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Legislative Initiative Benefits PA National Guard Members

Pennsylvania's National Guard plays an important role in protecting freedom around the globe and making the world safe for democracy. I am proud to support a package of legislation that will acknowledge their service by providing added benefits for our Guard members.

Several parts of this legislative package have already been signed into law. House Bill 1069 adds an additional 15 days of annual paid leave for PA National Guard members who are employed by the Commonwealth. House Bill 1261 provides that PA National Guard members who are returning from active duty may not be penalized when renewing or reinstating vehicle insurance coverage.

Two bills in the package benefit Guard members who are working toward their degrees. Senate Bill 358 gives National Guard members participating in the Educational Assistance Program additional time to complete their education if called to active duty. Senate Bill 869 extends eligibility for health coverage of deployed soldiers who are full time students and return to school following active duty.

In addition to this legislation, I was proud to support Senate passage of Senate Bill 398, which would require the state to pay for Guard members to receive the maximum available coverage under the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) plan. This legislation passed the Senate and was sent to the House for consideration.

Gordner Votes to Protect Property Rights

In June, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a controversial ruling that severely limits private property rights. The ruling allows governments to seize private property through eminent domain to make room for private development projects. Fortunately, the Supreme Court ruling gave states the authority to pass laws to provide citizens greater protection in eminent domain disputes, and the Senate immediately got to work to address the issue.

In December, the Senate unanimously passed a bi-partisan measure that would prohibit the use of eminent domain for the benefit of private businesses. The Property Rights Protection Act will ensure

that a person's private property cannot be seized for private development interests. The bill would make Pennsylvania the first state in the nation to protect property owners in light of the Supreme Court's ruling.

While the bill adds a layer of protection for Pennsylvania homeowners, it does not infringe on the rights of cities to improve blighted properties. This legislation strikes the right balance between the property rights of citizens and the economic development interests of their communities.



State Senator John Gordner *Reports*

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State Senator John Gordner

Reports



To the 27th Senatorial District

WINTER 2006

New Jobs for Montour and Snyder Counties

I was pleased to be able to work on two major job creation projects in the 27th Senatorial District in 2005. In August, United States Gypsum of Chicago announced plans to construct a new drywall plant near Washingtonville in Montour County. In November, the Susquehanna Industrial Development Corporation announced plans to develop the Pawling Station Business Park near Selinsgrove.

U.S. Gypsum's new \$180 million drywall plant will be under construction this year and will employ 150 area residents when the plant begins operation in 2008. The plant will utilize a byproduct of the nearby PPL Washingtonville coal-fired power plant as a raw material in the production of the drywall, which will benefit the environment.

Meanwhile, development of the Pawling Station Business

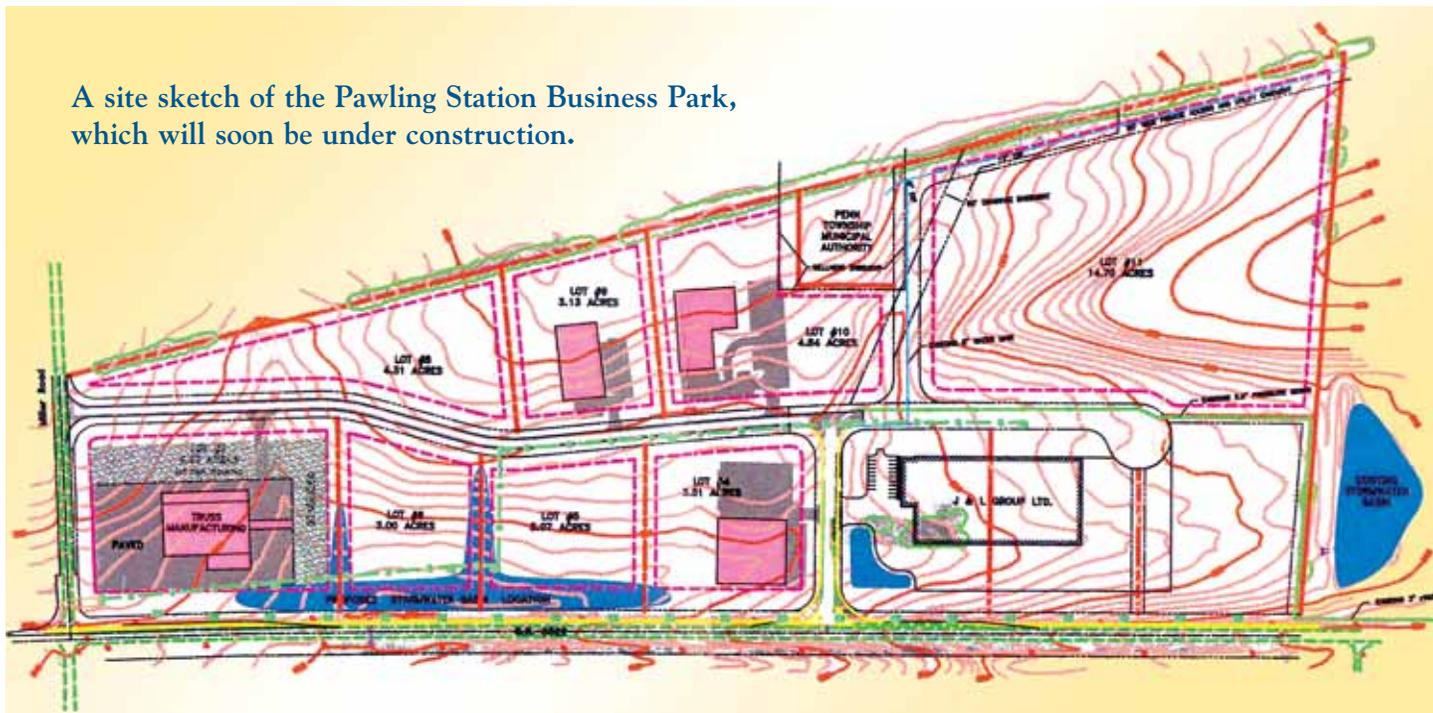
Park in Snyder County will result in eight ready-to-build sites for growing businesses in the Susquehanna Valley. State grants and low interest loans totaling about \$2.5 million will allow SIDCO to proceed with

