



PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TIM BONNER

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
17TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

Effective Representation

The National Center for Effective Lawmaking reviews certain criteria for state legislators across the nation. I was pleased to be recently recognized and selected as one of the 10 most effective Republican Representatives from a group of 101 Republican members in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives.

When I first ran for the State House in 2020, I pledged that I would be a strong voice on your behalf in the House of Representatives. As a leader in drafting and debating legislation in the committees and on the floor of the House, I continue my best efforts to fulfill this pledge. With my legal background in the criminal justice system as a prosecutor and defender; my position as Board Chairman and legal counsel for the Grove City Medical System; and my role as legal counsel for Grove City College and local school districts, I have a strong background in three key areas of policy-making in the House of Representatives--criminal justice, health care and education. I enjoy applying this experience to serve you and the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in my role as state representative.

On your behalf, then, I will continue my efforts to represent you in the Capitol with integrity, vigor and strong leadership on issues affecting you and all citizens across our Commonwealth.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be of service to you in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives.



ENSURING FAIRNESS

in Women's Sports

Recognizing the unfair advantage biological males have when competing in women's sports, I have supported Senate Bill 9, the Save Women's Sports Act, which passed the Senate with bipartisan support.

Athletic competitions give women the opportunity to demonstrate their strength and skill, while also providing opportunities for recognition ranging from accolades to college scholarships. By opening women's sports to include males, we take away those opportunities from our women who have worked tirelessly to achieve the equality they deserve.

Federal law, Title IX, was meant to level the playing field for young ladies and adult women. Allowing men to play women's sports, regardless of sexual orientation, again creates unfairness on the playing field for our female athletes. Senate Bill 9 will restore fairness and balance in women's athletics.

Bail Reform Needed to

Keep Communities Safe

Once an individual has been arrested, he is taken before a judge where his bail is set, except for the crime of murder, for which our Constitution prohibits bail. Bail is the security set forth in the Constitution which allows a person, who is presumed innocent at this stage of the proceedings, to be free until the time a guilty verdict may be rendered, and it is also meant to assure the appearance of the accused at each stage of the criminal proceedings. If the accused commits another crime while on bail, or the accused fails to show for a hearing, his bail is revoked and he is placed in jail until his trial.

However, lenient judges and prosecutors have supported the setting of low bail for very dangerous criminals resulting in their release into the community prior to trial and then committing further violent crimes against our citizens including murder. In the setting of bail, there are no state guidelines assisting judges as to what amount of bail should be required. I have, therefore, proposed legislation that will recommend state guidelines to assist courts in the setting of bail, balancing the presumption of innocence of the accused with the needed protection of our communities.

The State Budget Update

The General Assembly recently voted to approve the 2025–26 state budget in the total amount of \$50.1 billion. The Senate passed the budget by a vote of 40-9, and the House passed the budget by a vote of 156–47.

I voted against passage of the budget because it spent the remainder of the money in the General Reserve Fund. The General Reserve Fund generated significant revenue from interest earnings, maintained a high credit rating for borrowing purposes and was available for needed emergencies. In three short years in office, Governor Shapiro's spending spree has exhausted the General Reserve Fund which contained \$8.1 billion at the start of his term in office. The fiscal crisis which we faced this year will be a fiscal nightmare next year as we will have no General Reserve Funds to balance the budget and we start this fiscal year with spending exceeding current projected revenue by over \$4 billion. How will we pay for this excessive spending next year and in years to come?

Next year's budget will require a huge tax increase, or a slashing of government spending, neither event which is likely to occur, or an amendment to the law allowing for an invasion of the Rainy Day Fund, which is otherwise reserved for emergencies and not general spending purposes and certainly not for a Governor's personal wish list of projects and programs. Using the Rainy Day Fund to balance the budget is a betrayal to our citizens who have paid taxes into this fund in anticipation of these reserves protecting our citizens in the event of a pandemic, natural disaster or emergency.

We cannot follow the path of fiscal irresponsibility of the federal government which spends all tax money every year, incurs trillions of dollars in debt, sells bonds to our foreign adversaries and simply prints more money to cover deficit spending. We must do better.

RECYCLED GUN LEGISLATION

The House of Representatives considered three gun regulation bills that were all defeated by a vote of 102-101. I led the debate on the House floor against these bills because we either have existing laws that covered the same subject or the proposed laws have been declared unconstitutional by federal courts.

The first bill (HB 1859) would allow a court to order the seizure of firearms from a citizen based upon the allegation that someone is a danger to himself or to others without the individual being given an opportunity to personally appear before a judge to contest the allegations. The federal courts have declared such statutes unconstitutional as denying an individual his property without due process of the law under the Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution, which requires an individual to have a judicial hearing before his property can be taken by the government. Additionally, if a person is truly dangerous to himself or to others, the government, upon petition under oath, has the right to immediately take the person into custody to determine his mental state, and if needed, involuntarily commit the person for mental health treatment. Simply taking the person's guns without his appearance before the judge and not addressing the person's mental health issues is the wrong approach and may only aggravate the situation. The individual is entitled to a presumption of innocence, should not have his constitutional right to bear arms taken away without a hearing, and should receive medical treatment if he is a danger to himself or others. All of these issues should be addressed at one time where the individual has the right to present his side of the case to a judge.

