

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE HEARING

STATE CAPITOL
MAJORITY CAUCUS ROOM
ROOM 140
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

FRIDAY, MAY 22, 2009
3:12 P.M.

PRESENTATION ON SENATE BILL 850

PANEL 11 OF 15

BEFORE:

HONORABLE DWIGHT EVANS, MAJORITY CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE MATTHEW D. BRADFORD
HONORABLE WILLIAM C. KORTZ III
HONORABLE DEBERAH KULA
HONORABLE BRYAN R. LENTZ
HONORABLE TIM MAHONEY
HONORABLE JOSH SHAPIRO
HONORABLE MATTHEW SMITH
HONORABLE MARIO J. CIVERA, JR., MINORITY CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE GORDON DENLINGER
HONORABLE JOHN R. EVANS
HONORABLE MAUREE GINGRICH
HONORABLE DAVID R. MILLARD
HONORABLE RON MILLER
HONORABLE DOUGLAS G. REICHLEY
HONORABLE RICHARD R. STEVENSON

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

HONORABLE KEVIN P. MURPHY

JEAN DAVIS REPORTING

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ALSO PRESENT:
MIRIAM A. FOX
MAJORITY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
EDWARD J. NOLAN
MINORITY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DEBRA B. MILLER
REPORTER

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P R O C E E D I N G S

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3 REPRESENTATIVE SHAPIRO: Good afternoon, and
4 thank you.

5 We will reconvene the Appropriations
6 hearing.

7 And if we could just go down the table and
8 have the individuals identify themselves and begin
9 with some comments.

10 MR. SCHULTZ: My name is Bill Schultz. I'm
11 the President of the UCP of Pennsylvania. I advocate
12 for people with disabilities.

13 MS. FOLEY: Hi. I'm Rebecca Foley. I'm the
14 Director of Education and Advocacy Initiatives with
15 WOMEN'S WAY based in Philadelphia.

16 MR. WILSON: I'm Tim Wilson, the Executive
17 Director of the Philadelphia Alliance of Specialized
18 Agencies.

19 MR. WRIGHTSTONE: Gregory Wrightstone,
20 President of the Pennsylvania Coalition for
21 Responsible Government.

22 MS. MURRAY: I'm Nancy Murray. I'm the
23 President of the Arc of Greater Pittsburgh and
24 have two adult children, both of whom have
25 disabilities.

1 MS. BECK: I'm Jeanette Beck, and I'm
2 representing the ALS Association.

3 MR. HOLMAN: I'm Larry Holman, and I'm the
4 Commander of the Department of Pennsylvania, the
5 Jewish War Veterans, and the President of the
6 Pennsylvania War Veterans Council.

7 MS. SHEFFIELD: My name is Jane Sheffield.
8 I'm representing HeritagePA, which is the alliance of
9 12 Heritage Areas across Pennsylvania.

10 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN EVANS: Jane, we'll start
11 with you.

12 MS. SHEFFIELD: Absolutely.

13 First of all, I would like to thank your
14 committee for taking the time to hear us today on
15 behalf of the 12 Heritage Centers of the
16 Commonwealth. The development of conservation
17 created the Heritage Areas Program in 1989, so we are
18 20 years old.

19 The Heritage Areas Program has five goals:
20 economic development, partnerships, cultural
21 conservation, recreation and open space, and
22 education and interpretation.

23 Heritage Areas were designated using a
24 prudent, thoughtful approach, including a feasibility
25 study issue, a management action plan, and an

1 interpretative plan. These plans guide the work of
2 those areas.

3 The plans are developed with tremendous
4 grassroots participation and input, which is why the
5 Heritage Areas are so effective in communities. They
6 build the relationships from the beginning.

7 The Heritage Areas Program comprehensively
8 plans and strategically invests in the second largest
9 industry in the Commonwealth -- tourism.

10 State-designated Heritage Areas have no
11 other sources of State funding that will provide
12 operational dollars.

13 There are few, if any, foundations that fund
14 operations for Heritage Areas. Similarly, grants can
15 be obtained for projects but not for operations.
16 These areas are large, multicounty strategic
17 investment regions.

18 There are no gates where fees can be
19 assessed to raise revenues. Their partners are
20 communities and nonprofits who are not in the
21 financial position to support their operations. They
22 cannot exist without Commonwealth support.

23 Heritage Areas work at the grassroots level
24 in 52 counties and over 2,200 communities and
25 not-for-profit organizations.

1 Heritage Areas create economic development,
2 leveraging DCNR's grant investment at an average of
3 5 to 1 and as high as 15 to 1.

4 Heritage Areas are often the first people at
5 the table when a community or organization begins a
6 project, because these agencies understand the
7 Heritage Areas' ability to recognize, facilitate, and
8 develop the capacity and funding sources needed to
9 achieve the desired outcome.

10 Heritage Areas are the organizations that
11 develop, build, revitalize, and restore
12 Pennsylvania's heritage tourism infrastructure. It
13 is that work which helps small businesses survive and
14 thrive. It is that work which gives of DCED's
15 tourism office and the TPA/CVB community a
16 visitor-ready product to market. Their marketing
17 drives new money to Pennsylvania.

18 Heritage Areas are economic generators.
19 They are also image makers. Both contribute to the
20 health of the Commonwealth and benefit your
21 constituents.

22 As I said, I represent HeritagePA, our
23 statewide association. The primary purpose of
24 HeritagePA is to provide the Commonwealth of
25 Pennsylvania a better position in the cultural and

1 heritage tourism market through the established
2 success of the member organizations of Heritage PA
3 and to increase their statewide and national
4 leadership role in the heritage development movement.

5 I have included in your packets a
6 compilation of best practices of the Heritage Areas,
7 which describes leveraging and different projects
8 implemented over the many years of the program.

