



Lawmakers Speak Out On Matters Large and Small

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(AP) — Pennsylvania lawmakers have issued thousands of news releases in the past two years — even a few about the pay raise they voted themselves in July, then repealed in November after a public backlash.

Topics ranged from the most contentious battles in the Capitol to issues that couldn't have mattered to more than a handful of their constituents.

They spoke out about reducing property taxes and introducing slot-machine gambling, subsidizing prescription drugs and underwriting doctors' medical malpractice insurance, finding ways to reduce fraudulent voting and pushing for an increase in the minimum wage.

Dozens of releases heralded the arrival of state grant money in districts — even in amounts of just a few hundred dollars — as well as federal funds the incumbent had little or no role in securing.

They issued releases about their own upcoming constituent forums and other public appearances. They announced taking their oaths of office, their committee assignments and awards for accomplishments that included perfect attendance.

They took note of Skin Cancer Awareness Month, Lithuanian Independence Day, Juror Appreciation Week, Older Pennsylvanians Month and Volunteer Forest Firefighters Week.

They offered tips for driving in snowy weather, emergency preparedness and Halloween safety.

And they went on the record about stray pets, global warming, phone scams, free maps and calendars, kidney disease, gun violence, trout stocking schedules, out-of-state dumping, road rage, hybrid vehicles and the death of singer Luther Vandross.

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