

## **Short Bios of New House & Senate Members**

### **Rep. Brian Ellis (R- 11<sup>th</sup> District)**

Rep. Brian Ellis was born and raised in the 11th Legislative District. Prior to his election, Rep. Ellis and his brother, Jim, have spent the past several years building the family business, Hansen Auto Sales. A decade ago, the brothers started out with two cars. Today, they operate one of the region's largest pre-owned dealerships and have added lots in south Butler and Emlenton to their Lyndora base.

After graduating from Butler High School in 1988, Rep. Ellis attended the University of Pittsburgh and earned a B.A. degree in Communications. The representative lives in Meridian with his wife of seven years, Monica, and their two sons, Justin and Nathan.

Rep. Ellis participates in the Greeter Ministry at St. Paul's Catholic Church. He is also a member of the Butler Rotary Club, a longtime advisor to the Butler YMCA Youth and Government program, and a member of the Butler County Young Republicans.

### **Rep. Glen Grell (R-87<sup>th</sup> District)**

Glen R. Grell is the newly elected state representative of the 87th Legislative District and is set to begin his first term in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in January. A proven civic and community leader, Grell is a lifelong resident of Cumberland County.

The 87th Legislative District is comprised of the townships of East Pennsboro, Hampden and Silver Spring, the Borough of Camp Hill, and the second voting precinct of Wormleysburg Borough.

Grell has been a practicing attorney in the area since earning his law degree from the Dickinson School of Law in 1981. He has been with the firm of Klett, Rooney, Lieber & Schorling since 2000, concentrating his practice in the areas of municipal and administrative law, government affairs, real estate law and finance and public procurement.

For the past four years, Grell has served as Solicitor of Hampden Township, which is the largest municipality in Cumberland County. He has worked closely with the township commissioners on a variety of projects that have improved the quality of life for township residents.

As a highly-regarded real estate attorney, Grell was appointed in 2004 to serve on the Joint State Government Commission's Advisory Committee on Real Property law, in the first phase of its mission to advise the General Assembly on the codification of real estate laws in Pennsylvania.

Grell served as Deputy General Counsel to Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge from 1995 to 2000. In that capacity, he had primary responsibility for Commonwealth contracting, review and approval of Commonwealth contracts, deeds, leases, inter-agency agreements, and other obligations.

Grell has been active politically at the local, statewide and national level for more than 20 years. He has served as an elected committeeman in Hampden Township, as deputy chairman and vice chairman of the Cumberland County Republican Committee, as county coordinator and regional field director for Governor Ridge's gubernatorial campaign, as Pennsylvania co-chairman of Lawyers for Bush-Cheney, as a volunteer for

the 2000 Republican National Convention and has been active in many other local and regional political campaigns.

His civic activities include serving on the Shippensburg University Council of Trustees since 1995, currently as Vice Chairman; serving as chairman of a Fund Distribution Panel of the United Way of the Capital Region; serving as Vice Chairman of the Pennsylvania Youth Foundation and as Chairman of the Foundation's Educational Endowment Fund Scholarship Committee; and serving as Director of the Cumberland Valley Eagle Foundation since 2002.

He also is a member of the Republican National Lawyers Association, Pennsylvania State Association of Township Solicitors, the Urban Land Institute, the West Shore Chamber of Commerce, the Harrisburg Regional Chamber of Commerce, Greater Harrisburg Association of Realtors, and Home Builders Association of Metropolitan Harrisburg.

Grell is a 1974 graduate of Cumberland Valley High School and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Johns Hopkins University in 1978, as well as his J.D. from Dickinson Law School in 1981. He and his wife, Elaine (Sanzotto), reside in Hampden Township with their two children, Cory, 17, and Alyssa, 13.

#### **Rep. Rob Kauffman (R-89<sup>th</sup> District)**

Rep. Rob Kauffman was elected to represent the 89th Legislative District in 2004. The district covers portions of Cumberland County consisting of the townships of Shippensburg and Southampton and the borough of Shippensburg (Cumberland County portion) and part of Franklin County consisting of the townships of Greene, Guilford (part, districts 01 and 06), Letterkenny, Lurgan and Southampton and the boroughs of Chambersburg, Orrstown and Shippensburg (Franklin County portion).

Before being elected to serve the people of the 89th Legislative District, Kauffman had served at the local and state government level as the vice chairman of the Greene Township Board of Supervisors, and as district operations specialist and district staffer for the 90th Legislative District in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives.