9 HeritagePA has an action plan in response to
10 the proposed budgets. HeritagePA seeks to restore
11 State funding to the Commonwealth's budget for fiscal
12 year '09-10 and preserve the ability of Pennsylvania
13 Heritage Areas to build growing and sustainable
14 Heritage development projects and programs that
15 foster cultural, historic, environmental, and
16 community economic development.

17 The mission and existence of the
18 Commonwealth's 12 Heritage Areas are threatened by
19 the Governor's proposed budget, which eliminates
20 funding for all Heritage Areas in the State, as does
21 Senate Bill 850.

22 The Heritage Areas are further compromised
23 by the absence of comprehensive legislation,
24 legislation that would establish program funding and
25 a standard process for the identification,

1 establishment, and evaluation of Heritage Area
2 programs.

3 To address the issues confronting
4 Pennsylvania Heritage Areas, HeritagePA recommends
5 the following:

6 • Restore \$1.95 million in the fiscal year
7 2009-10 budget for the 12 Heritage Areas.

8 HeritagePA urges the General Assembly and
9 the Rendell Administration to fund the Heritage Areas
10 Program at the current fiscal year level.

11 In the first year of the Rendell
12 Administration, the Governor reduced Heritage Areas
13 Program funding from \$2.95 million in fiscal year
14 '02-03 to the current level, where it has remained
15 for the past six budget cycles.

16 The budget action taken by the Governor
17 eliminates spending and effectively wipes out the
18 Heritage Area work of the last four Administrations.
19 This will essentially end this critical economic
20 development initiative in Pennsylvania and its
21 communities.

22 Pennsylvania's Heritage Areas Program has
23 long been recognized as a national model. The
24 Governor's action removes Pennsylvania from this role
25 and increases the challenge to revitalize the

1 Commonwealth's economy.

2 • Also, enact legislation to authorize the
3 overall Pennsylvania Heritage Areas Program.

4 HeritagePA urges the General Assembly to
5 act, in this case, on House Bill 1126 introduced by
6 Representative Tim Seip.

7 The bill will establish the Commonwealth
8 Heritage Development Act and provide specific
9 criteria and standards, as I mentioned before. The
10 legislation will ensure that the valuable work of
11 Pennsylvania's 12 Heritage Areas continues.

12 Some key points about the Heritage Areas.

13 Pennsylvania's Heritage Areas are economic
14 engines. At a time of severe economic downturn,
15 State funding through Heritage Areas actually
16 attracts more investment into the Pennsylvania
17 economy, generating direct match from other public
18 and private sources.

19 These funds, when spent in the community,
20 generate revenue and create jobs. These are the
21 exact types of revenue enhancements that the State
22 should be investing in during an economic recession.

23 The State's \$1.95 million budget for
24 Pennsylvania's Heritage Areas is a strategic
25 investment that leverages substantial funds for many

1 other local, State, and national sources to create
2 critical economic activity in communities across the
3 Commonwealth.

4 Without the State's relatively modest
5 Heritage Area seed money, these other investments
6 will not come to our communities, and the jobs that
7 would otherwise be created will be lost. This is
8 particularly important for small businesses which
9 benefit greatly from funds that flow through Heritage
10 Areas.

11 Over the 20-year history of funding to the
12 Pennsylvania Heritage Areas, the average budget has
13 provided approximately \$2 million each fiscal year.
14 This amount has resulted in at least, as I said
15 before, a 5 to 1 and as much as a 15 to 1 match
16 ratio. Those other investments will be lost if the
17 budget line amount of \$1.95 million is not restored.

18 Heritage Areas play a strong role in
19 Pennsylvania communities through facilitation and
20 capacity building.

21 Heritage Areas provide vital, technical, and
22 grant-writing assistance as well as funding to
23 municipalities, nonprofit and grassroots
24 organizations working on community revitalization,
25 recreational enhancements, educational endeavors,

1 interpretation, preservation, heritage development,
2 and promotion.

3 In 2008, eight Heritage Areas participated
4 in a study to assess the characteristics of the
5 visitors to their sites and estimate the impact of
6 these visitors on the local economies. The results
7 from these surveys were used to estimate the total
8 economic impact of the entire Pennsylvania Heritage
9 Areas network.

10 Based on those surveys, it can be estimated
11 that visitors to the entire HeritagePA Network
12 generated \$1.6 billion in direct and indirect sales
13 last year. These sales were enough to support more
14 than 31,500 jobs, which paid nearly \$600 million in
15 wages and salaries.

16 The total direct and indirect value added to
17 the community from the heritage tourism-related
18 activity in the form of personal income to workers,
19 profits and rents to businesses, and indirect
20 business taxes paid to the government is estimated to
21 be \$934 million in 2008.

22 In short, Heritage Areas celebrate the
23 unique character of their regions, preserving their
24 historic natural and cultural treasures while
25 encouraging local economic development and tourism.

1 The local effect of these efforts is
2 multifaceted. It includes a higher quality of life
3 for area citizens, stronger communities, effective
4 regional partnerships, and more local jobs.

5 The heritage development strategy crafted
6 and implemented in Pennsylvania has stood the test
7 of time. It has a proven record of accomplishments.
8 Pennsylvania is the model looked at by other
9 States.

10 I urge you to restore funding to the
11 Pennsylvania Heritage Areas and approve the
12 Commonwealth Heritage Development Act.

13 Thank you very much.

14 MR. HOLMAN: Mr. Chairman, Committee
15 Members, I am Larry Holman. I am the Commander,
16 Department of Pennsylvania, Jewish War Veterans, and
17 I'm also the President of the Pennsylvania War
18 Veterans Council and I'm a member of many veterans
19 service organizations in Philadelphia.

20 I have been asked to summarize the views of
21 all the groups who support the continued operation of
22 the Scotland School for Veterans' Children.

