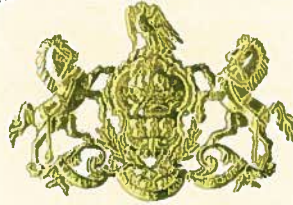


25TH DISTRICT
JOE SCARNATI

SENATE BOX 203025
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-3025
717-787-7084
FAX: 717-772-2755
www.senatorsarnati.com

Office of the President Pro Tempore



Senate of Pennsylvania

DISTRICT OFFICES

WARREN OFFICE:
315 SECOND AVENUE, SUITE 203
WARREN, PA 16365
814-726-7201
FAX: 814-726-7012

BROCKWAY OFFICE:
410 MAIN STREET
BROCKWAY, PA 15824
814-265-2030
FAX: 814-265-2040

WELLSBORO OFFICE:
5 MAIN STREET
WELLSBORO, PA 16901
570-724-5231
FAX: 570-723-5119

TOLL FREE: 1-877-787-7084

November 21, 2012

Adjutant General Wesley Craig
Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
Building P-O-47
Fort Indiantown Gap
Annville, PA 17003-5002

Dear General Craig:

We were shocked and saddened to learn that the Pennsylvania Army National Guard Funeral Honors program has been arbitrarily limited to within a 100-mile radius of Philadelphia and Annville. The decision to restrict this final tribute to our heroes was undertaken without notice or consultation.

It is troubling that the financial needs of the program were never brought to our attention during budget negotiations, so we might have explored responsible alternatives. While we understand the current economic constraints our Commonwealth faces, this program does not fall within any reasonable definition of wasteful spending. The cost of providing this important service for our deceased veterans certainly pales in comparison to the commitment and sacrifice they have given to our country.

The elimination of this traditional and fitting final show of respect for our servicemen and women residing in several urban centers, numerous small communities, and extensive rural parts of the state warrants public input and discussion. Most Pennsylvanians will likely feel strongly that denying our veterans a proper tribute is not a worthwhile manner to achieve some small savings.

Last week, we joined together in celebrating Veterans Day and the passage of legislation intended to improve and expand services for veterans and their families. To treat some as less deserving by virtue of the location of their hometown is not consistent with those intentions or the promises we have made to care for every veteran.

Adjutant General Wesley Craig
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We urgently request a reversal of this policy so that all veterans, regardless of their place of passing, can be honored with the final farewell they have so courageously earned through their honorable service to our nation and our Commonwealth.

Sincerely,



Joe Scarnati
Senate President Pro Tempore



Lisa Baker, Chair
Senate Veterans Affairs and Emergency
Preparedness Committee