

Senator Gene Yaw's Testimony
Senate Inter-Governmental Operations Committee
Wednesday, May 25, 2011
Hearing Room #1



Good Morning, Chairman Smucker and Members of the Committee. I am Senator Gene Yaw who represents the 23rd Senatorial District of Pennsylvania. I also serve as Chairman of the Board for the Center for Rural Pennsylvania.

On behalf of the Center's Board of Directors and staff, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding Senate Bill 1080, which, as you know, calls for the consolidation of six legislative research service agencies into one Legislative Office of Research and Policy Development.

The Center for Rural PA was established pursuant to the Rural Pennsylvania Revitalization Act in 1987. The Center is a bipartisan, bicameral legislative agency that serves as a resource for rural policy within the Pennsylvania General Assembly.

The Board meets at least every four months or as often as it deems necessary and works with members of the Legislature, educators, state and federal executive branch agencies, including the Governor, and national, statewide, regional and local organizations to maximize resources and strategies that can better serve Pennsylvania's 3.4 million rural residents.

The Center is governed by an 11 member Board of Directors, which is appointed in part by the Speaker of the House, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Governor and representatives of the State System of Higher Education (SSHE).

The Center promotes and sustains the vitality of Pennsylvania's rural and small communities by:

- administering grants to conduct research on matters relating to rural conditions;
- maintaining and disseminating a broad base of information on rural trends and demographics;
- publishing research and project results; and
- sponsoring regional and statewide forums on rural issues.

The grant programs of the organization are available to qualified faculty members of the college and university members of the SSHE and the current land grant university and the regional campuses of the University of Pittsburgh.

By statute, grants cannot exceed \$60,000 and are to address the following subjects:

- Rural People and Communities
- Economic Development
- Local Government Finance and Administration
- Community Services
- Natural Resources and Environment
- Education Research
- Rural Values and Social Change
- Agriculture
- Health and Welfare Concerns

Naturally, as Chairman of the Board, I have a vested interest in this piece of legislation and its impact on the Center. Moreover, I have a deep concern of its ramifications on Pennsylvania's 12.7 million residents.

I reference Pennsylvania's entire population because this bill does not just impact the 3.4 million residents who reside in rural areas. The Center for Rural Pennsylvania and its research plays a vital role in urban and metropolitan policy planning, especially as Pennsylvania's 57 cities and older suburbs continue to sprawl.

My intent today is not to sit before you and provide you with a lesson in state demographics or social diversities; however, Pennsylvania's demographics are changing, and it is important that the entire General Assembly is cognizant of these changes.

In its current form, the proposed draft language to consolidate several of the legislative service agencies would repeal the Center's enabling legislation.

For the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, its Board of Directors is eliminated and the determination and prioritization of workload, personnel, and expenditures with regard to research of rural conditions and rural database development/maintenance is granted to the newly hired executive director of the new research agency.

In effect, the current system of governance that provides for direct engagement of representatives of the General Assembly, academia and the Governor's office in research and policy matters of state government affecting rural Pennsylvania is now granted to one paid employee.

The Center for Rural Pennsylvania provides a number of services to constituents of the General Assembly.

For example, within the past 12 months, Center staff have been keynote speakers, panelists, and presenters, at more than 100 meetings, conferences, legislative hearings, workshops, and other community events across the Commonwealth. Audiences included: foundations, chambers of commerce, economic development agencies, local governments, high school students, community-based organizations, and rural leadership classes. In addition, numerous communities utilize the research publications and data from the Center, regularly, in making decisions that affect their quality of life.

I have included with my testimony a list of **136 Reports** completed by the Center, and available on their website, dealing with a myriad of issues from 'Community Visioning and Planning' to 'Coordination and Integration of Rural Transportation'.

The site also includes **42 Fact Sheets** looking at various trends and percentages on a number of issues ranging from 'Funding Municipal Recreation Projects' to 'Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Rural Pennsylvania'.

