



Senator Edwin "Ted" Erickson



26TH SENATORIAL DISTRICT • SPRING 2009

Expanding Access to Health Care

Especially with unemployment on the rise, the cost of health care is an increasing worry for many families. A package of legislation known as HealthNET PA has been introduced, which would expand access to health care and medicine to over 500,000 uninsured and low-income working Pennsylvanians in a very cost-efficient way.

One of the cornerstones of HealthNET PA is the Community-

Based Health Care Program, which I sponsored, that would



expand and develop health care clinics across Pennsylvania to provide "medical homes" for 175,000 working-poor clients and ease pressure on hospital emergency rooms. It would also implement a physician/health care facility volunteer program through which an additional 159,000 uninsured patients would be assigned to a primary or specialty care physician, with access to free specialty care, labs and inpatient hospital care.

Alternative Energy

Under the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act of 2004, 8 percent of the electricity sold in Pennsylvania must be produced from "clean" energy sources such as wind and solar power by 2020. This legislation will extend the requirement past the current deadline by adding an additional 2 percent per year to a total of 20 percent by 2026. Extending the deadline is important to provide those wishing to

invest in alternative energy the time needed to plan, develop and build facilities and then operate them long enough to recover their investments.

The legislation will also promote carbon capture and sequestration so that we can position Pennsylvania to use clean coal technology to generate our energy needs. This

will allow Pennsylvania to create jobs and help our coal industry evolve as new Federal environmental legislation is enacted.

If you are interested in exploring the installation of renewable energy systems, please visit the Department of Environmental Protection's website at www.depweb.state.pa.us and follow the links for "Pennsylvania's Energy Independence."





Senator Erickson, Chairman of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, visited Crozer-Chester Medical Center to discuss the HealthNET PA plan, which would provide direct care to uninsured and low-income working Pennsylvanians at a fraction of the cost of other state and national proposals.

Help For Those in Need

The ongoing economic crisis has caused difficulties for many families. The state has established a website, www.heretohelp.pa.gov to connect people with programs that can help get them through tough times. The site includes information on:

- Unemployment benefits.
- Heating assistance.
- Assistance with utility bills.
- Job search and job training resources.
- Mortgage assistance.
- Low-cost and no-cost health insurance.
- Veterans' services.
- And much more.

Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program

Of all Pennsylvania homeowners, our seniors face the greatest property tax burden, as they live on fixed incomes but are faced with rising property taxes. The Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians age 65 and older; widows and widowers age 50 and older; and people with disabilities age 18 and older.

The income eligibility level for the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program has been raised from \$15,000 a year to \$35,000 a year for homeowners, and the maximum rebate for both homeowners and renters was raised from \$500 to \$650. Applicants can exclude one-half of Social Security and Railroad Retirement income, so people who make substantially more than \$35,000 may still qualify for a rebate.

The deadline to apply for a rebate on property taxes or rent paid in 2008 is June 30, 2009. Rebate

application forms are available in my Drexel Hill office. For more information on property tax relief, visit www.PaPropertyTaxRelief.com or contact my district office at (610) 853-4100.



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State Senator Edwin B. Erickson

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