

## **Democracy Rising PA and Rock the Capital**

### **PART 1: STATEWIDE INVESTIGATING GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATION FOR A CONSTITUTION CONVENTION**

**1. The first action necessary for a convention to occur is for the General Assembly to place a referendum on the ballot for voters to approve or reject. What actions will you take as governor to compel the General Assembly to place the referendum on the ballot?**

It will all come down to leadership, and I am the only candidate in the race who has a record of turning reform into a reality. Since I have led Allegheny County, we consolidated 10 elected row offices into four, streamlined government, and saved taxpayers money while improving public services. The critics told me each time that it couldn't be done, but I consistently proved them wrong – and I had to take on my own party to succeed. The key was that – just like now – the voters were on my side. Pennsylvanians are demanding change, and I will insist that their voices are heard in Harrisburg. As County Executive, I was able to get County Council to put a referendum on the ballot to consolidate the row offices, so I have specific experience convincing a legislative body to follow the public will on major reform issues.

**2. You are on record as favoring a “limited” Constitution convention. What limits would you impose?**

I agree with the grand jury that the Constitutional Convention should be limited to reform issues. I have laid out a specific set of reform proposals – including cutting the size and cost of the Legislature, enacting term limits and making redistricting non-partisan – but I want the Convention to consider any government reform ideas that the delegates believe should be on the table. The purpose of limiting the Constitutional Convention to government reform is so that we can implement the political reforms our system desperately needs without the Convention being hijacked by unrelated issues.

**3. Do you support allowing voters to choose the convention’s limits, if any? If not, how would you give legally enforceable meaning to Article I, Section 2 of the PA Constitution?**

I will ask the Legislature to put a question on the next possible ballot so that voters can approve the convening of a Constitutional Convention that is focused on government reform.

**4. One of the critical aspects of a Constitution convention is the selection of delegates. In 1967, the procedure used to choose delegates resulted in a convention of 163 delegates where only 11 were women; only six were minorities; 44% were lawyers; and 11% represented insurance and real estate interests. Thirteen of the delegates were legislative leaders who controlled the agenda and conduct of the convention. Many believe that the next convention’s delegates should more accurately represent the Commonwealth’s citizenry. Do you agree with the goal of ensuring that delegates to a convention, in the aggregate, accurately reflect Pennsylvania’s citizenry geographically, demographically and economically? If so, how would you ensure that the delegate selection process achieves this goal?**

Absolutely. It is essential that the delegates represent the diversity of Pennsylvania in every sense, and that is the only way that our citizens will have confidence in the product of their work. I will ensure that the legislation laying out the parameters of the Convention and putting the question before voters includes adequate safeguards so that the delegate selection process establishes a level playing field and encourages true citizen participation. I will also consult with reform organizations and with groups representing Pennsylvanians who are too often under-represented in the political process to get their input on the best way to promote a diverse delegate selection process.

**5. If you disagree with the goal, what difficulties do you anticipate, if any, in gaining support for the convention's recommendations if the body of delegates does not reflect the citizenry?**

N/A

**6. The response of most legislators to the grand jury's report has been silence. A few have criticized the grand jury while a few others have called for action to implement some recommendations, to create a stronger system for enforcing ethics and standards of public integrity, and otherwise to prevent a repetition of the conduct at the center of the Bonus Scandal. If the General Assembly fails to enact the grand jury's recommendations in 2010, will you call a Special Session of the General Assembly to deal solely with matters of public integrity? If so, what specific statutory changes will you ask the General Assembly to enact? If not, what other methods will you use to prompt the General Assembly to address the grand jury's recommendations and other improvements?**

The Legislature's response to the grand jury report has been sickening – but not surprising. On June 1, just a few days after the report was released, I stood in the Capitol and called on the General Assembly to get to work on the grand jury's recommendations. I cited the report's examples of waste and abuse, including hundreds of taxpayer-funded legislative staffers whose jobs are completely unnecessary; a secret unit in the state Department of Transportation created to give special treatment to members of the General Assembly; and partisan caucuses that spend millions of dollars a year to have their own print shops, human resource staffs and information technology departments. All of this must change.

In addition, in the reform plan that I released last fall, I called for:

- Cutting the size and the cost of the Legislature, and having term limits;
- Eliminating per diems, WAMS and the leadership's slush fund;
- Making the budget process work on-time and with complete transparency – and permanently docking the Governor and Legislature's pay for each day if it is ever late;
- Putting limits on campaign contributions; and
- Stopping gerrymandering of legislative districts.

On my first day in office, I will send the Legislature a package of bills containing my reform plan – as well as implementing as many pieces as possible by Executive Order. I will pursue my legislative agenda in regular session or in special session – as long as it gets done.

**7. How will you lead citizens and media who support a Constitution convention into a force the General Assembly cannot ignore?**

I see this election as a crucial step in reaching that goal. I have a record of reform and have campaigned with a strong reform agenda. When I become Governor, it will be a clear sign that voters are demanding change, and I will use the persuasive power of the Governor's Office to deliver reform.

**PART 2: WAMs**

**8. All WAMs are contracts between the Commonwealth and the local entity receiving the funds. As such they require the prior approval of the governor, the state treasurer and the attorney general. As governor, will you refuse to approve any contracts in which legislators have influenced, either directly or indirectly, the awarding of the contract *after* the money for it has been appropriated to an executive agency? Why or why not?**

No legislator should ever have the power to direct the use of public dollars *after* the budget is enacted. We need to have complete transparency in how public funds are used. That means that the enacted budget should identify specific uses or recipients for funds to the greatest extent possible – so that they can receive up-or-down votes with full accountability. For grant programs where the recipient is not pre-determined – for example, where there is an application process and proposals are evaluated – there should be clear and publicly available criteria for how public funds are awarded.

**9. Given *Common Cause of Pennsylvania v. Commonwealth*, 668 A.2d 190, what legal authority do you believe permits the governor to approve WAMs? If you believe this case is current law, will you enforce it and refuse to approve WAMs?**

I will eliminate WAMs from the state budget – period.

**PART 3: THE LEGISLATURE'S SURPLUS**

**10. Do you believe the legislature, unlike executive and judicial agencies with rare exceptions, should be able to carry funds forward that were not expended in the year for which they were appropriated? Please explain.**

No, the Legislature absolutely should not be able to stockpile public funds. We are talking about taxpayer dollars, and they do not belong to the General Assembly just like they do not belong to the Executive or Judicial branches. The Legislature's \$200 million slush fund is an insult to Pennsylvania taxpayers.

**11. If not, will you blue-line as many line items in the budget for the General Assembly as necessary to ensure that the legislature spends down its surplus funds from previous years? Please explain.**

I have called on the Legislature to return their \$200 million surplus. If they do not do so voluntarily, I will consider any action within my power as Governor necessary to put Pennsylvanians back in control of these tax dollars.

**12. If so, how large a surplus do you believe is appropriate for the legislature to carry forward? Why shouldn't executive and judicial agencies be able to carry forward similar funding?**

I do not believe that any surplus is necessary or appropriate. The excuse that I have heard is that legislators need a surplus so that if they are in a budget stalemate with the Governor, they are not "starved" into submission. That is a typical Harrisburg attitude. The real solution is not to stockpile tax dollars – it's to pass the budget on time, which is what I have done for six years as Allegheny County Executive.

In addition, my reform plan establishes a better timeline for considering and passing the budget each year, and it would permanently withhold the pay of the Governor and Legislature for every day the budget is late.