All of this information is included on the Center's website at (www.rural.palegislature.us). If you have not already done so, I encourage you view this site. The information contained on it is invaluable.

In conclusion, I cannot emphasize enough the important work that the Center for Rural Pennsylvania does to assist members of the Legislature, locally elected and municipal officials in making informed and cognizant decisions when addressing rural and urban policy.

Since its inception, the Center has a documented practice and history of being cost effective and efficient.

For example, through Center initiatives, staff compliment has been reduced from 9 to 5 employees over the past several years. Additionally, the Center has moved from leased facilities into state-owned office space that has resulted in a tax savings of:

- Annual rent costs exceeding \$50,000
- Annual parking costs of \$3,400
- Annual telecommunications costs of approximately \$6,000
- Increased presence and use of Internet has reduced printing, publications and postage expenses of approximately \$4,500

Given the Center's current staff compliment and allocation of resources, I believe its work would be severely compromised, or eliminated, with this consolidation.

We hope to work with you and your office to address some of these issues and to ensure the Center's continued viability in the state, especially rural Pennsylvania, will continue.

On behalf of the Center, I want to thank you again for the opportunity to address your Committee.



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Reports

For a copy of a report listed below that is not available as a pdf file, please call or email the Center. Our contact information is listed above.

[Community & Economic Development](#) | [Health & Human Services](#)
[Agriculture and the Environment](#) | [Education](#) | [Reports](#)

Community and Economic Development

- [Examination of Small Business Owners in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2010) (1.1 MB in size)
- [Rural Exports: A Baseline Study](#) (2009) (956 KB in size)
- [Studies on Unemployment and Underemployment in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2009) (2.6 MB in size)
- [Drinking Water Quality in Rural Pennsylvania and the Effect of Management Practices](#) (2009) (941 KB in size)
- [Economic and Transportation Impact of Warehousing on Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2008) (2.2 MB in size)
- [An Evaluation of the Keystone Opportunity Zone \(KOZ\) and Keystone Opportunity Expansion Zone \(KOEZ\) Programs in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2008) (1076 KB in size)
- [Protocol for Determining the Feasibility of Installing Dedicated Wind Energy in Pennsylvania Rural Communities](#) (2008) (388 KB in size)
- [Pennsylvania Local Government and Water Resources Management: 1991 and 2006](#) (2008) (815 KB in size)
- [Developing Effective Citizen Engagement: A How-To Guide for Community Leaders](#) (2008) (141 KB in size)
- [Broadband Internet Use in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2008) (250 KB in size)
- [Examining the Rural-Urban Income Gap](#) (2006) (210 KB in size)
- [Rural Pennsylvania's Water and Wastewater Infrastructure](#) (2006) (182 KB in size)
- [Affordable Housing in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2006) (424 KB in size)
- [2003 Attitudinal Survey of Pennsylvania Rural Residents](#) (2004) (343 KB in size)
- [Rural Pennsylvania in the New Economy](#) (2004) (175 KB in size)
- [Broadband Internet Service in Rural and Urban Pennsylvania: A Common Wealth or Digital Divide?](#) (2003) (308 KB in size)
- [Assessment of and Strategies for Enhancing E-commerce in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2003) (333 KB in size)
- [Welcome Back Downtown: A Guide to Revitalizing Pennsylvania's Small Towns](#) (2002) (168 KB in size)
- [Rural Bankruptcy Rates in Pennsylvania](#) (2001) (1,842 KB in size)
- [A Retrospective of Economic Development Programs](#) (2001) (280 KB in size)
- [Measuring the Effectiveness of Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulations in Pennsylvania](#) (2001) (982 KB in size)
- [A Demographic Profile of Pennsylvania's Rural Women](#) (2000) (187 KB in size)
- [An Attitudinal Survey of Pennsylvania's Rural Residents](#) (2000) (188 KB in size)
- [The Cost of Living Across Pennsylvania's 67 Counties](#) (2000) (534 KB in size)
- [A Survey of Pennsylvania's Small Town Municipal Officials](#) (2000)
- [Planning for the Future: A Handbook On Community Visioning, Third Edition](#)

