

Profile



State Senator Mike Folmer

48TH DISTRICT

Lebanon County and portions of Berks, Chester, Dauphin and Lancaster Counties

Mike Folmer may be best known for the 87 year old, landmark produce store that bore his family name in Lebanon, Pennsylvania. But it's from a lifetime of living and working in the Lebanon community that he's maintained a solid reputation as a civic leader and businessman.

Much of Mike's early life was spent defying the odds. With the help of a next door neighbor, a gifted reading and speech teacher, Mike overcame a significant speech impediment – a defining victory in his young life.

As a college student at Grace College in Winona Lake, Indiana, Mike paid tuition by selling produce door-to-door in a converted pick-up truck from his father's business. It was the first of many successes as an entrepreneur. Mike received a degree in History from Grace College in 1978.

For nearly thirty years, Mike's passion for people has earned him the trust and loyalty of his customers, clients, and constituents. As a financial consultant, sales manager, and public servant, honesty and professionalism have defined his life's work.

Mike is a founding member of the Constitutional Organization of Liberty, a community-wide educational project designed to promote awareness of America's founding principles.

In 1986, Mike pulled an upset victory to Lebanon City Council campaigning as a conservative Democrat (he would later follow Ronald Reagan's example by re-registering as a Republican). As the Council's Director of Public Safety, Mike fought local labor unions on excessive contract demands and introduced a plan to trim hundreds of thousands of dollars from the cash strapped community's annual budget. Mike honored a term-limits pledge, retiring after just one term in office.

Two decades later, running on a "Promise to Pennsylvania," a pledge to advance government reform, tort reform, the elimination of wasteful state spending, and lower taxes, Mike pulled another upset victory to win a seat in the Pennsylvania State Senate. He was reelected to a second term in 2010.

In his first term, Senator Folmer had five bills signed into law. Act 76 of 2007 establishes rights for foster children and foster parents; Act 127 of 2008 strengthens the child custody rights for military personnel deployed overseas; Act 29 of 2009 is a land transfer provision for Lancaster County; Act 89 of 2010, clarifies powers and duties of police officers employed at state military institutions and police powers at military installations; Act 125 of 2010 adds bioterrorism to the Pennsylvania Crime Code.

He currently serves as Chairman of the Communications and Technology Committee and Vice Chair of the Education Committee. Other committee assignments include Inter-Governmental Operations; Labor and Industry; State Government; and Urban Affairs and Housing.

Mike and his wife, Shelia, reside in Lebanon City and have two grown children and seven grandchildren.

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AGENDA OF PROMISE TO PENNSYLVANIA

1. LEGISLATIVE REFORM

ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE TAXPAYERS:

- Require an independent auditing firm to conduct a comprehensive audit of the General Assembly for waste, fraud and mismanagement.

CITIZEN INCLUSION IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS:

- Mandate that the "PA Sunshine Law" apply uniformly to all legislative sessions, meetings and hearings conducted by State Government, granting appropriate access to the public and media.
- Disallow passage of any legislation that has not strictly met the procedural rigor detailed in Sections 1-4, Article III, of the Pennsylvania Constitution.

ENACT STRICT LOBBYING REFORM:

- Enact a five-year waiting period for former legislators and cabinet officials to become lobbyists.
- Eliminate gifts to public officials from lobbyists for any entity desiring business with the Commonwealth.
- Require legislators to abstain from voting on any legislation that could benefit their personal or business interests.

2. POLITICAL REFORM

RESTORING THE CONCEPT OF A CITIZEN LEGISLATURE:

- Enact a Constitutional Amendment limiting the number of years Senators and Representatives can serve to 12 years in each legislative body.
- Enact term limits on committee chairmanships and leadership positions.

OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY IN GOVERNMENT:

- Will post the senator's votes within 24 hours of each session day.

ENDING TAXPAYER SUBSIDIZED INCUMBENT PROTECTION:

- Rein in taxpayer subsidized newsletters and public service announcements, which are tools for reelection and further the status quo in Harrisburg.

3. TAXATION AND SPENDING REFORM

STOP THE SPENDING SPREE IN HARRISBURG:

- Implement the Taxpayers Bill of Rights (TABOR) to strictly limit increases in state spending to the concurrent rates of inflation and population growth.
- Eliminate unfunded mandates to the counties, municipalities and school districts in the Commonwealth, which shift the tax increases to these taxing bodies.
- Limit the ability of politicians to distribute tax dollars to special interests.

AN END TO BURDENING THE TAXPAYER:

- Require a three-fifths majority to pass a tax increase.
- Work to eliminate property taxation.
- Eliminate "nuisance taxes."

4. LEGAL AND LABOR LAW REFORM

END THE JACKPOT JUSTICE SYSTEM:

- Pass a constitutional amendment giving the General Assembly broader authority to implement commonsense legal reform.
- Reform lawsuit abuse by ending unlimited jury awards and enforcing a "loser pays" rule.

PROMOTE WORKERS' FREEDOM:

- End forced unionism in Pennsylvania, giving people the freedom to choose whether or not they want to join a union.