23 I would first like to mention those groups
24 who are here today. Please stand as I identify your
25 group.

1 Here today are Scotland School alumni,
2 Scotland School families, teachers, nonteaching
3 staff, and members and representatives of the
4 Foundation for Scotland School, and members of
5 various veterans groups. Thank you.

6 For 114 years, the Scotland School has
7 served as a benefit for the thousands of Pennsylvania
8 men and women who have answered the call in the
9 defense of our country.

10 The Scotland School is a privilege that
11 veterans have earned in exchange for our willingness
12 to put ourselves in harm's way to protect America's
13 freedoms.

14 The school survived the Great Depression and
15 it survived a proposed closing back in the early
16 1990s. In this post-9/11 era, as America conducts
17 wars on two fronts and as Pennsylvania generously
18 continues to send more than our share of sons and
19 daughters to serve our country, Scotland School is
20 more important to veterans than ever.

21 The need for Scotland School as a benefit to
22 military families is greater than ever before. We
23 are here to ask that you continue to support our
24 military personnel by keeping the Scotland School
25 intact.

1 The Department of Education has suggested
2 that Scotland School should be closed because it
3 costs too much. To that I ask, how much is it worth
4 to a deployed soldier in a foreign land and in a
5 hostile and dangerous environment to know that the
6 one thing he or she does not need to worry about is
7 that his or her kids will have a quality education in
8 a safe place no matter what happens?

9 The Department of Education has suggested
10 that the school should be closed because its test
11 scores aren't good enough. Mr. Chairman, unlike many
12 other schools, Scotland School graduates almost all
13 of its students.

14 Unlike many other schools, the vast majority
15 of Scotland graduates go on to study at 2-year and
16 4-year institutions of higher learning, and from
17 there they go on to have successful careers and
18 productive lives.

19 Ignoring these facts and diminishing the
20 school's accomplishments on the basis of PSSA scores
21 is a personal insult to every alumnus, every current
22 student, every family, every teacher, and every
23 houseparent.

24 The Department of Education has lost a PR
25 campaign designed to make you think that shutting

1 down Scotland School has been a smooth transition for
2 the students and their families. I have heard some
3 Legislators express the belief that many or most
4 Scotland students will simply end up at Milton
5 Hershey School.

6 To date and to my knowledge, not a single
7 Scotland student has been accepted at Milton Hershey.
8 Instead, many of them are being forced back into the
9 at-risk environments they came to Scotland School to
10 escape in the first place.

11 Mr. Chairman, I know you are interested in
12 the answer to at least one question, and that is
13 whether the people who support Scotland School would
14 support increased taxes or fees in order to save our
15 school.

16 I can assure you that many of those here
17 today and many other supporters who could not be here
18 today would support revenue increases in order to
19 save this institution.

20 At the same time, Mr. Chairman, let's put
21 this \$10.5 million line item into perspective.

22 The resources required to continue funding
23 Scotland School amount to about one-half of 1 percent
24 of the budget proposals before you. The funding
25 required for Scotland School equates to less than a

1 dollar a year for every Pennsylvania resident.

2 Last week, it came to light that the
3 Department of Education is moving forward with a
4 \$200 million contract for graduation exams over the
5 next 7 years. That's an average of almost
6 \$30 million per year for a program that not many
7 people seem to want, especially in a year in which
8 the State and national economy are in shambles.

9 Mr. Chairman, \$200 million is enough to fund
10 Scotland School for almost the next 20 years. Let me
11 reiterate that we are here today primarily on behalf
12 of Pennsylvania's veterans. We are also here on
13 behalf of Scotland School students, families, and
14 alumni, and the teachers, houseparents, and others
15 who are committed to preserving this important
16 benefit for veterans and their families.

17 An institution that exists to give veterans'
18 children an opportunity to succeed is a small price
19 to pay for the sacrifice that veterans make for our
20 country.

21 We ask that you continue to fund this
22 important and successful institution so that our
23 fighting men and women have an important safety net
24 and peace of mind while they protect the freedom that
25 defines our country.

1 Now, just two other brief comments.

2 I had occasion to look at Senate Bill 850
3 and compare it to House Bill 1416, and Senate Bill
4 850 cuts the amount to the State veterans homes
5 system by about \$7.6 million, from \$77 million to
6 \$69 million.

7 This could result in closure of one of the
8 six homes or closure of some of its wings in those
9 homes. This would have dire consequences, since it
10 has been learned that we need more homes in the
11 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in ensuing years, not
12 less.

13 Senate Bill 850 and House Bill 1416 have the
14 same amount for Act 66, the VSO outreach program.
15 That amount, \$1.678 million, is really not adequate
16 to complete the full mission of the program, and we
17 must remember that this program pays for itself by
18 bringing Federal benefits into the Commonwealth.

19 In closing, please do not balance the budget
20 on the backs of veterans without whom we would
21 probably be speaking a different language. I got
22 that last comment from a colleague of mine.

23 And I also invite you to see, at Senator
24 Baker's Website, the testimony that I gave in March
25 before the joint House and Senate Veterans Affairs

1 and Emergency Preparedness Committees.

2 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 MS. BECK: Thank you for letting me come
4 before you today.

5 My name is Jeanette Beck, and I'm here on
6 behalf of the ALS Association, which is the only
7 national not-for-profit health organization dedicated
8 solely to the fight against Lou Gehrig's disease.

9 I'm here to ask the State to support the ALS
10 community by providing \$800,000 to the association
11 for patient services.

12 ALS is a fatal disease, and it robs people
13 of their ability to perform everyday things that you
14 and I take for granted.

15 There is no cure or effective treatment for
16 ALS, and the life expectancy for someone with ALS is
17 2 to 5 years from the time of diagnosis. It does not
18 discriminate in who it strikes and can impact anyone
19 at any time regardless of age, gender, race, or
20 ethnicity.

