

QUESTIONS FOR ELECTED STATE REPRESENTATIVES
ANSWERS SUBMITTED BY STATE REPRESENTATIVE MIKE STURLA

1. As an elected representative of the residents of Lancaster City, do you believe the current legislative authority given to the city provides for the efficient and effective delivery of local government services?
No. It is way too fragmented to operate efficiently. It should be more regional.
2. As an elected representative of the residents of Lancaster City, are you in favor of, or opposed to, Lancaster City moving forward with a new charter? Why?
Actually, I am fairly ambivalent. Increased local control is a double-edged sword. As an example, zoning and planning might work better at a county level versus individual municipalities. Regional police, fire, and EMS also might be more efficient than individual municipalities.
3. If a new Charter is written, what do you believe would be its benefits for the city?
Depends on what is in the Charter. A possible pro is a combo regional and at large City Council member. A possible con is higher local taxes.
4. What help does the state have for municipalities that are facing a financial crisis caused by local tax policy other than distressed city status? What are your ideas on options for property, income and business taxes for cities? In your opinion has the legislature provided enough tools for cities to thrive? If not, what legislative remedies would you support?
Get counties to do reassessment more often than once every 50 years. This is another example where a state mandate would work better than hoping for a county to do the right thing.
5. What is your position on the sale of local utilities to provide revenue while at the same time removing the asset and rate setting from local authority? What legislation would you support that would help keep local ownership but also provide citizens with revenue from these operations?
I am opposed to the sale of local utilities. I support allowing for equalized rates between regulated and non-regulated users/consumers.
6. There is proposed legislation allowing municipalities to use firms for management work. Please explain how that would work and are you for it, against it, and why?
This legislation would mostly be applicable for small municipalities that cannot justify full-time staff. I support this bill.
7. Recognizing the multiplicity of local governments in Pennsylvania, what legislative changes, tools and resources would you support to improve the efficiency of local services that provide for the health, safety and welfare of citizens?
As co-chair of the Basic Education Funding Commission, I am working on determining the appropriate levels of funding for basic education that would relieve taxpayers of "municipal overburden". I have also introduced bills addressing various issues:
 - **HB 20 would create a dedicated funding source for clean water projects by using minimal fees for non-municipal users of excessive amounts of water.**
 - **HB 678 would allow for a one cent countywide sales tax that would be redistributed to all municipalities within the county based on the value of tax-example properties in each municipality.**
 - **HB 680 would provide grants to fire departments based on number of fire stations instead of only one per department.**
 - **HB 684 would eliminate "free" state police to municipalities with no local police department and free up additional General Fund and Motor License Fund money from the state for municipalities that maintain a local police department.**

I urge the Home Rule Study Commission to determine at what level local government is operating in an efficient manner before looking to raise taxes and share its findings with the public.