A graduate of Greencastle-Antrim High School, Kauffman earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from American University School of Public Affairs in Washington, DC.

Kauffman has served as vice chairman of Franklin County Council of Governments, vice president of Pregnancy Ministries, Inc., Republican State Committee and is a member of the Greater Chambersburg 21st Century Partnership, Franklin County Republican Committee, Greene Township Lions Club, National Rifle Association and is a member and secretary of the board of the Bethel Assembly of God.

Kauffman and his wife Niki live in Scotland located in Greene Township, with their two children, Abby and Will. The couple is awaiting the birth of their third child.

#### **Rep. Mark Keller (R-86<sup>th</sup> District)**

Mark Keller brings a wealth of experience in local government to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives.

Before his election to the House, he served on the Perry County Board of Commissioners and was president of the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania in 2004. From 1985 to 1996 he served on the Board of Supervisors in Spring Township. He was a Spring Township auditor from 1979 to 1985.

He is chairman of the Harrisburg Area Transit Study (HATS) and has been a member of the Judicial Council Committee on Judicial Safety and Preparedness, Executive Board of the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission , and Perry County Commission liaison to the Cumberland-Perry Drug and Alcohol Commission.

He is member of Ducks Unlimited, the National Rifle Association, the Perry County Farm Bureau and Mount Zion Lutheran Church.

Keller was born on Jan. 14, 1954. He is a graduate of West Perry High School, Missouri Auction School, and attended classes at The Pennsylvania State University.

He and his wife Sally, a nurse at West Perry Senior High School, live on Waggoners Gap Road in Landisburg. Their son, Bryan, is a student at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

### **Rep. Jeff Pyle (R-60<sup>th</sup> District)**

Jeffrey Paul Pyle, 39 is the son of Ted, a retired steelworker, and Janet, a retired high school English teacher, Pyle. He is the husband of Michele (Buccieri) Pyle, as well as the father of two beautiful daughters, Lauren and Katherine (7 and 5 respectively.)

Jeff graduated Ford City High School in 1982 and attended college at West Virginia University, receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science in 1986. While at WVU, Jeff worked summers at Allegheny Ludlum Steel, dug water line trenches for Kittanning Suburban Joint Water Authority, and did landscaping in Morgantown, West Virginia. Jeff also graduated from Indiana University of PA in 1991 with a Bachelor of Science in Education in Social Studies, with Cum Laude honors and was named one of five Outstanding Student Teachers.

Jeff was hired as a Social Studies teacher by the Armstrong School District in 1992. Jeff began his teaching career at Kittanning Junior High School where he also coached basketball and had a number of guest speakers for his students including the Armstrong County Commissioners. Later, transferred by seniority to Shannock Valley High School in 1993, Jeff took up where he left off in Kittanning by diving into student activities such as coaching basketball, founding the SVHS Tennis program, coaching football for one year, serving as the class advisor of the SVHS Class of 1996 for three years and served one year as the newspaper advisor. Jeff was transferred to Ford City High School in 1997, where he taught American History, Sociology and American Government.

Jeff started his FCHS career by leading a group of students to produce a short documentary on the ethnic history of Ford City. This documentary, an entry in the State History Day contest, has since been used numerous times as a lobbying tool for Ford City in its Economic Revitalization Project and has been shown inside the Capitol Rotunda in Washington D.C.

Since 1999, Jeff has been advisor to the LEO club (junior division of the Lions Club International), where he has facilitated the growth of the group from 8 to 188 members, receiving the title of the largest LEO club in the world. Over the past five years, Jeff's LEOs have performed over 20,000 hours of volunteer community service while he has taught them the values of leadership and the importance of community volunteerism. Jeff's LEOs beautify Ford City's parks and playgrounds annually on Earth Day. The LEO Club also holds an Ethnic dinner to honor the town founder, John B. Ford, holds senior citizen christmas socials, sends valentines to disable veterans, and assists

over thirty state and local agencies annually. The efforts of the FCHS LEO club have helped to strengthen the ties between the students, the school and the community.

In November 2000, Jeff defeated a two-term incumbent Democrat Mayor by a 2:1 margin in heavily democratic Ford City. During his term, has been instrumental in obtaining grants that resulted in the Borough constructing a police evidence room, obtaining a town fire and emergency siren and has contributed to the grant and fundraising necessary for the restoration of Ford Street, the historic cobblestone center of the business district in Ford City. As Mayor, Jeff managed day to day operations of the Ford City Police Department including budgeting, scheduling, citizen requests for action, media releases, creation of the Borough's Federally required Emergency Operations Plan as well as police policy implementation. He also successfully obtained Ford City's first and only historic marker.