- (2006) (344 KB in size)
- Government Policy and Land Use Change Along State Highways: A Case Study of Highway Access Permits and Municipal Planning (1996)
- Tourism: An Economic Strategy for Rural Pennsylvania (1993)
- [Economic Development in the Rural Community](#) (1993) (Available on website only)
- Telelinked Business: A New Horizon for Rural Pennsylvania (1992)
- Intermunicipal Organizations: The Untapped Potential for Rural Pennsylvania (1991)
- Meeting Fiscal Challenges in the 1990s: Innovative Approaches for Rural Local Governments (1991)
- The Widening Rural-Urban Income Gap: Past Trend or Forecast for the 1990s (1991)

Health and Human Services

- [Direct Care Worker Training for Aging Clients with Developmental Disabilities](#) (2010) (1.5 MB in size)
- [Analyses of Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Data for Rural Health Outcomes](#) (2010) (662 KB in size)
- [Rural Hospital Financial Conditions](#) (2010) (6 MB in size)
- [The Sustainability of Rural Community Health Service Providers](#) (2010) (1.2 MB in size)
- [An Inventory and Evaluation of HIV/AIDS Support Networks in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2008) (1.1 MB in size)
- [Health Care Degree Programs: Their Role in Serving Pennsylvania's Rural Health Care Workforce](#) (2008) (2 MB in size)
- [An Examination of Food Assistance Availability to Rural Pennsylvanians](#) (2008) (678 KB in size)
- [Substance Abuse in Rural Pennsylvania: Present and Future](#) (2007) (97 KB in size)
- [School Nurses on the Front Line: Challenges in Meeting the Diverse Health Needs of Rural Pennsylvania School Children](#) (2007) (3 MB in size)
- [A Rural-Urban Analysis and Comparison of Health Insurance Benefits Offered by Small Businesses](#) (2007) (303 KB in size)
- [The Impact of Mandatory Managed Care for Medicaid Clients on the Delivery of Mental Health Services to Children and Adolescents in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2007) (63 KB in size)
- [Childhood Asthma in Rural Pennsylvania: Building Schools' Capacity to Optimize Health](#) (2006) (165 KB in size)
- [Public Health Infrastructure for Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2005) (293 KB in size)
- [The Health and Nutrition of Hispanic Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers](#) (2004) (82 KB in size)
- [Adult Day Services in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2004) (247 KB in size)
- [An Analysis of Employment Dynamics for Former TANF Recipients in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2004) (87 KB in size)
- [Dental Service Supply and Demand for the Indigent Populations in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2004) (248 KB in size)
- [Analysis of the Children's Health Insurance Program in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2003) (84 KB in size)
- [Studies on Rural Elderly Care](#) (2003) (274 KB in size)
- [The Effect of New Medicare Reimbursement Methodologies on Rural Home Health Agencies and Their Beneficiaries](#) (2002) (493 KB in size)
- [Welfare Reform: The Experience of Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2002) (74 KB in size)
- [An Examination of Homebound Rural Seniors](#) (2000) (150 KB in size)
- Status Check II Pennsylvania Rural Health Care (1999)
- The Impact of Managed Care on Rural Providers: A Focus on Critical Access Primary Care Providers Serving Vulnerable Rural Populations (1999)
- Rural Housing Needs in Pennsylvania: Assessment and Impact (1994)
- Urban Perceptions of Rural Areas (1994)
- Critical Access Hospitals: Hospitals Pennsylvania Cannot Afford to Lose (1992)
- Rural Pennsylvania Enters the 1990s: Healthcare Outlook and Opportunities (1990)

