

TALKING POINTS

OVERVIEW

- ?? 2006 is shaping up to be one of the best years in terms of Democratic victories in Pennsylvania with two giants at the top of the ticket in Gov. Ed Rendell and our next U.S. Senator, Bob Casey.
- ?? Pennsylvanians are tired of Republican majorities in both state chambers as well and will be competitive in most House races to prime us for major legislative victories in the fall.
- ?? The Republican “culture of corruption”, as evidenced by shenanigans in Washington, D.C. (Abramoff scandal, Santorum’s notorious K Street Project) and President Bush’s abominable favorable rating of 37 percent plays well for Democrats.
- ?? Bush’s approval ratings are the worst for ANY PRESIDENT since Richard Nixon and the Watergate debacle.
- ?? It shows that Americans – and Pennsylvanians – are tired of “business as usual” and that voters are ready for a much needed change at the federal, state and local levels.
- ?? Democrats believe that families should spend less, not that government should spend more. We are fighting because it is wrong to keep our kids from going to college and our seniors from getting their medicine.
 - We should make the government balance the budget-just like every American family has to do.
 - We should make American life more affordable and ease the middle-class squeeze.
 - We should make the investment we need to provide real security for the nation.
- ?? In a recent ABC News/USA Today poll, 51 percent of Americans believe that Republicans are leading the country in the wrong direction and feel that their ideas have failed them.
- ?? Pennsylvania is part of the DNC’s “States Program” where resources are spent on regional coordinators (3) and a full-time Director of Communications as part of a national grass-roots effort aimed at strengthening the Party overall.

GOV. RENDELL

- ?? Despite Republican majorities in both chambers, Gov. Rendell's progressive agenda has been successful in several fronts that include:
 - \$1.2 billion in new spending on public education that includes a \$200 million accountability block grant program that is being used by school districts for:
 - ~~///~~ Full-day kindergarten
 - ~~///~~ Quality pre-kindergarten programs
 - ~~///~~ Math and literacy coaching for children
 - ~~///~~ Greater teacher training

- ?? The Governor's economic stimulus program leverages more than \$2.3 billion in grants, loans and guarantees over the next three years to generate at least \$5 billion in private-sector investment to help start new businesses in Pennsylvania and help existing companies expand here.

- ?? Municipalities and businesses throughout the Commonwealth are already dipping into the pool of resources now available to boost our business climate, spur private sector growth, revitalize our housing and rebuild our infrastructure.

- ?? **And Governor Rendell's economic stimulus plan works.**
 - In May 2005, the number of employed Pennsylvanians reached an all-time high of 6,045,000—an increase of 28,000 over the record set in April and 200,000 more than when Governor Rendell took office in 2003.
 - Additionally, the statewide unemployment rate dropped below 5 percent for the first time since 2001 and the state gained jobs in the good producing and service providing sectors in three consecutive months for the first time in a decade.
 - Largest gains were in the construction sector, which added 2,700 new workers in May, reaching an all-time-record high of 256,300.

- ?? Governor Rendell signed into law Growing Greener II, fulfilling his pledge to improve the economic and environmental health of Pennsylvania and bringing to fruition more than a year of aggressive efforts to address some of the state's most pressing environmental problems.
 - The \$625 million voter-approved plan --- the single largest environmental investment in state history --- will clean up rivers and streams; protect natural areas, open spaces and working farms; and shore up key programs to improve quality of life and revitalize communities across the Commonwealth.

- ?? The \$625 million will be spread out over six years in the following manner:
 - \$230 million to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to clean up rivers and streams; take on serious environmental problems at

abandoned mines and contaminated industrial sites; and finance the development and deployment of advanced energy projects.

- \$217.5 million to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to preserve natural areas and open spaces; improve state parks; and enhance local recreational needs.
- \$80 million to the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) to protect working farms.
- \$50 million to the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) to revitalize communities through investments in housing and mixed-use redevelopment projects.
- \$27.5 million to the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) to repair fish hatcheries and aging dams.
- \$20 million to the Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) for habitat-related facility upgrades and repairs.

?? Pennsylvania is establishing itself as a leader in building and deploying a robust diversity of clean and renewable energy technologies with measurable impacts on pollution reduction, environmental protection, economic growth and enhanced homeland security.

