

# WEEKLY SESSION NOTES

SENATE REPUBLICAN POLICY COMMITTEE – JOHN PIPPY, CHAIRMAN

## Monday, September 14, 2009

[Senate Bill 535](#) (Fontana) would amend Title 34 (Game) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to provide an exemption from licensing requirements for adult hunters who participate in a mentored adult hunting program. **Passed: 49-0.**

[Senate Resolution 171](#) (Dinniman) designates the week of September 21 through 27, 2009 as “Active Aging Week” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 172](#) (Dinniman) congratulates the American Kennel Club on the occasion of the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding in the City of Philadelphia, and designates the month of September 2009 as “American Kennel Club Month” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

## Tuesday, September 15, 2009

There were no final passage votes taken in the Senate on Tuesday.

## Wednesday, September 16, 2009

There were no final passage votes taken in the Senate on Wednesday.

## Thursday, September 17, 2009

[Senate Bill 1070](#) (Mellow) would designate Route 611 from Main Street in the Village of Tobyhanna to Interstate 380 in Coolbaugh Township, Monroe County as the Trooper Joshua D. Miller Memorial Highway. Trooper Miller was killed in the line of duty June 7, 2009 while attempting to apprehend a kidnapping suspect. Trooper Miller is survived by his wife and three children. **Passed: 49-0.**

[Senate Resolution 173](#) (Tartaglione) observes September 15 through October 15, 2009 as “Hispanic Heritage Month” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 174](#) (Brubaker) commends the Pennsylvania Association of Regional Food Banks on the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its establishment. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[House Bill 1828](#) (Williams) would amend the Municipal Pension Plan Funding Standard and Recovery Act to provide for municipal pension reform. Among other provisions, the bill would:

- Mandate actuarial funding standards for all municipal pension systems.

- Provide for mandatory and optional local government remedies based upon the severity of a municipal plan's distress which is calculated by the ratio of the plan's assets to liabilities:
  - Minimally Distressed Plans [Level I: 70 – 89 percent funded] would be permitted a reduction in contribution limits for two years.
  - Moderately Distressed Plans [Level II: 50-69 percent funded] would be permitted a reduction in contribution limits for four years, required to aggregate pension funds for administration and investment purposes, and required to submit an administrative improvement plan.
  - Severely Distressed Plans [Level III: less than 50 percent funded] would be permitted to pay a reduced contribution for six years.
- Establish a Code of Conduct for municipal pension systems that would:
  - Require pension systems to adopt procedures to advertise and review proposals for contracts for professional services.
  - Require service contractors to disclose the names and titles of the individuals providing services.
  - Require the system to adopt policies regarding conflicts of interest including revolving door policies for employees of the system and the contractor.
  - Require service contractors to disclose the hiring of third parties or lobbyists to communicate with a municipality or municipal pension system.
  - Require disclosure of campaign contributions for the last five years and prohibit a contract with a person who made a contribution to an official of the municipality within the last four years.
  - Prohibit the contractor from having any business relationship with a system official and prohibit gifts to system officials and employees.
- Allow Philadelphia to amortize its unfunded actuarial accrued liability as of July 1, 2009 over 30 years. Other special provisions relating to Philadelphia would:
  - Permit the City to defer a portion of its minimum obligation to the fund for fiscal years 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 in amounts not to exceed \$115 million and \$80 million respectively with interest payable at 8.25%, to be repaid in full by June 30, 2014.

- Permit the City to temporarily (until July 1, 2014) impose an additional local sales and use tax of 1 percent (from 7 percent to 8 percent), with all such revenues required to be used to pay Philadelphia's pension systems obligations.
- Create a commission to conduct a benefit plan study of each benefit plan maintained by Philadelphia. The first study would have to be completed within two years following the effective date of the section and every two years thereafter until 2016. Copies of the reports would have to be submitted to the Chair and Minority Chair of the Senate and House Appropriations and Finance Committees. The reports would also be available for public inspection.
- Freeze the Pittsburgh parking tax at 37.5 percent and dedicate 6.75 percent of the amount collected to fund pension liabilities.
- Allow Pittsburgh to impose an additional 2.5 percent parking tax if it sells or leases all of its parking garages and deposits all of the net proceeds into its account in the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System. All of the revenue from the additional tax would have to be dedicated to funding pension liabilities.
- Require Pittsburgh to transfer all existing benefits plans to the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement Board solely for administration if it is determined to be in Level III distress based on the required actuarial valuation reports for a plan year beginning on January 1, 2011. Pension benefits and eligibility requirements would continue to be subject to collective bargaining, if applicable. The plans would not be subject to the control or input of the Board.
- Provide for the establishment and administration of local government deferred retirement option plans for local governments that do not have such plans on the effective date of the act. A deferred retirement option plan established on or after the effective date of the act would not be available to an elected official. A plan established prior to the effective date would be available to an official elected prior to the effective date of the section who runs for re-election. [Concurrence in House Amendments to Senate Amendments: 32-17.](#)

(2009-129)