Agriculture and the Environment

- [Creation of Organic Feed Formulations for Rural Pennsylvania Aquafarmers \(2009\)](#) (242 KB in size)
- [Your Agritourism Business in Pennsylvania: A Resource Handbook \(2009\)](#) (1 MB in size)
- [Using Natural Heritage Program Data for Wind Energy Planning: A Manual for Townships \(2009\)](#) (373 KB in size)
- [Modeling Potential Wildlife-Wind Energy Conflict Areas \(2009\)](#) (778 KB in size)
- [Growing the Links Between Farms and Schools: A How-To Guidebook for Pennsylvania Farmers, Schools and Communities \(2008\)](#) (1 MB in size)
- [Farm to School Programs in Pennsylvania \(2008\)](#) (1.1 MB in size)
- [An Evaluation of Failing Private Septic Systems in Pennsylvania \(2008\)](#) (5 MB in size)
- [Biosolids Disposal in Pennsylvania \(2007\)](#) (1 MB in size)
- [Pennsylvanians' Knowledge of Agriculture \(2007\)](#) (506 KB in size)
- [An Examination of Pennsylvania's Meat and Poultry Processing Industry \(2007\)](#) (98 KB in size)
- [An Investigation Into the Needs and Concerns of Young Pennsylvania Farmers \(2007\)](#) (149 KB in size)
- [Market and Labor Force Factors in the Growth of the Wood Products Industry in Rural Pennsylvania \(2007\)](#) (300 KB in size)
- [Agritourism in Pennsylvania: An Industry Assessment \(2006\)](#) (441 KB in size)
- [Assessment of Community Watershed Organizations in Rural Pennsylvania \(2005\)](#) (258 KB in size)
- [Building on Our Strengths: Workforce Development for the Pennsylvania Dairy Industry \(2004\)](#) (225 KB in size)
- [The Influence of Well Construction on Bacterial Contamination \(2004\)](#) (156 KB in size)
- [Nature-Based Tourism Policy \(2003\)](#) (116 KB in size)
- [Building a Geographic Information System \(GIS\) for Acid Mine Drainage Remediation Planning: A Manual for Non-profits \(2003\)](#) (97 KB in size)
- [Acid Mine Drainage: Studies in Remediation \(2003\)](#) (79 KB in size)
- [Starting & Strengthening Farmers' Markets in Pennsylvania \(2002\)](#) (252 KB in size)
- [Streams: Science Teams in Rural Environment for Aquatic Management Studies \(1996\)](#)
- [Medium- and Small-Scale Methane Digesters for Livestock Manure Disposal in Lancaster County \(1995\)](#) (Available on website only)
- [Pennsylvania Ecotourism: Untapped Potential \(1995\)](#) (approximate 6MB) (Available on website only)
- [Zoning for Farming: A Guidebook for Pennsylvania Municipalities on How to Protect Valuable Agricultural Lands \(1995\)](#) (Note: [Act 67 and 68 Updates for Zoning for Farming, April 2001](#) (160 KB in size))
- [Outlook for Value-added Wood Manufacturing in Pennsylvania \(1988\)](#)

Education

- [An Analysis of Rural and Urban Pennsylvania Adults Taking, Completing and Passing the GED \(2011\)](#) (1.6 MB in size)
- [Rural Youth Education Project Third Wave \(2010\)](#) (423 KB in size)
- [Survey and Analysis of Alternative Education Programs II \(2009\)](#) (1 MB in size)
- [Rural School District Enrollment and Building Capacity: Projections for the Next 10 Years \(2009\)](#) (1 MB in size)
- [Rural Youth Education Project Second Wave \(2009\)](#) (467 KB in size)
- [Growing the Links Between Farms and Schools: A How-To Guidebook for Pennsylvania Farmers, Schools and Communities \(2008\)](#) (1 MB in size)
- [Farm to School Programs in Pennsylvania \(2008\)](#) (1.1 MB in size)
- [A Statewide Investigation into Meeting the Mandates of No Child Left Behind \(2008\)](#) (520 KB in size)
- [Rural Youth Education Project \(2006\)](#) (49 KB in size)
- [Is Bigger Better? A Comparison of Rural School Districts \(2006\)](#) (259 KB in size)
- [Adult Education in Rural Pennsylvania \(2006\)](#) (547 KB in size)
- [Survey and Analysis of Alternative Education Programs \(2003\)](#) (115 KB in size)
- [Postsecondary Enrollment and Persistence of Students From Rural Pennsylvania \(2002\)](#) (58 KB in size)
- [The Improvement of Employment Opportunities for Students with Disabilities](#)