- The Pennsylvania Energy Harvest Grant Program has awarded \$10 million and leveraged another \$26.7 million in private funds since its inception in May 2003 to build a clean, indigenous, diversified energy industry from sources such as biomass, wind, solar, small-scale hydroelectric, landfill methane, coal-bed methane and waste coal.
- Pennsylvania is now home to one of the nation's most progressive two-tiered energy portfolio standards, ensuring that in 15 years, 18 percent of all of the energy generated in the Commonwealth comes from clean, efficient sources. At least 0.5 percent of Tier I electricity must come from solar photovoltaic cells --- a requirement that is at least three times more ambitious than anything any neighboring states have put in place.
- To help build a new energy manufacturing base in Pennsylvania, the state offers significant resources to assist with project financing or business siting, including nearly \$1 billion in tax-exempt bond financing for energy development through the recently revitalized Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority and up to \$100 million to support energy efficiency and renewable-energy projects such as biodigesters that benefit the agricultural sector.
- Pennsylvania has doubled its green electricity purchase from 5 percent to 10 percent, with the goal of reaching 20 percent in green power purchases. An executive signed in December 2004 ensures maximum efficiency in energy management and conservation in state facilities to decrease energy consumption and costs while promoting a cleaner environment.

?? Pennsylvania is neck and neck with California as a national leader with 18 buildings certified under the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy

and Environmental Design rating system for “green” buildings. Ninety-seven other buildings are registered for LEED certification.

- ?? On July 5, 2004, Governor Edward G. Rendell signed legislation implementing expanded gaming and delivering on a decades old promise to deliver property tax relief to Pennsylvania homeowners. This bipartisan property tax relief package represents the largest local tax reduction in Pennsylvania in decades.

- ?? Under Senate Bill 100, the property-tax relief legislation, property-tax relief will begin once gaming has generated \$750 million in state revenue. At that level, every school district will be able to reduce its reliance on property taxes by a minimum of 10 percent – up to a maximum of 40 percent.

- ?? When revenue from gaming reaches \$1 billion, his plan will lower school property taxes by an average of 23 percent – or about \$333 for every homeowner in Pennsylvania. If gaming revenue is higher, the amount of property-tax relief increases.

- ?? Governor Rendell delivered on his promise to make sure older Pennsylvanians have access to life-sustaining prescription medications.

- ?? During his first year in office, Gov. Rendell signed legislation to increase income limits for the PACE and PACENET prescription assistance programs, making more than one million older residents eligible for those crucial programs. Since the new limits took effect, PACE and PACENET have added more than 50,000 new enrollees.

- ?? PACE and PACENET are funded entirely by the Pennsylvania Lottery – no tax dollars are used. Under Gov. Rendell’s leadership, the Pennsylvania Lottery has taken steps to ensure it will be able to support those programs well into the future.

- ?? At the Governor’s direction, the Department of Aging is implementing other cost-saving initiatives to benefit the PACE program including:

- Imposing on manufacturers “best price” rebates for branded products
- Using the “Federal upper limit” maximum allowable cost in reimbursing pharmacies
- Developing a 90-day supply policy and mail order access for consumers.

?? This purchasing approach has been used by successful businesses in the private sector for years, and has generated substantial savings for the taxpayers of a number of other states including Delaware, Illinois, Virginia and Florida. We’re not even halfway through the process and already this new strategy of smart buying has generated more than \$121 million in annual savings:

- Advertising -- \$2.6 Million in Savings
- IT Staff Augmentation -- \$19.8 Million in Savings
- Vehicles -- \$2.4 Million in Savings
- Food -- \$13.8 Million in Savings
- Networking Gear & Peripherals -- \$8.5 Million in Savings
- Cleaning Supplies -- \$3.5 Million in Savings
- Computer Servers & Storage -- \$13.4 Million in Savings
- Office Furniture -- \$7 Million in Savings
- Personal Computers -- \$19.1 Million in Savings
- Copiers -- \$11 Million In Savings
- Office Supplies -- \$9.6 Million in Savings
- Computer Maintenance -- \$4.2 Million in Savings
- Asphalts -- \$2.4 Million in Savings
- Software -- \$4 Million in Savings