21 They have found military veterans at a
22 50-percent greater risk of developing ALS than those
23 who have not served in the military. The average age
24 of diagnosis is 55 years, with many of those
25 diagnosed in their thirties and forties.

1 I speak to you today with firsthand
2 knowledge about ALS. My husband, Jim, was diagnosed
3 with ALS in January of 2007. When Jim was diagnosed
4 with ALS, I became not only his wife and caregiver
5 but his advocate for whatever he needed. I can't
6 tell you how alone I felt at this time trying to
7 provide for the needs of my husband.

8 I believe the hardest thing I've had to do
9 in this life is watch my husband live with ALS and
10 lose more and more of his abilities with each passing
11 day. I have been a nurse for over 40 years, and I
12 served in the Army as an Army nurse in Vietnam, so I
13 have seen a lot. But what ALS does to a person is
14 unequalled to anything else.

15 Imagine one day no longer being able to walk
16 or move your arms or legs and needing help for every
17 function of daily living, not being able to eat and
18 dependent on tube feedings for nutrition, and not
19 being able to talk or communicate.

20 During this time, though, your mind does not
21 change. It functions just the same, but it becomes
22 trapped inside a body which is no longer working.
23 The frustration, the act of breathing that you and I
24 take for granted, now becomes something you have to
25 think about in order for it to happen.

1 Through my husband's journey with ALS, we
2 met so many wonderful people who tried to make this
3 journey as easy as possible. Our pharmacist was
4 someone I could always depend on, and the medical
5 equipment suppliers were always there to provide
6 whatever he needed.

7 When we began our visits to the ALS clinic
8 in Hershey and met the ALS team, which I cannot say
9 enough about, they treated Jim with dignity and such
10 caring, not a disease but a person. They became our
11 extended family, and I no longer felt alone but had a
12 whole team of dedicated individuals advocating for my
13 husband and for me to give Jim quality of life.

14 The ALS Association is the only statewide
15 organization focused solely on ALS and the many
16 people with ALS who would not have their basic needs
17 met without their assistance.

18 The ALS Association does not receive Federal
19 funding, and up until now, has not received anything
20 from the State. The association depends on
21 charitable contributions in order to serve patients
22 and to keep their doors open.

23 The ALS Association, just like the State, is
24 doing their best to deal with these uncertain
25 economic times. The budgets are smaller, but the

1 need for services continues to grow.

2 Families that typically would not use some
3 services are finding that they now have to contact
4 the association for help. Therefore, in an effort to
5 meet the needs of all Pennsylvanians living with ALS,
6 the ALS Association is requesting assistance from the
7 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for funding of core
8 programs and clinics.

9 We are seeking an \$800,000 line item in the
10 budget to support the approximately 1,000
11 Pennsylvanians living with ALS. This amounts to
12 about \$800 per patient, which would be used to fund
13 the ALS multidisciplinary clinics that are in
14 Johnstown, Pittsburgh, Hershey, Allentown, and
15 Philadelphia, to provide case management services, to
16 continue and expand support groups, to purchase
17 equipment for medical loan closets such as speech
18 communications devices, to provide home visits,
19 provide respite and in-home-care programs, and to
20 provide transportation and assistance.

21 The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will save
22 money, likely more than the investment, by partnering
23 with the ALS Association to provide vital patient
24 services to Pennsylvanians battling Lou Gehrig's
25 disease.

1 In Pennsylvania, the average cost per year
2 of nursing home placement is \$80,665, and it is often
3 paid through Medicaid.

4 The ALS Association provides respite-care
5 grants to families. These grants can help delay and
6 prevent nursing-home placement. This allows the
7 patient with ALS to remain in their home with their
8 families.

9 Not only is being at home more cost
10 effective and medically appropriate care for the
11 person with ALS and their family, but it means the
12 family is less likely to require State services and
13 programs.

14 My husband lost his battle with ALS in
15 September of 2008, so I ask you, on behalf of those
16 people with ALS and their families, to help keep
17 their hope alive that a cure and effective treatment
18 may be found.

19 But until that day, we ask that you include
20 the ALS Association in the State budget for \$800,000
21 in order to continue to provide the services and keep
22 the clinics open so that our loved ones can at least
23 have quality of life with the life they still have to
24 live.

25 Thank you so much for allowing me to speak

1 to you, and we look forward to working with you as
2 we seek a treatment and a cure for Lou Gehrig's
3 disease.

4 MS. MURRAY: My name is Nancy Murray, and
5 I'm the President of the Arc of Greater Pittsburgh,
6 and more importantly, my husband and I have two adult
7 children with disabilities.

8 And I'm really here today not only
9 representing myself, my organization, but the tens of
10 thousands of other families with children with
11 disabilities who could not possibly travel to
12 Harrisburg.

13 I also want to let you know that our lives
14 will be devastated should Senate Bill 850 be enacted.
15 I refer specifically to these facts:

16 Senate Bill 850 will reduce the Mental
17 Retardation Consolidated Waiver services by almost
18 \$33 million in State and Federal funding. So
19 basically, the State of Pennsylvania will be giving
20 up millions in Federal funds.

21 This will cause immediately 550 people
22 currently receiving waiver services to lose their
23 services.

24 It will totally eliminate the waiting list
25 initiative, which next year was to serve almost

1 793 new people, all of whom are in emergency
2 situations.

3 It will also terminate services for almost
4 180 children who are currently in residential
5 treatment facilities who will be turning 21, who will
6 lose those services.

7 It will also terminate residential services
8 for more than 100 other adults who are in emergency
9 situations.

10 Senate Bill 850 will also reduce the
11 Base Mental Retardation Community Program by another
12 \$12 million.

13 This will result in a devastating loss of
14 services for another 3,000 families who rely on a few
15 hundred dollars a year that enables them to continue
16 to care for their sons and daughters at home.