- Upon High School Graduation in Rural Settings (2000)
- Support Systems for Rural Youth at Risk (1994)
- Teleteaching Distance Education (1994)
- Rich Schools - Poor Schools: Challenges for Rural and Urban Pennsylvania (1991)

Reports

- [Impacts of Electricity Restructuring in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2011) (1.1 MB in size)
- [Rural Leaders and Leadership Development in Pennsylvania](#) (2011) (829 KB in size)
- [Pennsylvania County Property Reassessment: Impact on Local Government Finances and the Local Economy](#) (2010) (1 MB in size)
- [2008 Attitudinal Survey of Pennsylvania Rural Residents](#) (2010) (484 KB in size)
- [Impact of the Uniform Construction Code in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2010) (1.2 MB in size)
- [Survey of Emergency Management and Preparedness Agencies in Pennsylvania's Rural Counties](#) (2010) (415 KB in size)
- [Challenges and Opportunities for Community Banks in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2010) (1.2 MB in size)
- [An Examination of Mobile Homes in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2009) (1 MB in size)
- [An Information Systems Security Readiness Assessment for Municipalities in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2009) (728 KB in size)
- [Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Use Among Youth in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2009) (515 KB in size)
- [Measuring and Analyzing Juvenile Recidivism in Rural and Urban Pennsylvania](#) (2009) (797 KB in size)
- [Wealth Transfer in Pennsylvania](#) (2008) (2.2 MB in size)
- [Rural by the Numbers 2008](#) (2008) (1 MB in size)
- [Migration for Housing: Urban Families in Rural Living](#) (2008) (269 KB in size)
- [Impact and Analysis of Act 50](#) (2007) (393 KB in size)
- [Rural by the Numbers 2007](#) (2007) (301 KB in size)
- [The Future of Hunting](#) (2007) (260 KB in size)
- [Prisons and Rural Communities: Exploring Impact and Community Satisfaction](#) (2007) (77 KB in size)
- [Rural by the Numbers 2006](#) (2006) (288 KB in size)
- [Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment and Retention in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2006) (235 KB in size)
- [Rural by the Numbers 2005](#) (2005) (165 KB in size)
- [Rural Development in the European Union: Lessons for Pennsylvania](#) (2005) (283 KB in size)
- [Overweight Children in Pennsylvania](#) (2005) (439 KB in size)
- [An Examination of Pennsylvania's Oil and Gas Industry](#) (2005) (235 KB in size)
- [Coordination and Integration of Rural Public Transportation Services in Pennsylvania](#) (2004) (124 KB in size)
- [Exploring Public Housing Use in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2004) (102 KB in size)
- [Stats for Scaredy-Cats: A How-To Guide for Rural Data Users](#) (2002) (189 KB in size)
- [Moving Heritage Tourism Forward in Pennsylvania](#) (2001) (83 KB in size)
- [Cybercitizens of the Commonwealth: How Rural and Urban Pennsylvanians Access and Use the Internet](#) (2001) (362 KB in size)
- [Economic Values and Impacts of Sport Fishing, Hunting and Trapping Activities in Pennsylvania](#) (1998) (192 KB in size)
- [Executive Summary - Single Parents' Attitudes Toward and Use of Government and Community Assistance: A Needs Assessment to Plan Interventions that Preserve Family Function and Lower the Risk of Poverty](#) (1998) (Available on website only)
- [The Pennsylvania GIS Resource and Implementation Guide](#) (1997) (Available on website only)
- [Inside Rural Pennsylvania: A Statistical Profile](#) (1997) (3.73 MB in size)