The second bill (HB 1866) would have made it unlawful to possess a device that can turn a firearm into a machine gun. Federal and state law already prohibit the possession of a machine gun. The legislation is simply repetitive of existing laws and only serves to inflame advocates on both sides of the Second Amendment.

The third bill (HB 1099) would prohibit possessing any firearm that cannot be detected in security screening for firearms. These firearms, formerly called homemade guns, are now called "ghost guns," because they are not detectable by security screening devices. Federal and state law already make it a crime for an individual to possess a firearm that is undetectable by security screening. This proposed legislation is unnecessary and is again recycled legislation simply to inflame the citizens over the Second Amendment. I spoke on the floor of the House reminding our legislators that we have a duty to obey, enforce, and defend the Constitution even if we may disagree with parts of it. I also reminded my colleagues that we should not recycle old legislation that has no legal effect simply to divide and inflame our citizens. This obligation is part of the Rule of Law which is the foundation of this country.





Protecting Innocent Lives

Abortion **UPDATE**

The Democrats recently passed legislation that would authorize a constitutional referendum to consider allowing a woman to have an abortion at anytime from conception to the birth of a child. It would give Pennsylvania the most extreme abortion rights law in the United States and western Europe.

It is shocking and barbaric to think that a mother would want to abort a child in the ninth month of pregnancy. The language of the bill gives the government the right to regulate abortions in the final three months except when it affects the mental health of the mother. The courts have interpreted “mental health of the mother” to include factors of stress, disruption of lifestyle and economic impact on the family. The language of the proposed amendment, then, basically allows for abortion on demand from conception to birth.

A child in the womb has a heart, lungs, ears, eyes, nose, mouth, limbs, digestive system, and fingerprints at four months and then grows in size and strength over the next five months. The fetus is a maturing human being in the womb who will become a contributing member in society if allowed to grow and develop in the womb. The child also has legal rights in the womb—the right to inherit from the father; the right to sue for injuries sustained in the womb; the right to be a victim of a crime—all the rights of a human being except the most basic right—the right to life.

I led the debate against the legislation in the Judiciary Committee and on the floor of the House.

I will continue my fight to protect innocent life in the womb. I appreciate your understanding and support of these efforts.

Recreation Marijuana Bill **RUSHED AND UNCONSTITUTIONAL**

The Democrats in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives have been planning on introducing legislation to legalize the recreational use of marijuana for the past several years.

The bill seeking to legalize the use of recreational marijuana had serious problems from the outset. It was not well thought out and was poorly drafted. Among other problems, it:

1. Directed most tax revenues to those individuals and communities who had the highest rates of marijuana usage and convictions, also allowing those individuals and communities preferential treatment in obtaining licenses to sell marijuana and work in the business. Under this approach, most of the tax revenue would go to Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.
2. Hearings held by the Health Committee revealed from other states that the medical treatment costs, and the legal and social costs for marijuana abusers outweighed the tax revenue on marijuana collected by the state government. Much like tobacco, which is the leading cause of death in the United States, we will likely be spending billions of dollars in medical costs and advertising costs telling our people not to use the drug in years to come. Although six states surrounding Pennsylvania have legalized its use, I am proud that our state is the exception and not the rule.
3. Marijuana has a detrimental effect on the health of our citizens leading to an increased risk of addiction, loss of mental acuity and exposure to carcinogens. It will adversely affect the productivity of our workforce and educational achievement of our children.
4. Marijuana is a mind numbing drug which is much more powerful than the marijuana of 25 years ago.
5. If needed for medical purposes, Pennsylvania liberally allows its use.

With that background, the Pennsylvania House of Representatives voted on party lines to pass the legislation—102 Democrats in favor and 101 Republicans opposed.

With such a close vote, Senator Joseph Pittman (R-Armstrong/Indiana/Jefferson/Westmoreland), Majority Leader of the Senate, stated the bill was dead on arrival. The Senate Law and Justice Committee then defeated the legislation by a vote of 7-3. We await the next effort to legalize recreational marijuana which I will not support.



TIM BONNER

STATE REPRESENTATIVE | 17TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

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From left to right: Rev. Jeff Black, Rep. Bonner, Mercer County Commissioner Ann Coleman, Navy Veteran William "Rocky" Stone, Mercer County Sheriff Tim Callahan and Marine Veteran Mike Kearns.

I want to thank everyone who attended my Veterans Day Breakfast. We had a dignified and heartfelt time together in recognition of every man and woman who has faithfully served the United States in the military throughout our history.

We specifically honored Seaman First Class Rocky Stone for his service in the United States Navy during World War II.

Enlisting at age 18, Seaman Stone served in Japan and China prior to his honorable discharge in 1946.

The Pennsylvania House of Representatives issued a Distinguished Service citation to William "Rocky" Stone for his military service.

Best Wishes for the New Year

As we enter the New Year, I want to wish you a safe, happy and healthy 2026 and thank you for giving me the privilege and honor to serve you in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. Hopefully, the deep divisions within our country will begin to heal and we can find ourselves more willing to engage in constructive dialogue and more open to accept common sense solutions.

May God Bless you, your family and our country throughout this year.