17 Who are these families? Let me tell you.
18 Many of them are now in their fifties, sixties,
19 seventies, eighties, and nineties. These are the
20 people who did not put their children in an
21 institution decades ago, who have since cared for
22 their children at home.

23 In order to provide this care, many parents
24 have declined job promotions, many in other cities,
25 in order that they could stay close to family because

1 they needed assistance in caring for their son or
2 daughter.

3 Many marriages have ended in divorce. So
4 there are many single parents caring for these
5 children.

6 Many parents who have adult children with
7 disabilities don't even think about retirement like
8 most people do, because for them, there is no
9 retirement from their caregiving. Their only hope
10 is that they can outlive their son or daughter by
11 1 day.

12 Many of these families have only received a
13 few hundred dollars per year in family support
14 service funding, but over these years, they have
15 saved this Commonwealth billions -- with a "b" --
16 billions of dollars.

17 The disastrous result of Senate Bill 850
18 will be that many of these families are going to now
19 be unable to care for their sons and daughters at
20 home.

21 For example, without a day program for a
22 person to attend, a parent will not be able to
23 continue their employment. Without in-home services,
24 an elderly parent will not be able to continue to
25 bathe and dress their adult son or daughter. The

1 result will be placement in an expensive State
2 institution, which is a Federal entitlement, for
3 which the State must pay its share of the funding.

4 Currently, the average annual cost per
5 resident at one of your five State mental retardation
6 centers is \$226,000, of which you and the State are
7 paying \$88,000 per person.

8 Hence, sending people to State centers
9 rather than continuing to provide them with more
10 cost-effective community services will require the
11 State to incur millions of dollars to maintain the
12 Federal matching funds, which, of course, is at a
13 most greater cost to Pennsylvania's taxpayers.

14 So again, Pennsylvania will be abandoning
15 millions of Federal dollars that are intended and
16 available to provide for our citizens with
17 disabilities.

18 Let me give you an example. As I mentioned
19 before, 3,000 families are slated to lose these
20 family support service dollars. If only 1 in 10 of
21 those 3,000 has to make the heart-wrenching decision
22 to place their sons and daughters in an institution,
23 this ill-advised budget proposal would actually
24 increase State expenditures by \$14.3 million rather
25 than achieving \$12.1 million in projected savings,

1 and that's only if 1 in 10 has to make this
2 decision.

3 Now, please try to imagine for one moment
4 the fear that a person would feel, a person who has
5 lived all of his life at home with his family. He
6 has lived in his community; he has gone to school;
7 maybe he works in a day program. His brothers and
8 sisters come to visit every weekend or he goes to
9 visit them.

10 Can you just for one minute imagine the fear
11 that this young man would feel if all of a sudden he
12 is taken to one of our State institutions and left
13 there? It's incomprehensible.

14 It is also immoral that an elderly mother or
15 father who has taken care of a son or daughter for
16 decades, who now, because of their ill health, can no
17 longer provide that care, should face their adult
18 child being taken to an institution.

19 Most reasonable people understand the
20 competing interests and pressures that all of you
21 face in making very difficult budget decisions during
22 America's current economic crisis. I'm sure no one
23 in this room would even consider taking any of your
24 jobs at this moment.

25 However, it is also the case that especially

1 during tough economic times, State Government must
2 focus its limited resources on meeting our core
3 responsibilities, and they include protecting our
4 most vulnerable citizens -- our children, the
5 elderly, and people with disabilities.

6 Since Senate Bill 850 was passed, I have
7 heard from hundreds of families. Two of these
8 parents could not be here today, and in a minute I
9 think you'll understand why, but they asked me to
10 share their thoughts with you.

11 One mother from Allegheny County writes:

12 "I am writing to you as a concerned parent
13 of a 36-year old lady who has cerebral palsy. My
14 daughter has lived at home with me since birth -- and
15 I'm a single working mom. It is only through the
16 in-home services...that I have been able to continue
17 to work and care for..." her.

18 "I cannot even begin to tell you how much
19 that funding means to us -- it provides for a
20 care-giver to come into our home each day.... She
21 comes in the morning to help by staying with her and
22 getting her on the bus.... That way I am able to get
23 to work.... In the afternoon..." she's back to take
24 care of her until I get home from work.

25 "Can you imagine what it is like to have a

1 daughter who is 36 years old and totally dependent?
2 I wish I could help paint the picture of what it's
3 like to have a 36-year old 'baby' to care for -- it's
4 not an easy task. The in-home services also fund
5 some respite days for me -- so that I can maintain my
6 own sanity.... The stress of holding down a
7 full-time job and caring for someone like my daughter
8 are awesome tasks.... Without the in-home
9 services...we would surely be at our wit's end trying
10 to survive.

11 "Cutting funding to those of us to try to
12 care for our adult children at home is like punishing
13 us for doing the best we can possibly do for them.
14 Without the...services...parents like me will be
15 faced with such financial and emotional trauma that
16 it will be unbearable. I can't even begin to tell
17 you what a burden it..." will be for me.

18 A mother from Lancaster County wanted me to
19 share these thoughts:

20 "My husband and I are the parents of our
21 9-almost-10-year-old son, who has severe to profound
22 mental retardation, autism, a seizure disorder and a
23 movement disorder. Developmentally, he functions
24 below or at the level of a 2-year-old. Each day he
25 continues to grow and gain more physical strength;

1 our strength, however, does not. In fact, we become
2 weaker and weaker physically, mentally and
3 emotionally each day."

4 Thank you.

5 MR. WRIGHTSTONE: Good afternoon.

6 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN EVANS: Would you just
7 announce your name again, please.

