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SENATORIAL NEWSLETTER — EARLY AUTUMN, 2013

Sen. Poore guides streamlined school choice bill to passage in the Senate

For the first time since it was enacted in the 1990's, Delaware has carried out a major overhaul of its popular school choice program, Rep. Kimberly Williams's House Bill 90, making it easier for families to take part. As prime Senate co-sponsor of the bill, Senator Nicole Poore guided the measure through the Senate. Thanks to this new legislation, parents will now have standardized application forms and deadlines to sign up for the program. The new law also eliminates discrimination against students with special needs and makes changes to allow schools to accept more students in the choice program.

"It simplifies the process so that a parent or child has the opportunity to choose among several different schools and, whether they're in the

district or outside it, they can go straight to the Dept. of Education website and fill out a uniform application form," said Senator Poore, who has firsthand knowledge of the challenges facing parents who want to use the school choice program. "I think this will really clarify things and will help more children take part in it."

The Legislature has established a new "Task Force for Promoting Charter-District Collaboration" to document and share effective practices between public charter schools and traditional public schools. Meetings of the task force will be open to the public and we will keep you informed in future newsletters about the meeting schedule.

Senator Poore tells U.S. Senate panel about effective strategies for government reorganization and streamlining



U. S. Sen. Chris Coons & State Sen. Nicole Poore at the U.S. Capitol

Delaware State Senator Nicole Poore testified before a hearing of the U.S. Senate Budget Committee's Government Performance Task Force in June, briefing senators on Delaware's efforts to streamline redundant programs to save tax dollars. U.S. Senator Chris Coons (D-Del.), who is a member of the task force, was an active part of the hearing, which explored strategies for streamlining redundant federal programs.

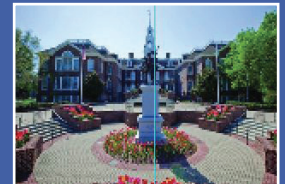
Senator Poore, who chairs Delaware's Joint Sunset Committee, described the history, processes, and outcomes of the work done by the Committee. Created in 1979, the Sunset Committee is a bipartisan Committee with members from both House and Senate. It is designed to promote government efficiency and effectiveness. Since its



Senator Poore testifying before the Senate Budget Committee's Government Performance Task Force

inception, the committee has evaluated and analyzed approximately 120 state agencies. For example, in 2008, the Joint Sunset Committee worked with boards and commissions staff in the governor's office to terminate 19 inactive gubernatorial boards, councils, and commissions.

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Sen. Poore sponsors bill to increase cap on damages for oil spills

Companies spilling oil into Delaware's waterways or on the state's soil will face considerably higher fines thanks to a new law.

Sen. Nicole Poore led Senate efforts to pass House Majority Whip Valerie Longhurst's measure (House Bill 32) increasing the 35-year-old cap on fines. The new law also eliminates duplicative regulations to make the state law conform to federal regulations.

Before the change, Delaware's liability cap was well below what the federal government allows.

Historically, most oil spills have been in the Delaware Bay—the most recent notable spill came in 2004, when the *Athos I* spilled some 265,000 gallons of oil into the bay. But with increasing amounts of oil being shipped to the PBF's Delaware City refinery by rail, Poore said the new law will provide better protection all around.

"This change removes our liability, should a spill occur," Poore said. "It's an insurance policy that makes sure our environment and taxpayers are protected from the high costs associated with oil spills. We strive as legislators to provide a healthy balance between jobs and environmental protection for the citizens we serve."

New law helps foster kids make the transition to independent living

Foster children often have a tough time making the transition from their foster homes to the adult world. Thanks to a new law, however, the process should become easier.

Sen. Nicole Poore led efforts in the Senate to pass a new law (House Bill 163) requiring the Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families, more commonly known as "the Kid's Department," to develop and maintain programs that will provide independent living services for young people between the ages of 14 and 21 to help them navigate the adult world.

"These kids need our help," Poore said. "It's hard enough for young people with full family support to make the change and it's doubly hard for foster kids who lost a lot of support when they came of age. I hope these changes we're calling for make the transition smoother and make life better for these young people."

Sen. Poore speaks to Leach School Graduating Class

Sen. Nicole Poore was the commencement speaker at this year's graduation exercises at the John G. Leach School. Families and friends of the school's second largest graduating class gathered together in May to celebrate the achievements of the six graduating seniors. An excerpt of Sen. Poore's speech follows:

"Sometimes it is said that the Leach School is a school for students with special needs. I'm here to tell you that we all have special needs, just as we all have special attributes. Every one of us is special and unique. We all take something from this world as we pass through it, but, more important, each of us brings something to it, something of our own that we, and only we, possess."



As Chair of the Joint Sunset Committee, Senator Poore presided over hearings this year that resulted in 13 pieces of legislation to make state government more efficient. The mission of the Sunset Committee is to address duplication of services and government organizational effectiveness.

SB 104—Financial disclosure of public officers.

SB 105—Financial disclosures of officers and employees of the State.

SB 106—Board of Plumbing, Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Examiners.

SB 107—State Employees' Pension Plan.

SB 118—Relating to Pharmacists.

SB 124—Relating to the Division of the Public Advocate.

SB 125—Delaware Manufactured Home Relocation Authority.

SB 127—Relating to the State Board of Parole.

SB 128—Delaware Sentencing Accountability Commission.

SB 129—Relating to Parole.

SB 133—Relating to Cosmetology and Barbering.