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Fact Sheets

- [Foreign Language Course Offerings in Pennsylvania School Districts](#) (2010) (505 KB in size)
- [Department of Defense Spending in Rural and Urban Counties](#) (2010) (727 KB in size)
- [An Analysis of Illegal Dumpsites in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2009) (610 KB in size)
- [A 60-Year Perspective on Pennsylvania's Rural Population](#) (2009) (607 KB in size)
- [Funding for Municipal Recreation Projects](#) (2008) (911 KB in size)
- [How Are You Connected?](#) (2008) (348 KB in size)
- [Profile of Rural Pennsylvania Elderly Women](#) (2008) (619 KB in size)
- [A Comparison of Rural and Urban Middle-Income Households](#) (2007) (1.4 MB in size)
- [The Outs and Ins of Rural Migration](#) (2007) (199 KB in size)
- [Rural Economic Snapshot: Second Quarter 2005 to Second Quarter 2006](#) (2007) (158 KB in size)
- [An Inventory of Pennsylvania Historic Barns](#) (2006) (112 KB in size)
- [Behind the Numbers: Race, Ethnicity and Ancestry](#) (2006) (36 KB in size)
- [Behind the Numbers: Industries](#) (2006) (45 KB in size)
- [Behind the Numbers: Geographic Boundaries](#) (2006) (36 KB in size)
- [Behind the Numbers: Rural](#) (2006) (65 KB in size)
- [Drug and Alcohol Treatment in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2006) (83 KB in size)
- [Behind the Numbers: Cost of Living](#) (2006) (46 KB in size)
- [Behind the Numbers: Poverty](#) (2006) (71 KB in size)
- [Survey of Small-Town Police Departments](#) (2006) (191 KB in size)
- [Behind the Numbers: Income](#) (2006) (36 KB in size)
- [Trends in Rural School Enrollment: A 20-Year Perspective](#) (2005) (169 KB in size)
- [2005 Survey of Small-Town Municipal Officials](#) (2005) (142 KB in size)
- [Persistent Poverty: An Issue for Some Municipalities](#) (2005) (161 KB in size)
- [Housing Trends in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2005) (83 KB in size)
- [Survey of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault Victim Service Agencies](#) (2004) (201 KB in size)
- [Progress in Pennsylvania Downtowns](#) (2004) (71 KB in size)
- [Trends in Rural Pennsylvania: A Rural Economic Reality Check](#) (2004) (53 KB in size)
- [Trends in Rural Pennsylvania: The Dirt on Pennsylvania Agriculture](#) (2004) (112 KB in size)
- [Trends in Rural Pennsylvania: Infrastructure Makes It All Work](#) (2004) (70 KB in size)
- [Pockets of Rural Prosperity](#) (2004) (60 KB in size)
- [Municipal Computer Use](#) (2003) (102 KB in size)
- [Religious Establishments in Rural Pennsylvania](#) (2003) (47 KB in size)
- [Trends in Rural Pennsylvania: The Environment and Natural Resources](#) (2003) (128 KB in size)
- [Trends in Rural Pennsylvania: Local Government Capacity](#) (2003) (65 KB in size)
- [Trends in Rural Pennsylvania: Education Progress Report](#) (2003) (97 KB in size)
- [Trends in Rural Pennsylvania: Socio-demographics - So That's a Rural Pennsylvanian!](#) (2003) (73 KB in size)
- [Trends in Rural Pennsylvania: Transportation, The Road Rules](#) (2003) (69 KB in size)

- [*Trends in Rural Pennsylvania: Health Care Access and Affordability*](#) (2003) (122 KB in size)
- [*Answering the Call – Recruitment and Retention of Pennsylvania Firefighters*](#) (2002) (459 KB in size)
- [*Recreational Issues in Pennsylvania's Small Municipalities*](#) (2002) (170 KB in size)
- [*Landing on a Rural Opportunity: Aerotourism in Rural Pennsylvania*](#) (2001) (239 KB in size)
- [*Pennsylvania's Rural Homeless Reality*](#) (2000) (327 KB in size)