

June, 2006

The NewsPAGR

Pennsylvania Association for Government Relations

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The mission statement of the Pennsylvania Association for Government Relations, Inc. (PAGR) is to promote the purpose and effectiveness of the lobbying profession consistent with the public interest. Further, association members encourage high standards of personal and professional conduct among all lobbyists. ☎

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *by Brian Barno*



State House and Senate elections

are uniquely local. While Harrisburg lobbyists excel at the workings inside the Capitol, our political prognostications on local races too often repeat the last conversation we had in the Rotunda. We all were tracking the races of Senate and House leaders and a number of other high-profile contests – the ones with polling data, media attention and visible campaigns. What Harrisburg insiders didn't have a handle on were the other races where the challenger won over a "sure bet" or where the incumbent came within a whisker of being knocked off. Voters are disgusted with the pay raise and legislative perks. But the huge exodus of incumbents isn't strictly issue-based. It's because the voters that turned out on May 16 perceived their views weren't being represented by the person they had sent to Harrisburg.

The reason incumbent legislators were swept out of office was because they lost touch with their constituents. Of the incumbents who lost, how many have aggressively been out there in the community – how many have operated in "campaign mode" in non-election years? We heard about incumbents going door-to-door followed by the line: "When was the last time that happened?" There were threatened

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Save the date!
PAGR's
ELECTION NIGHT
PARTY is

Tuesday, November 7, 2006

At the
Firehouse Restaurant
606 N. 2nd Street • Harrisburg

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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE*(continued from page one)*

incumbents who ran hard from the opening bell, revitalized local grassroots efforts and called in outside campaign help. In a number of cases, it was enough to win. But the defeat of fifteen House incumbents is stunning. Were they asleep at the switch? Or did they think they could keep it on autopilot and continue to hold their seats as long as they wanted? Voters are upset with Harrisburg. When you add the pay raise and lack of progress on property tax relief to the general sour mood on the Iraq war and gas prices, you have a volatile environment where change is acceptable. Voters perceived too many legislators as being divorced from day-to-day life in the district. Were the incumbents smug and arrogant? The challengers surely hammered that message home and the voters that came to the polls on primary day answered in the affirmative.

What does all this mean going forward? First off, it's tough to see some of these folks leave. Lobbyists have developed working relationships and friendships with these legislators. While we lament the loss of legislative friends, the poll results are good for the democracy. In the ebb and flow of political cycles, this election brings all our representatives back closer to the voters. Legislators that hung on after unexpected tight races and Senators not up until 2008 took notice – they need to be more involved, communicative and visible in the communities they represent.

The primary election really changes the leadership and committee batting line-ups. Losing the President Pro Tem and Majority Leader in the primary, the Majority Caucus and Policy Committee Chairman to retirement, and with the passing of Senator Thompson, there is a huge leadership vacuum in the Senate. Discussions are under way about selecting new leaders. Members want leaders they can trust and that will listen to them. In the House, 15 incumbents were defeated in the primary and 27 did not seek re-election. Three Republican and two Democratic House leadership slots are open as well as numerous committee leadership positions. There will be more changes after the November elections.

Of course, everyone is claiming credit and extrapolating what the election returns means. Democrats claim the election is reflective of the negative sense in the populace of the Administration in Washington and Republican dominance in the

(continued on page three)**2006 Meeting Dates**

Monday, October 2
Membership Meeting
Firehouse Restaurant

Tuesday, November 7
Election Night Party
Firehouse Restaurant

Monday, December 4
Membership Meeting
And Holiday Gathering
(time/place TBD)

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**Joy Bearley**

PA RETAILERS ASSOCIATION

Dave Kerr

TELECOMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Nate Muniz

PSECU

Alex Rahn

AKR GOVERNMENT SOLUTIONS

Michael Rose

NATIONAL FUEL

Shirley WalkerPAR (PA Association of Resources for People
with Mental Retardation)

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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state House and Senate. Rush Limbaugh said Pennsylvania Republicans threw out the "country club" set of legislators and elected true conservatives to fill the spots. Gubernatorial candidate Russ Diamond points the PA Clean Sweep's success and bemoans the fact that more Democratic challengers didn't prevail. The Club for Growth and Young Republicans of Pennsylvania took major roles in knocking off leaders and claim the election indicates a conservative resurgence.

Victory has a thousand fathers (and mothers). How will these campaigns and election results carry forward into November? Has the body politic breathed a collective sigh of relief? Is the anger over and it's back to politics as usual? The election does prove that conventional political thought in the Capitol, particularly about local races, is suspect. Underdogs, with a focused, energized grassroots effort can overcome the advantages of incumbency. This election will encourage more people to sit down at the kitchen table with friends and family and make the decision to run for office. That's a good thing. ✦



Thanks

Jill Kusic
For her four years of
contributions and commitment
as a Member of
PAGR's Board of Directors
2003 –2006

We will miss you ...
but your girls need you more!

Governor Orders Lobbyists to Comply with Registration and Disclosure

Lobbyists listened when Governor Edward G. Rendell said anyone whose work involves trying to influence any member of his executive branch must comply with a Code of Conduct change and register with the state via the new Lobbyist Disclosure & Expense Reporting Web site.

Due to the change, lobbyists will only be permitted to lobby the executive branch if they've registered with the state five days in advance. Expense reports for any registered lobbyist must be filed no later than 30 days after the end of each quarter. That requirement starts with the current quarter, which ends June 30.

Lobbyists will be required to report personnel and office expenses related to their work, as well as detailed expenses for direct and indirect communications. They also will have to report the total cost for gifts, entertainment, meals, transportation, lodging and receptions given for state officials or employees covered by the Governor's Code of Conduct. And, they must account for those who received any gift.

The Office of Administration is responsible for creating and operating the lobbyist registry and all registries and expense reports will be made available to the public within 24 hours of their receipt.

To search the database, click "Registry Search" in the left-hand column of www.lobbyistdisclosure.state.pa.us. Queries can be made by filling in the name of an individual, employer, principal or organization. General queries may also be made by typing each letter of the alphabet, one at a time. A complete list of registered lobbyists is available on the Web site.

It's just as easy for lobbyists to register. All they need to do is visit www.lobbyistdisclosure.state.pa.us, click on "Lobbyist Registration" and follow the links.

The Governor said his change in the Code of Conduct, for the first time in Pennsylvania, requires registration by any group of three or more lobbyists (a lobbying coalition) who are working together to influence a decision or state action. Such a coalition, perhaps organized under a group name, would have to register all of the participants in the group and the matter they are trying to influence. ✦