8 MR. WRIGHTSTONE: Gregory Wrightstone.

9 Good afternoon. Thank you for allowing me
10 to speak today.

11 I'm the President of the Pennsylvania
12 Coalition for Responsible Government. Our group is a
13 grassroots organization that was formed to promote
14 and advance the principles of limited government and
15 to assist ordinary citizens to be effective agents of
16 change to promote free enterprise, limited
17 government, and the empowerment of the individual.

18 I'm here today representing average
19 taxpayers throughout the Commonwealth in support of
20 the Senate's recently passed budget. This is a
21 commonsense, no-tax-increase budget which is
22 significantly less than the budget proposed by
23 Governor Rendell.

24 In a time of economic downturn, most
25 Pennsylvania families and businesses are trimming

1 their budgets to the bone and making due with less
2 and less each month. We believe it's time for the
3 government to do the same and even more so since they
4 are spending our hard-earned money.

5 You've heard from many other speakers before
6 me with virtually all of them advocating increased
7 spending. Most of these speakers are representing
8 special interests that feed at the trough of
9 government largesse and are dependent on an
10 ever-increasing and bloated government system.

11 I want you to remember that each dollar you
12 decide to spend is money that is taken out of my
13 wallet and my neighbor's wallet and your neighbor's
14 wallet.

15 As I said, I'm representing the largest
16 special interest group in the State, and apparently
17 from what I see today, the most disenfranchised
18 special interest group, and that's the taxpayers.

19 Contrary to what other speakers have told
20 you, the average taxpayer doesn't want the government
21 to do more. They want the government to get out of
22 the way, to downsize, to spend less, to do less, and
23 to tax less.

24 Pennsylvania has the eleventh highest State
25 and local tax rate in the nation, and it appears that

1 Governor Rendell and his supporters believe that they
2 can tax and spend and borrow their way out of their
3 problems. Every taxpayer with a shred of common
4 sense will tell you that this is a recipe for
5 financial disaster.

6 Governor Rendell's budget calls for tax
7 increases of nearly \$500 million and will spend more
8 than \$3 billion more than it takes in this fiscal
9 year. In a recession, our leaders should be talking
10 about cutting taxes to stimulate the economy, not
11 raising them.

12 In spite of spending billions of dollars in
13 corporate welfare to spur economic development under
14 Governor Rendell, Pennsylvania currently ranks 40th
15 in the nation in both job growth and income.

16 As it stands now, Pennsylvania ranks 28th in
17 the Tax Foundation's State business climate index.
18 Considering the poor economic climate and poor
19 corporate climate, the high corporate tax rate in
20 Pennsylvania, it is not surprising that companies are
21 voting with their feet and leaving the Commonwealth
22 for locations in other States with a better and less
23 punitive tax structure.

24 Yesterday you heard from Matt Brouillette of
25 the Commonwealth Foundation where he identified

1 nearly \$5 billion of wasteful State spending that
2 should be eliminated. We have reviewed these
3 proposals and believe that it's a good first step
4 toward bringing our State spending back under
5 control.

6 We support their three-step proposal towards
7 putting the Commonwealth on a path toward fiscal and
8 economic health while restoring the State
9 Government's constitutional role and functions in
10 citizens' lives.

11 These include, first, limit the growth in
12 annual State Government spending; second, allow
13 voters the choice to accept or reject any and all tax
14 increases; third, reduce Pennsylvania's tax burden on
15 families and businesses.

16 Interestingly, the Governor proposes to
17 spend \$428 million in his Growing Greener initiative
18 to spur development of uneconomic and, in some cases,
19 unproven alternative energy resources, such as
20 biofuels, windmills, and solar power, while at the
21 same time his Administration throws up roadblocks and
22 refuses to lease additional acreage for the
23 development of the vast, clean-burning natural gas
24 resources that we know exist in the Marcellus
25 Shale.

1 The Governor's budget proposes a new
2 5-percent surcharge on all natural gas production
3 from this resource, and that is the newest -- that is
4 the largest amount of new taxes that is in his
5 budget, as you are aware.

6 A similar shale play in Louisiana has
7 already created 33,000 new jobs, and the Marcellus is
8 projected to create 60,000 new jobs in Pennsylvania
9 without State subsidies.

10 This new tax could cripple an industry that
11 is already reeling from low product prices.
12 Apparently the Governor wants to kill the goose
13 before it has had a chance to lay its first golden
14 egg.

15 As you consider the choices before you,
16 remember that your vote on this budget is a test on
17 whether you will stand with the little people who
18 actually pay the taxes and desire a smaller, less
19 intrusive government, or will you promote an
20 ever-growing behemoth that swallows more and more of
21 our money?

22 This is a new day, and if you haven't
23 noticed, the voters and taxpayers are increasingly
24 aware and angry at those Legislators that support
25 wasteful spending.

1 The mood of the electorate across the nation
2 is vehemently against additional wasteful spending,
3 as the recent vote in California we just saw proves.

4 So I implore you to stand up for the
5 taxpayers, support the commonsense, no-tax budget
6 passed by the Senate, or risk facing the voters who
7 will remember this important vote. And I guarantee
8 you that we will be there to remind them.

9 I thank you for your time. Thank you.

10 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN EVANS: Thank you very
11 much.

12 Next.

13 MR. WILSON: My name is Tim Wilson. I'm the
14 Executive Director of the Philadelphia Alliance of
15 Specialized Agencies.

16 Thank you, Chairman Evans and Members of the
17 committee, for the opportunity to be part of your
18 conversation.

19 Given that I followed the gentleman to my
20 left, I must say that I am a taxpayer also. And, you
21 know, I think there are a lot of taxpayers who don't
22 want government to spend money on hardly anything
23 until they need the help and support of one of the
24 government programs, and then the attitude changes
25 greatly. So I just add that footnote.

1 And in this case, I realize in this
2 environment that it's not likely that there are going
3 to be any new taxes except maybe some little ones
4 around the edges, but House Bill 1416 doesn't really
5 do that.