construction of the park. Once the Pawling Station Business Park is in operation, it is estimated Snyder County could see 300 to 500 new jobs.



Senator Gordner and USG officials following the groundbreaking for the company's new Washingtonville plant.

A site sketch of the Pawling Station Business Park, which will soon be under construction.



EconomicsPennsylvania Recognizes Senator Gordner

In October, I was honored to receive the Adam Smith Award, the highest award bestowed by EconomicsPennsylvania.

EconomicsPennsylvania is a state-wide not-for-profit corporation dedicated to helping students understand economic concepts by operating a variety of educational programs. It is based in Selinsgrove.

State Reps. Merle Phillips (R-108) and Russ Fairchild (R-85) present Senator Gordner with the EconomicsPennsylvania Adam Smith Award.



Business Tours

Because economic development and job creation are my priorities as your Senator, it is important for me to visit employers throughout the 27th Senatorial District. As I help to formulate economic development policy in Harrisburg, it is helpful to be able to draw upon my personal contacts with business and industry leaders, as well as the people who work in Central Pennsylvania.

Senator Gordner tours the Mount Carmel Cogeneration plant, Wood-Mode, and joins Secretary of Agriculture Dennis Wolff of Columbia County following a tour of farms in the 27th District.

In 2005, I was pleased to be able to visit various industries, such as Wood-Mode in Kreamer and the Mount Carmel Cogeneration plant. I also had the opportunity to visit

several farms during Ag Tour 2005 in Montour County. Agriculture remains the number one industry in the 27th Senatorial District.



Computer Spyware Legislation Moves in General Assembly

The Senate has unanimously passed legislation that I authored to improve computer security by preventing Spyware, a tool used by cyber identity thieves to obtain personal information.

Spyware is a term for a computer program that gathers information through a user's Internet connection. Such information can include passwords and identification numbers, which can then be used to commit fraud.

In addition to being used by identity thieves, Spyware can affect a computer's basic operations by modifying bookmarks, manipulating search engines, removing anti-virus software and triggering harmful downloads.

I worked with the major Internet service providers to forward Senate

Bill 711, which would give Pennsylvania the toughest law in the nation against Spyware. SB 711 is a major component of a compre-

hensive package of bi-partisan legislation to combat increasing computer crimes.



Senator Gordner at a Harrisburg media briefing relating to his anti-Spyware legislation.

Emergency Services Seminars

I was pleased to recently host an Emergency Services Seminar for fire, ambulance, police and local officials in Upper Dauphin County. This was an excellent forum to bring local emergency responders together with state

government officials to keep them updated on programs and funding sources from Harrisburg.

Our emergency responders – many of whom serve on a volunteer basis – face continuing challenges relating to funding operations,

obtaining updated equipment and recruiting new members.

An upcoming seminar will be held in Snyder County, and I plan to schedule future seminars throughout the 27th Senatorial District.

Senator Gordner addresses emergency responders at the recent EMS Seminar in Dauphin County.

