



March 26, 2008

**An Open Letter to the Pennsylvania General Assembly:
Return Your Surplus to Taxpayers!**

Dear Legislator:

On behalf of the nearly 17,300 Pennsylvania members of the National Taxpayers Union, I urge you to support efforts to devote the General Assembly's operating fund surplus to tax relief.

For years, the Assembly has hoarded hard-earned taxpayer dollars and now there is a sizable surplus. The Legislative Audit Advisory Commission has recommended that the Assembly adopt standards for how to deal with this money. Rather than expanding government and increasing spending, the best course is to return those dollars to the folks who earned them in the first place.

At a time when our economy is slowing, Pennsylvania ought to be collecting only the revenues necessary for legitimate core functions. The operating fund from which the Assembly draws its salary and pays for other costs has taken an extra \$241 million out of Pennsylvanians' pockets in recent years. That money would be better used to feed the families, fill the gas tanks, and expand the businesses upon which Pennsylvania relies so heavily.

Nonetheless, some legislators would prefer to use the money to boost spending on programs like health care. Instead of spending millions on new programs that would expand the reach of government, elected officials ought to focus on relieving the burdens of taxation. Pennsylvania has the nation's second-highest corporate income taxes, a high sales tax, and a property tax burden that is increasingly difficult to bear for hard-working families.

Politics has trumped the interests of taxpayers for far too long. The time has come to stop using the fruits of Pennsylvania's labor as a political shield in budget battles between the legislative and executive branches. The General Assembly should resist the urge to grow government and instead devote the operating fund surplus to tax relief for Pennsylvanians suffering from a slowing economy.

Sincerely,

Andrew Moylan
Government Affairs Manager