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COMMENTARY

OUR READERS SAY

State rep hopeful covers the issues

In light of your June 14 article, "Budget stalemate lingers," I would like to introduce myself to your readers as an alternative to the politics of partisan gridlock that currently holds sway in Harrisburg. My name is Matthew Gordon, and I am the Democratic candidate seeking to represent the 70th District (from Norristown to Lower Salford) in the General Assembly.

The partisan political games being played by the Republican majority in Harrisburg to prevent the Democratic governor from making progress on the economy, education and the environment, do not serve the public interest. It is mind-boggling to me that incumbent Rep. John Fichter at this late date can suggest, as he does in that article, that he is not aware that the governor's gambling proposal is tied to property tax reduction.

Either Mr. Fichter is asleep at the wheel, or he is being dishonest; either way, his actions (and non-actions) serve to obstruct property tax reduction and improvements in the education funding system, for which constituents (Republican and Democratic alike) have been clamoring for years. Similarly, Mr. Fichter is

blocking a referendum to let the voters decide whether to proceed with Gov. Rendell's Growing Greener II program, which will improve Pennsylvania's economy, employment picture, and environment at an estimated cost to the average Pennsylvanian of only \$5 per year.

Meanwhile, Mr. Fichter would prefer to drag his feet, or fund an umpteenth taxpayer-funded "study" on Brownfield revitalization approaches, rather than allow voters to decide whether an action-oriented program, supported by the vast majority of the public, should proceed. Mr. Fichter, if you don't have the diligence to act decisively, then let the people decide!

We need new energy in the representation of this district. We need a representative who will work on breaking through the phony political logjams, towards common-sense solutions that benefit all parties. It's time to stop seeing bills as "Democratic" or "Republican."

The only measure of a bill should be how well it serves the interest of Pennsylvanians. In my more than 20 years of work as a groundwater hydrologist in environmental cleanups, I have extensive

experience working across the table with various stakeholders including industry, government and the public, to develop responsible, cost-effective solutions to complex problems that benefit all involved. I would take that same approach to Harrisburg, so that the community interest is served first and foremost. The position of state representative should not be seen as a career to be protected by blocking progress on behalf of corporate special interests. Rather, it's a responsibility to actively and enthusiastically represent and serve the interests of your neighbors and the community at large.

In fact, I would support a reduction in the length of the legislative session, as I am convinced we could get twice as much done, in half the time and at half the cost to taxpayers, if we promote the legislature as the part-time citizen-led government our forefathers intended, rather than the career entitlement program for slow-moving obstructionists that the legislature has become.

Matthew Gordon
Skippack