**Rep. Tom Quigley (R-146<sup>th</sup> District)**

Rep. Quigley earned a Master of Business Administration from Philadelphia University in 1993 and bachelor's degrees in Science and Business Management from Philadelphia University in 1986.

Previously, Rep. Quigley was elected as mayor of Royersford in 2002. He worked with the Borough Council to provide fiscal responsibility, manage growth, ensure public safety and deliver honest local government.

Tom also served as a Royersford Borough councilman from 1999 to 2001, where he worked hard to demand sensible budgets, control spending and plan for the future. He even voted against a pay raise.

Rep. Quigley also has over 17 years of business experience working for The Vanguard Group, one of the nation's largest mutual fund companies. He understands budget procedures, working as part of a team, and establishing solid client relationships. Most importantly, he understands the responsibility of being an effective steward of other people's money.

**Rep. Kathy Rapp (R-65<sup>th</sup> District)**

Before being elected, Rep. Rapp served as a community relations representative with Beverly Health Care, where she managed admissions and marketing for two health care facilities in Warren. She also was a VIP coordinator for the Parent Education Network in York and assisted individuals with disabilities and their families receive information and skills to live more productive lives.

**Rep. Curt Sonney (R- 4<sup>th</sup> District)**

Representative Curt Sonney was elected to represent Erie County's Fourth Legislative District in November 2004. A dedicated family man, Sonney is committed to improving the quality of life for Erie County's families through improved job creation and economic development, education and reducing the cost of health care. He is also committed to ensuring government lives within its means, just as families and individuals have to do.

A lifelong Harborcreek Township resident, Sonney has worked in the private sector his entire life. He was a self-employed contractor before taking a job with American Sterilizer, now Steris Corporation, in 1990. Sonney is a member of the United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America - UAW Local

832. Recognizing education is a lifelong journey, Sonney has attended classes at Erie County's Vo-Tech and has taken engineering courses at Penn State Behrend.

Sonney is the son of Joe and Shirley Sonney of Harborcreek. He has been married to Cathy Jodon-Sonney, a Registered Nurse at Erie's VA Medical Center, for the past 27 years. The couple built their East Lake Road home in 1977 and has dedicated their lives to raising three children. Jenna Sonney graduated from Great Lakes Business Institute and lives in Arizona. Curtis Sonney lives and works in North East Township and Jodon Sonney returned from serving our country in both Afghanistan and Iraq and is now attending Mercyhurst College.

Sonney is an avid sportsman and an active member of Faith Lutheran Church in Harborcreek.

The Fourth Legislative District includes the City of Corry; the townships of Amity, Concord, Greene, Greenfield, Harborcreek, Leboeuf, North East, Union, Venango, and Wayne; and the boroughs of Elgin, Mill Village, North East, Union City, Wattsburg and Wesleyville.

**Rep. Thomas Blackwell (D-190<sup>th</sup> District)**

Rep. Thomas Blackwell is the son of the late community leader and U.S. Rep. Lucien Blackwell and stepson of Philadelphia City Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell. He began working with the International Longshoremen's Association after graduating from high school and was elected local vice-president of the longshoremen in 1989.

During his career of community and political activism, Blackwell has served as a commissioner of the Philadelphia Regional Port Authority, an administrative manager for St. Hill & Associates and with Community Interactions Inc., a nonprofit agency serving adults with mental-health problems.

Blackwell plans to remain highly visible in the community, taking his experience in developing community resources, providing recreation and other alternatives for area youth, and housing development and rehabilitation to the General Assembly. He will continue his efforts to have money confiscated from criminal activities redirected toward activities and facilities for young people, including after-school programs, and to enlist students from the University of Pennsylvania and Drexel University in mentoring high school students.

Blackwell is a lifelong resident of Philadelphia, well-known in the 190th Legislative District and throughout the city. He is married with four children – two sons and two daughters. His legislative priorities include reducing crime and improving education, job opportunities and housing in neighborhoods throughout Philadelphia and the state.

**Rep. Michael F. Gerber (D-148<sup>th</sup> District)**

Representative Michael F. Gerber was born and raised in Montgomery County. He graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, where he was a Dean's List student and a defensive back on an Ivy League championship football team. Gerber then graduated cum laude from Villanova University School of Law, where he received a scholarship award for his contributions to community legal services.