6 It takes advantage of the Federal stimulus
7 money, which Nancy Murray and others have mentioned
8 before. It provides millions and millions of dollars
9 to help that deficit with the enhanced Federal match.

10 So excuse me for that little tangent. Back
11 to what I want to say.

12 You may have a letter that I turned in that
13 is really our testimony. The Philadelphia Alliance
14 is an association of human service agencies that
15 provide services for people with intellectual
16 disabilities, mental illness, and/or addictions.

17 Together, those 44 member agencies serve in
18 the neighborhood of 50,000 people and have 20,000
19 employees.

20 And I'm going to read a few excerpts from our
21 letter, but the main points that I want to make to
22 you is, yes, we want compassion, and you've heard a
23 lot of people talk about human need and the necessity
24 of many of the Federal and State programs. But there
25 is an economic argument here also.

1 Our agencies and agencies that provide all
2 the other types of services, human services, they
3 have employees, and program cuts, budget cuts, mean
4 less employees, more people laid off, more
5 unemployment, more people needing the very Medicaid
6 services that Senate Bill 850 wants to cut.

7 And that is just -- it's hard to imagine the
8 reasoning that goes into that. Why leave all that
9 Federal money on the table when there is so much
10 need? And it's likely to be greater now from
11 unemployment and people needing more service.

12 And you can't avoid those costs. I mean,
13 you might try to fool yourself and think that, well,
14 you know, we're going to cut Medicaid. Well, some of
15 that, a lot of that, is an entitlement, and so when
16 people get into those situations, are driven to that
17 level by the heartless Senate Bill 850, there are
18 going to be more costs. And it is, you know, cutting
19 off one's nose to spite their face.

20 But let me get back to our written
21 testimony. We actually had submitted an earlier
22 letter around the Governor's proposed budget, and
23 while we had a few arguments with that, there were
24 a few things that we thought should have been
25 included.

1 We complimented at the time the Governor,
2 and it is reflected in House Bill 1416, for making
3 human services a priority. We don't believe, as was
4 suggested in the dialogue with the previous panel, we
5 do not believe any human services should be cut. We
6 don't want to play one group against another. There
7 is a lot of need, but that need can be taken care of
8 as reflected in House Bill 1416.

9 One of the points that we have tried to talk
10 up is that, you know, when all the stimulus
11 discussion was going on, there was a lot of talk
12 about investing in the infrastructure. And what we
13 would like to say is, Pennsylvania needs to invest in
14 the human infrastructure as well as the things that
15 can be built or, you know, developed.

16 But the human infrastructure is very
17 important. Not only, as I mentioned previously, not
18 only are people's jobs at stake and, therefore, their
19 paying taxes is at stake, their hopefully preventing
20 avoiding needing additional services at stake, but
21 also the services that we are talking about for
22 people with intellectual disabilities, for people
23 with mental illness, for people with addictions, the
24 services we provide help to make them more productive
25 also, which then produces more taxes for

1 Pennsylvania.

2 And so to cut the bottom out of it is just
3 foolish, as Debbie Plotnick said in the last panel,
4 pennywise and pound foolish. It's hard to imagine
5 why we would want to jump off the cliff now.

6 I mean, Senate Bill 850 seems to be saying,
7 well, we think there is going to be a big crisis
8 2 years from now, ignoring the fact that things could
9 change, that as a lot of people think, the economy
10 could turn around, things could be better.

11 But we think there might be a problem
12 2 years from now, so let's just jump off the cliff
13 now. Let's just get it over with instead of waiting
14 to see if things get better 2 years from now.

15 You can read our letter, but, you know, I
16 think I have digressed from it somewhat. What I want
17 to urge you all to do as Members of the House
18 Appropriations Committee is when the negotiations
19 begin, use House Bill 1416 as the starting point. It
20 should not be Senate Bill 850.

21 I would urge you to stand firm and not even
22 move in that direction. Don't give it that validity.
23 It's a political maneuver, not thinking about
24 Pennsylvania citizens.

25 Thank you.

1 MS. FOLEY: Chairman Evans and Members of
2 the Pennsylvania House of Representatives---

3 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN EVANS: Would you state
4 your name again, please.

5 MS. FOLEY: Oh, sure. Rebecca Foley, and
6 I'm with WOMEN'S WAY.

7 So thank you so much for having me here
8 today, and thank you for this opportunity to come
9 voice our concerns over this budget. It is really
10 important, and we thank you for convening these
11 hearings.

12 Again, I'm with WOMEN'S WAY, and our
13 organization works tirelessly in the Philadelphia
14 region to raise money and public awareness to help
15 women achieve quality, safety, self-sufficiency,
16 health care, and reproductive freedom through
17 women-centered funding, education, and advocacy.

18 WOMEN'S WAY supports a broad network of
19 quality agencies serving women, girls, and families
20 throughout the Philadelphia region and also works to
21 advocate for much needed systemic and larger changes
22 to advance women's progress.

23 I'm here today to voice WOMEN'S WAY's
24 concerns with Senate Bill 850, which makes deep
25 funding cuts to programs providing services to the

1 most vulnerable women and families.

2 In the sake of, I know that time is limited
3 today, so I'm just going to point out a few of the
4 cuts that we're concerned with.

5 The cut of \$17 million in child-care subsidy
6 funds for working parents will eliminate subsidy
7 slots for 3,400 children whose parents have left
8 welfare for work, and also 2,000 additional parents
9 just trying to make ends meet.

10 The budget also puts women's health in
11 jeopardy, as cuts were made to funding for
12 preventative health-care screenings for newborn
13 babies. It also made cuts to breast and cervical
14 cancer screenings and community-based family health
15 centers.

