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Sturla: No more free police protection at expense of others

Assemblyman Mike Sturla is a rare politician who is prepared to run risks for what he considers the public good.

Sturla recently facilitated the deregulation of the sale of syringes because almost two Pennsylvanians each day contract HIV/AIDS through the sharing of dirty needles.

Currently Sturla is sponsoring a bill that would charge townships and boroughs that do not provide municipal police for state trooper protection.

According to the *Sunday News*, an opponent reasoned: “*Everyone gets some use of the state police,*” [Elam] Herr said. “*Whether it be patrolling or help with other types of crime, or the state police fire marshal or crime labs.*”

But that doesn’t mean they shouldn’t have to pay for their additional services. Those of us who have to pay for police protection should not have to also pay for police protection for those who cannot or choose not to provide it.

Hospital Certificate of Need process could return to PA

At present, Pennsylvania is one of fourteen states in the US that do not operate a Certificate of Need (CON) process to regulate the introduction of new medical services or facilities—like the one proposed by Lancaster General for West Earl Township, about three miles away from the well functioning Ephrata Community Hospital. But, if State Representative Phyllis Mundy (Luzerne County) has her way, CON requirements will return to Pennsylvania, perhaps as early as next spring.

The Health Care Facilities Act (HB247), sponsored by Mundy last February, would reintroduce the CON process, a move that Mundy has called “*critical to helping rein in the escalating costs of health care.*” The bill is currently being considered

by the House Insurance Committee. In her April testimony before the committee, Mundy stated that “*one of the significant health care cost drivers is unnecessary duplication of expensive medical technology and services.*”

According to Art McNulty, Executive Director of the House Insurance Committee, HB247 would “*absolutely*” relate to a project like the one proposed for West Earl. He did qualify, however, that a CON review could, under certain circumstances, approve a project that did not appear reasonable at face value. For example, McNulty said, if LGH were proposing the introduction of particular services and technologies unavailable at Ephrata Community, a CON would likely be granted.

NEW ERA: Mid-day exit polls on election days identifying likely local winners and losers.

WATCHDOG: None this year. A benefit of the *New Era*’s merging into the morning *Intelligencer Journal*. A wag of the tail!

LETTER: Mayor needs to set proper priorities

“...The Lancaster city fire bureau has for years been viewed as the expendable resource when financial times get tough. At one time, the fire bureau here had as many as 120 personnel in six active fire stations with two full alarms available for immediate response in the city. Through reductions the bureau reached the size of approximately ninety firefighters under the Stork administration.

“Many here don’t think of the fire bureau on a day to day basis... However when one of those emergency incidents occur, taxpayers of Lancaster expect their firefighters to respond quickly, in force, with the resources immediately available to mitigate any emergency situation.

“National standards (NFPA 1710) requires four or five firefighters to respond on each apparatus to emergency calls, with a minimum of sixteen at the scene of a fire.

“If Mayor Gray and Tim Gregg have their way, the fire bureau will be reduced by 25%, and fire apparatus will respond with two fire personnel on board. That would allow for as few as ten fire fighters to respond to a structure fire. In such a situation, it is impossible for fire fighters, no matter how well trained or highly motivated, to safely conduct operations.”

McCaskey celebrates first football win since 2007

On Friday, November 6, in an away game versus the Reading Knights, McCaskey’s Red Tornado won 14-10, scoring its first win since 2007.

“Being a senior,” one girl said, “I haven’t seen my team win since my sophomore year.” One 10th grade boy said that, among the student body, “Everybody’s just all hyped, if you know what I mean. Just energetic and stuff.”

“I was surprised,” a 9th grade girl said, reflecting a common sentiment, “I didn’t think

they would win.”

Some students were less impressed with the narrow victory. *“We could do a whole lot better,” one girl said, “It’s just one game.”*

According to a 12th grade boy, who had played on the team during its losing streak, *“They are doing better with the new coach. Next year they should do alright.”*

NEW ERA: Editorial **“Another setback for gay marriage”** states: *“Gay marriage now has lost in all 31 states in which it has been put to a popular vote.”*

WATCHDOG: Proposition #6, a California state-wide initiative to ban gay marriages, was

defeated by an almost two to one ratio in 1978.

This would be known to anyone who has watched the recent motion picture **“Milk”**, based on the life of openly gay San Francisco supervisor Harvey Milk, who was assassinated in that same year.

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