33 weeks of federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation benefits after their maximum 26 weeks of state benefits ran out.

**You can file online at:  
[www.dli.state.pa.us](http://www.dli.state.pa.us) to receive unemployment compensation benefits or call the Department of Labor and Industry  
1 (888) 313-7284.**

## ◆ JOB SEARCH/JOB TRAINING:

Through PA CareerLink, the state Department of Community and Economic Development can help you connect with employers and search for job training and re-training programs if you are currently unemployed.

**You can access PA CareerLink online at:  
<https://www.cwds.state.pa.us>**

## SAVING LIVES



Senator Boscola presents a check in the amount of \$10,000 to staff members of the Miller-Keystone Blood Center to help them "Keep Saving Lives!"



STATE SENATOR

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***“Fixing our economy will take more than fixing roads and bridges . . . it will take hard work, courage and common sense. And I will make a difference.”***

*Lisa*