Professionally, Gerber served as legal counsel to Governor Ed Rendell's transition team and as Law Clerk for Judge Ronald L. Buckwalter of the United States

District Court of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. In private practice at the Philadelphia law firm of Wolf Block, Gerber handles commercial litigation matters.

Gerber's community involvement began at an early age. As an undergraduate at Penn, he co-founded a nonprofit organization called Urban Artists Inc., which developed after-school programs in Philadelphia community centers and provided art programs for children in detention. While in law school, Gerber served as an intern in the U.S. Attorney's Office, worked for the Delaware County Legal Aid, and interned for Anthony J. Scirica, Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. Locally, Gerber has served on his township's park and recreation board and coaches youth football. Additionally, Gerber volunteers at his high school alma mater, Germantown Academy.

Gerber, his wife Jessica, and their two sons, Benjamin and Samuel, live in the Broad Axe section of Whitpain Township. His legislative priorities include improving early childhood education, encouraging smart growth and lowering property taxes for seniors.

### **Rep. Sean Ramaley (D-16<sup>th</sup> District)**

Rep. Sean Ramaley brings an extensive history of community involvement and political experience to the House of Representatives. Ramaley earned his bachelor's degree in political science from Allegheny College in 1997 and accepted a position as a research and policy aide in the Ohio House of Representatives. Since then, he worked as a campaign manager and consultant to a number of candidates at various levels of government, including the U.S. Congress, Pennsylvania House of Representatives, Common Pleas Court and municipal offices.

Ramaley received a law degree from the University of Pittsburgh in 2002 and went to work for the U.S. Department of Labor, where he reviewed cases and advised judges on labor-related claims pending before the Office of Administrative Law Judges. In addition to his work with the U.S. Labor Department, Ramaley also worked as a practicing attorney and is a member of the Beaver County, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania and American Bar associations.

He is active in St. Felix Parish and in a number of other community organizations. In 2003, he co-founded the Keystone Leadership Development Corp., a nonprofit company devoted to developing and managing educational programs to teach youth about leadership and government service. Ramaley also was involved for 10 years with the American Legion's Keystone Boys State Program, which teaches high school juniors about state and local government.

Ramaley was born and raised in Economy, where he currently resides. His legislative priorities include continued improvement in education, the economy and services in the 16th Legislative District.

### **Rep. Josh Shapiro (D-153<sup>rd</sup> District)**

Rep. Josh Shapiro is an Abington resident and native of Upper Dublin. He is an honors graduate of the University of Rochester, and of the Georgetown University Law Center, and has worked with some of the most prominent and influential legislators in the United States.

As a 21-year-old college graduate, Shapiro was hired by U.S. Sen. Carl Levin of Michigan as a legislative aide. He has also served as a senior advisor on foreign policy for U.S. Sen. Robert Torricelli of New Jersey, and as a senior legislative assistant to U.S. Rep. Peter Deutsch of Florida.

For five years, Shapiro served as chief of staff to Pennsylvania U.S. Rep. Joseph Hoeffel, during which time the congressman secured more than \$550,000 in federal funding for projects in Abington and Upper Dublin. Shapiro is also an attorney with the law firm of Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll LLP in Philadelphia. His focus is on government enforcement and white collar crime, and he advises businesses on government regulation and oversight matters.

Shapiro is married to Lori and has a daughter, Sophia. He wants to focus on a number of issues while in the General Assembly, but his No. 1 legislative priority is health care, particularly expanding health-insurance coverage for all Pennsylvanians and protecting Pennsylvania doctors and hospitals from the medical-malpractice liability crisis through a comprehensive legislative package that focuses on both insurance reform and tort reform.

**Sen. Patricia Vance (R-31<sup>st</sup> District)**

Prior to her political career, Sen. Patricia H. Vance was a professional nurse. She has been a member of the House of Representatives since 1991. Vance is a graduate of the Harrisburg Hospital School of Nursing and had served as the Cumberland County Recorder of Deeds from 1978 to 1990.

In the House, she is vice chair of the Professional Licensure Committee, and was a member of the Health and Human Services, Finance, Insurance and Policy committees. Previously, she chaired the Select Committee on Pharmaceuticals. Vance also has been appointed to the Health Committee of the Council of State Governments and the Board of Directors of Preservation Pennsylvania.

