

## Day on the Hill 2011 – Talking Points

The fifth annual Cyber Charter School Day on the Hill gives everyone an opportunity to tell their representatives how proposed legislation could impact educational opportunities for Pennsylvania families and children. This year, we are focusing our efforts on [Senate Bill 904](#) and its companion [House Bill 1348](#), the proposed Charter and Cyber Charter School Reform Law. We are also taking an opportunity to request restored funding for basic education in the state budget. Below are suggested talking points on both issues.

### Proposed Reform of the Charter School and Cyber Charter School Law

- ✓ The culmination of nearly 15 years of review and analyses, this legislation would improve accountability and transparency, while continuing to support additional educational opportunities for Pennsylvania families.
- ✓ The legislation eliminates wasteful spending of tax dollars on new school building construction by allowing existing buildings to be retooled and reused.
- ✓ It removes politics from the equation, and instead sets up an independent commission to determine the viability of proposed charter schools.
- ✓ Leveling the playing field for all students across the commonwealth, the legislation assures they're all tested using the same criteria.
- ✓ It increases accountability, making it harder for a few bad charter schools to ruin the reputation of the many that are operating with high standards.
- ✓ The legislation continues to allow families the option to choose what's best for them and their children by creating a policy that combines educational excellence with taxpayer accountability.
- ✓ The bills would make sure high-performing charter schools can thrive and financial mismanagement and academic problems can be prevented.

### Basic Education Funding

- ✓ With one shot at an education, our children clearly have the most at stake in this year's budget debate, and deserve access to quality programs threatened by deep cuts.
- ✓ For every dollar we invest in children, our return is multiplied many times over.

- ✓ We need a budget that continues the focus of getting our children off to a good start in life, and that starts with restored funding for basic education.
- ✓ The best way to keep homeowner property tax increases to a minimum is to increase our state-level support for our public schools.
- ✓ While government cannot create jobs, it can create an environment that spurs development and answers our business community's plea for a well-trained workforce.