

LEG REG REVIEW

2006, Fourteenth Issue Special Update

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SPECIAL PRIMARY ELECTION UPDATE

At the time of this writing, shock waves are still reverberating in Harrisburg and across the state from the May 16 primary. Because of retirements (open seats) and incumbents who lost their own primary, there will be as many as 50 new faces in the 254-seat General Assembly in January.

The 2006 primary election's impact will be felt within the business and insurance communities for several reasons;

- **A shift in key leadership in the next legislative session means that different players will be directing the flow of Senate legislation and in a number of House Committees.**
- **In 2007 there will be new committee chairs for House Labor Relations (Workers Compensation), Finance (tax legislation), and a new minority chair for Aging & Older Adult Services Committee.**
- **Other committee slots will open up because of vacancies due to retirement.**
- **House Insurance Committee will look different because of retirements of Linda Bebko-Jones (D-Erie), John Fichter (R-Montgomery), and Larry Sather (R-Huntingdon) as well as the election losses of Pat Fleagle (R-Franklin), Roy Baldwin (R-Lancaster), and Peter Zug (R-Lebanon).**
- **Senate Banking & Insurance Committee loses Senator Jubelirer (R-Blair) who lost in the primary and retiring Joe Conti-R-Bucks), and Noah Wenger (R-Lancaster).**
- **Other committee changes include new chairs for Senate Appropriations (Wenger), Games & Fisheries (Conti) and State Government (Charles Lemmond-R-Luzerne)**

Keep in mind that there will be numerous other changes coming as caucuses and leadership decide who their 2007-2008 leadership, committee chairs, and committee members will be. The above just scratches the surface of the major changes may take place. The wild card is the general election where other incumbents may be ousted and a new class of freshmen legislators comes to town.

The primary carnage:

- **Senate President Pro Tempore Robert Jubelirer (Blair) losing to county commissioner John Echelberger 12,447 to 15,276 with a third candidate getting another 7,059 anti-Jubelirer votes.**

- Senate Majority Leader Chip Brightbill (R-Lebanon) losing to tire salesman newcomer Mike Folmer 8,832 to 17,247.
- House races included both veteran lawmakers and relative newcomers.
 - Theresa Forcier (R-Mercer) was defeated by Brad Roar 2,315 to 2,749
 - Frank LaGrotta (D-Lawrence) was defeated 2,682 to 2,709.
 - Frank Pistella (D-Allegheny), minority chair of the House Aging and Older Adult Services Committee, lost 2,805 to 3,846 for Lisa Bennington.
 - Ken Ruffing (D-Allegheny) was defeated in a 3-way 2,134 to Bill Kortz' 3,924.
 - GOP Tom Stevenson (Allegheny) lost in a 3-way 2,089-2,620 to Mark Hams.
 - Pat Fleagle (R-Franklin) lost 3,130 to 3,252 to Todd Rook.
 - Republican Steve Maitland (R-Adams) to Dan Moul 2,303 to 2,795.
 - Losing were Lancaster Republican incumbents Roy Baldwin (3,931 to 4,630 against John Bear) and Gib Armstrong (2,678 to 3,770 against Bryan Cutler).
 - Lebanon incumbent Peter Zug (R) lost 4,259 to 4,911 by Rosemarie Swanger.
 - Fred Belardi (D-Lackawanna) lost 3,323 to 3,949 to Ken Smith.
 - Labor Relations Committee Chair Bob Allen (R-Schuylkill) lost 3,108 to 3,210 against Gary Hornberg. This committee is the Workers' Comp committee.
 - Finance Committee chair Dennis Leh (R-Berks) lost 1,535 to Billy Reed's 1,675. The committee handles tax legislation.
 - Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness chair Paul Semmel (R-Lehigh) lost in a three-way 1,349 to winner Carl Mantz' 1,669.
 - Montgomery County Republican Sue Cornell lost 2,289 to Thomas Murt's 2,770.

Fiercely contested primaries where incumbents survived.

- Babette Josephs (D-Phila.) survived her primary by about 200 votes in this overwhelmingly Democratic district.
- Republican Mauree Gingrich (R-Lebanon) won her race handily 5,445 to Karen Rowe's 2,203. She is considered to be the GOP Caucus' health specialist.
- In Erie, Matthew Good (R) won in a three-way primary as did John Evans (R).
- Vince Biancucci (D-Beaver) won in a three-way.
- Joe Preston (D-Allegheny), minority chair of Consumer Services, won a 3-way.
- Joe Markosek (D-Westmoreland), minority chair of Commerce, won a three-way as did Allegheny County Democrat Don Walko in a four-way.

Incumbents' return despite media and intense campaigning to the contrary.

- Number Two Democrat Mike Veon (D-Beaver), the only legislator who voted for the pay raise twice, outpaced Jay Paisley 5,476 to 3,591.
- Republican rising star Steve Nickol (York) brushed off Debra Hoff 3,174 to 1,343. Nickol is regarded as the legislator the Speaker turns to when policy depth and analysis is required.
- House Majority Leader Sam Smith (Jefferson) won with 2,495 votes although his two opponents between them garnered 2,724.

Those losing their respective primaries will be able to complete their work until November 30, the end of the 2005-2006 legislative session.