In the 1995-96 session of the General Assembly, Vance authored legislation, now law, which prohibits discrimination against victims of domestic violence by insurance companies. The law is designed to prevent victims of domestic violence from being victimized twice, once by the abuser and once by insurance companies, which deny them coverage. Prior to the enactment of her legislation, more than 100 companies considered domestic violence as an underwriting criteria including eight of the top writers, by volume, in the state.

In 1997, Vance's legislation expanding parents' ability to protect their children from drug and alcohol abuse was signed into law. Act 53 of 1997 gives parents the right to commit their minor child to a drug and alcohol treatment program through a court proceeding. Previous law stated that children 14 and older could refuse treatment, regardless of their parents' wishes. Vance also authored key legislation that protects elderly patients from physical and sexual abuse from caregivers.

Act 13 of 1997 establishes a procedure and requirement in Pennsylvania for employees and administrators who work in facilities that care for the elderly to report suspected cases of patient abuse. The law requires oral and written reporting to the local provider of protective services, to law enforcement officials and to the coroner. These individuals are required to coordinate investigations and cooperate on an ongoing basis.

Act 14 of 1997 increases the training and in-service education requirements for nurse aides who work with the elderly. Under this law, nurse aides will be given specific training on identifying abuse and on preventing abuse from occurring. The law also requires individuals to undergo criminal history checks before being certified as nurse aides.

In 1998, landmark managed care legislation that put patients first was signed into law. The act, created by Vance, protects consumers and establishes Pennsylvania as the national leader in preserving and expanding the rights of patients in managed care plans. The law provides direct access to emergency care and prohibits financial incentives to medical providers to treat people less. It also prohibits plans from imposing “gag clauses” on health care providers so they can’t share all medically appropriate information with their patients.

In 2002, Vance-sponsored legislation making property owners more aware of potential rezoning of land bordering their property became law. The act requires municipal zoning boards to send written notice to adjacent property owners stating proposed rezoning plans and to notify them of public hearing dates before any zoning changes are made. The notice does not apply when a municipality is undertaking a comprehensive rezoning.

Vance continues to be active in her community as a member of several charitable, community and religious organizations, including as a board member of the American Trauma Society, Pennsylvania Division; Health Alliance of Pennsylvania; a trustee of Harrisburg Area Community College; and as a member of the advisory committee for Domestic Violence Services for Cumberland and Perry Counties. She also serves on the Holy Spirit Hospital Capital Region Maternal Assistance Committee, Keystones of Public Health Steering Committee and United Cerebral Palsy Advisory Committee, and is a member of St. James Presbyterian Church.

### **Sen. Bob Regola (R-39<sup>th</sup> District)**

As a native of Westmoreland County, with roots three generations deep, Sen. Bob Regola has a vital interest in the improvement of his community.

After graduating from Hempfield High School in 1980, Bob completed the rigorous 5 year engineering program at Penn State in just 4 years. After graduation, Bob came home to Westmoreland County to join the small family engineering business. In 1987, Bob married Janette Sepesy and they now have three children, Bobby, 14, John Ross, 10, and Marlena, 8. Janette works part time for a local oral surgeon.

Bob was compelled to jump into politics in 1999 when he knew he could use his knowledge and expertise in the fight to keep the sewer authority in the hands of Hempfield Township ratepayers in order to promote township growth and maintain lower taxes.

Sen. Regola led the way in reorganizing the local government by forming a Department of Public Works, which makes the Board of Supervisors more accountable, more responsible and more effective for the people of Hempfield Township.

Throughout his political career, Bob has stood firmly against raising taxes on the citizens of Hempfield Township. Bob diligently worked to slash spending and directed the township departments to be more accountable and work more efficiently in order to avoid a tax increase in the 2002 and 2003 budgets.

Bob's career in civil engineering and surveying has provided him with the special kind of expertise that has prepared him to deal successfully with one of the most pressing problems facing our area today. Because Bob has designed roads, storm sewers, sanitary sewers and subdivisions, he has the experience needed to understand the impact of growth in our area and the knowledge of how to control it.

Bob spearheaded the formation of the Multi Municipal Comprehensive Plan between Hempfield Township, City of Greensburg and Southwest Greensburg Borough. He serves on the executive committee for the Smart Growth Partnership of Westmoreland County and sits on the board of the Sewickley Creek Watershed Committee. Bob is also a member of the Board of the Westmoreland County Stormwater Management Committee.

He is a member of the Police Rod and Gun Club and the National Rifle Association, as well as an Honorary member of the Hempfield #2 Volunteer Fire Department.

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