SB 134—Relating to Manufactured Home installation.

SB 135—Relating to Charitable Gaming.

Please visit <http://www.legis.delaware.gov> to view any of the bills listed above or other bills considered this year that might be of interest to you.

William Penn High School agriculture students operate a community-sponsored agriculture program at historic Penn Farm

William Penn High School students are participating in an innovative “Community Sponsored Agriculture” program in cooperation with Delaware Greenways. The program will utilize a historic tract, the Penn Farm, on Frenchtown Road across from Amazon.com for a “pick your own” cooperative.

The program is student-operated, from growing, maintaining, and sustaining the crops, to business and marketing, to soil and crop production, and on and on and on... No harsh chemicals, artificial fertilizer, or dangerous pesticides will be used. You will enjoy the freshest and best-tasting vegetables that Delaware has to offer. All monies from the CSA are returned to the William Penn High School programing.

For a membership fee of \$100 per year, members will be able to pick your own vegetables for half the prevailing market price in local stores and support the William Penn agriculture program at the same time.

Members can come to Penn Farm on certain days,

every week; (weather and sunlight permitting). Bring your own bags and containers. We will supply cutting knives for your convenience. Come and enjoy the bounty! The growing season should be early May through October. You will receive an email with exact days & times for pickup.



The available varieties are: salad greens (many varieties, especially Asian); radishes (four varieties); tomatoes (heirloom varieties); sweet peppers (four varieties); hot peppers (four varieties); cucumbers (three varieties);

string beans (two varieties); beets (three varieties); turnips (two varieties); cabbage (four varieties); cooking greens (five varieties); eggplant; okra; squash (four varieties); sweet potatoes; onions; pumpkins; and gourds.

For further information, you can contact Jim Ryan, agriculture teacher at William Penn High School at 713 East Basin Road, New Castle, DE 19720 or go to:

<http://www.pennfarm.info/>

Have any friends who would like to get Senator Poore's E-mail Newsletters?

Send their name and e-mail address to:

nicole.poore@state.de.us

to have them added to our e-mail list.

Thanks



Special Recognition for a Special Lady:

In June, Senator Poore honored her friend, Deborah Ann Teoli, in the Senate Chamber at Legislative Hall in recognition of her 60th Birthday. Debbie is a graduate of the John G. Leach School and the Douglas School and has been a longtime volunteer at the Mary Campbell Center, the Girl Scouts and United Cerebral Palsey of Delaware, Inc.



A new Delaware State Senate Facebook Page is now up and running. Check it out at:

<http://www.facebook.com/delawarestatesenate>



Greeting a young constituent –

Senator Poore took time out from the Delaware City Fourth of July Parade to greet a youthful visitor to the event.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



Exceptional Care for Children (ECC) is the first and only pediatric, skilled nursing facility in Delaware. Opening in 2006 with only 10 rooms, and having responded to increasing demands from our area’s leading pediatric hospitals, ECC has completed two expansion projects and now features 31 unique and beautiful rooms. ECC provides long-term, transitional, palliative, and end-of-life care to technology-dependent children and their families. Situated on nearly eight acres of serene, suburban property, ECC provides top-quality pediatric care in a home-like setting.

Businesses, organizations and individuals support Exceptional Care for Children (ECC) throughout the year with the gift of their time. There are many fun and rewarding ways to help this fine community organization meet its mission, including landscaping within their 7.7 acre campus, planning and running special events, and providing entertainment and stimulation for the children.

If you are interested in helping others and making a difference in their world, are willing to attend an orientation, and share the group’s belief in the potential of the children at Exceptional Care for Children, please contact them by calling (302) 894-1001 and asking to speak with their Volunteer Coordinator or by emailing them with your contact information at:

volunteer@exceptionalcare.org

LEGISLATIVE RECORD–

Some significant legislation sponsored or co-sponsored by Senator Poore during the 2013 session

Criminal Law & Courts:

Senate Bills 127 & 129: Modernizes enabling statute for state Board of Parole, including adding victim advocacy as a qualification for appointment to the board.

House Bill 130: Continues efforts to fight the manufacture of methamphetamine by stopping people from crossing state lines to get additional supplies of meth ingredients.

Education:

Senate Bill 100 “Seclusion Bill”: Based on national reports documenting misuse of seclusion and restraint within public schools, many states are adopting remedial statutory or regulatory standards. In 2012, the U.S. Department of Education issued authoritative guidance encouraging states to adopt written standards deterring use of seclusion and restraint in public schools. This bill is the product of research and deliberations of an inter-agency committee formed by the Governor’s Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) to identify best practices and develop standards for Delaware public schools.

House Bill 24: Reaffirms compulsory attendance for K-12 students and requires truancy charges to be brought after 20 unexcused absences instead of the old provision of 30 days.

Health & Social Services:

Senate Bill 108: Requires distribution of materials about Sudden Cardiac Arrest to student athletes and their families and requires training on dealing with the problem for officials and coaches.

Open Government/Government Operations:

Senate Bill 150: A major overhaul of the state Sustainable Energy Utility to tighten up procedures and make the operations of the utility more efficient.

Social Policy:

Senate Bill 9: Brings Delaware’s juvenile sentencing laws into line with recent U.S. Supreme Court rulings by eliminating mandatory sentences of life without parole in Murder One cases, and gives judges discretion in sentencing and eliminating life without parole as an option for juveniles in other serious felony cases.