16 The total State appropriation for legal
17 services, \$3.2 million, was completely eliminated.
18 In times of economic crisis, these populations at
19 risk have an acute need for legal services, such as
20 victims of sexual assault and domestic violence.

21 Cuts were also made directly to domestic
22 violence and sexual assault and rape services.

23 It wasn't a surprise when these cuts were
24 made because cuts to domestic violence and rape
25 services have been made for years and years now, and

1 it really must be restored.

2 I would also like to make an additional --
3 just as a point to something that is going to be
4 coming down the line.

5 Legislation will be introduced to address
6 the critical shortage of funding for domestic
7 violence survivors through a bill that will be filed
8 in just a few short weeks, and we will be urging you
9 to support that bill. It's a commonsense piece of
10 legislation which finds a mechanism to support
11 revenue for these dire, dire needs of domestic
12 violence services in Pennsylvania.

13 So the cumulative need for all these
14 lifesaving services I just mentioned and more are
15 actually captured in WOMEN'S WAY's updated recent
16 research report which looks at the status of women's
17 conditions in the region. So I will be submitting
18 this along with my testimony, and it also can be
19 found on our Website at womensway.org.

20 Lastly, Senate Bill 850 would zero out the
21 Pennsylvania Commission for Women's budget, thereby
22 eliminating this commission altogether.

23 For 35 years, the Pennsylvania Commission
24 for Women has identified and advanced the diverse
25 needs and interests of Pennsylvania women and

1 children. Its achievements in the areas of women's
2 health, domestic violence, rape crisis, employment,
3 and wage equity has helped countless women and
4 children and their families.

5 In dissolving the budget of the Pennsylvania
6 Commission for Women, Senate Bill 850 destroys a
7 strong and worthy advocate in the fight that
8 Pennsylvania women and children are really trying to
9 wage to make their lives better, their health better,
10 and just live more productive lives altogether.

11 We strongly urge your support for the
12 companion bill in the House, House Bill 1416, which
13 would restore the funding for the Pennsylvania
14 Commission for Women.

15 We also respectfully ask that you restore
16 the restoration of all the deep cuts made in
17 Senate Bill 850 for much needed community and health
18 and human services. The most vulnerable in the
19 Commonwealth need your voice and leadership.

20 Thank you very much for your time and
21 consideration.

22 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN EVANS: Thank you.

23 MR. SCHULTZ: Good afternoon.

24 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN EVANS: Good afternoon to
25 you, too.

1 MR. SCHULTZ: I would like to thank the
2 Members of the committee for hearing my voice.

3 My name is William Schultz. I live in
4 Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, and I am the
5 Board President of the UCP of Pennsylvania.

6 We were established in the 1950s by parents
7 of people with disabilities, servicing their needs.
8 And it's essential for people with disabilities to
9 have the support they need to function in their
10 communities and be in their communities instead of
11 institutions, and they are much cheaper and they
12 benefit the people and their communities.

13 We strongly object to the cuts in the
14 programs serving people with disabilities in the
15 community, including in the Office of Developmental
16 Programs, the Office of Long Term Living, and in the
17 Department of Aging.

18 If these cuts are enacted as described in
19 Senate Bill 850, thousands of consumers could lose
20 services with devastating effects on them, their
21 families, and their providers.

22 The needs of these vulnerable people do not
23 go away in tight budget years. Many could end up in
24 nursing homes for lack of any other alternative.
25 This will cost the State much more.

1 And we urge that we continue funding for
2 home modifications and assistive technology that
3 support and promote independence in the community.

4 I would like to submit to you a list of the
5 funding amounts that these programs need to continue
6 their services without interruption and to provide
7 services to those people projected to be in need of
8 services next year.

9 We view the role of government to ensure a
10 safety net for seniors and with people with
11 disabilities and that these services must be a
12 priority for policymakers and taxpayers alike.

13 Thank you for your consideration.

14 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN EVANS: Thank you for
15 coming before us.

16 One, I want to thank all of you in the
17 comments that you have made.

18 As I said earlier, this is the beginning of
19 a conversation. Really, all of us need to work
20 together to figure out how we will address these
21 issues. They are not easy. I do believe that we
22 will get through this short-term and long-term
23 strategy.

24 We all are Pennsylvanians, no matter what
25 our differences of opinion may be, but we are going

1 to work together.

2 My understanding is that Representative
3 Bill Kortz wants to say something. Bill.

4 REPRESENTATIVE KORTZ: Thank you,
5 Mr. Chairman.

6 Thank you all for being here today.

7 Mr. Schultz, I agree with you 100 percent.
8 We cannot cut the programs. We have to keep the
9 programs for the disabilities, people that need that.
10 That is one of our core functions.

11 Mr. Holman, I would like to go back to you.
12 You talked about the Scotland School. I agree
13 100 percent. I think that institution is doing a
14 fine job, and I think it is bad policy for us to go
15 out and contract for GCAs at \$200 million when we
16 have an institution that we could keep running. So I
17 agree with you.

18 Mr. Wrightstone, I would be remiss if I
19 didn't come back to you. If we go with this
20 Senate Bill 850, we put people like Mr. Schultz at
21 risk, Nancy Murray's daughters. Elise Kuhn was here
22 today and Elise Westcott.

23 I don't think we want to put these people at
24 risk. However, that bill takes a butcher knife to
25 the budget.

1 We have to take a look at maybe taking
2 surgical cuts along with revenue enhancers, okay?
3 Going across the board and putting these people at
4 risk is bad policy.

5 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN EVANS: Again, I want to
7 thank all of you, seriously, for your testimony. I
8 really appreciate that.

9 Thank you very much.

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11 (The hearing concluded at 4:10 p.m.)

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1 I hereby certify that the proceedings and
2 evidence are contained fully and accurately in the
3 notes taken by me on the within proceedings and that
4 this is a correct transcript of the same.

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Debra B. Miller, Reporter

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