

Keystone Connection

Rick Santorum

United States Senator, Pennsylvania

Dear Friends,

As we enter the “dog days of summer,” the Senate, as it does each year, is set to begin its August recess. I have always found August to be one of the most beneficial months of the year, giving me the opportunity to travel through Pennsylvania for four weeks uninterrupted, meeting with thousands of constituents in communities just like yours.

But before heading out, I wanted to touch base again and let you know what has been keeping me busy these last few months. Within this newsletter you will find information on the recent Pennsylvania floods, the debate over our nation’s immigration policy, and protecting our children from predators who use the Internet to hide their identity.

These are just a few of the things I’ve been working on--please feel free to contact me or visit my website, <http://santorum.senate.gov>, to learn more. Enjoy the newsletter, and I hope to see you on the road.

Best Wishes,



Pennsylvania Flooding

In late June, the Northeast experienced uncommonly heavy rainfall that raised the levels of the Susquehanna and Delaware rivers and caused extensive flooding across eastern Pennsylvania. From Wilkes-Barre to Easton to New Hope, thousands of Pennsylvanians were facing the fallout of a second “100 year” level flood in the last three years.



I had the opportunity to travel throughout the affected regions, meeting with flood victims and surveying the damage. It was quite an experience. The damage was severe, with many Pennsylvanians enduring the ruin of their homes or businesses, but more striking than anything else was the grace and courage of those who were hit. Instead of throwing in the towel and wallowing in their misfortune--certainly an approach that would have been well within their rights to take--they looked to the future, determined to clean up their homes and businesses and get back to living their lives.

The flooding also led to an impressive response by Pennsylvanians not directly affected by the water. PECO Energy workers rapidly shut off electricity, making sure there would be no problems with the electrical grids in affected areas. The Pennsylvania National Guard rescued close to 1,000 individuals, and the State Police pulled three people from a rooftop. The stories go on and on.



Now, in the wake of the floods, many Pennsylvania families will have to navigate the trying task of rebuilding. There are ways in which the government can assist in this process, and if you, or anyone you know, is having trouble getting the necessary help, please contact one of **my offices**.

Protecting our Children

In recent hearings, Congress has heard disturbing and saddening accounts of predators using the anonymous nature of the Internet to exploit our children. **We have all seen the troubling headlines coming out of Pennsylvania and states across the country**, and the frequency of these abhorrent crimes seems to be increasing. Combating this new and growing threat requires cooperation at all levels of government and law enforcement, and Congress has acted to ensure that such cooperation takes place.



Earlier this year, I authored a bill that would authorize **Project Safe Childhood**, a program that expands our approach to preventing and punishing online predators, as well as the **Schools SAFE Act**, which would allow states access to FBI background checks on those potentially working with or around our kids. Both of these bills became law as part of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act, signed by the President on July 20. As the father of six young children, I understand that we can't protect our children from everything, but these two bills will help to protect them in the places they are most vulnerable--places, like home and at school, that should be nothing but safe-havens.

Securing our Borders

This spring, the Senate began debating what is surely one of the most important issues currently facing our nation—**the state of our immigration system**. In doing so, my colleagues in the Senate elected to pass a bill that fails to secure our borders and grants amnesty to millions who have entered our country illegally. I did not support the bill then, and I do not support it now.

The first, and central, component to any immigration reform must be securing our borders. In the post 9/11 world in which we live, our national security depends on our border security. Until we properly secure our borders, we remain vulnerable to criminals, terrorists, and individuals who mean to harm Americans and are able to enter our country undetected and unimpeded. Before we proceed to any further reform, Congress must ensure our border patrol agents have the resources, the manpower, and the technology to effectively do their jobs, which is why I introduced the Border Security First Act--a responsible bill I am hopeful we can pass.



Did you know?

Some of the most successful, cutting edge medical research in the world is taking place right in Pittsburgh, at the Pittsburgh Tissue Engineering Initiative's National Tissue Engineering Center. Working with the Department of Defense, the NTEC is developing promising technologies like tissue engineering, regenerative medicine employing adult **stem cells**, and other cellular therapies.

Already, the work of the talented researchers at the NTEC is paying dividends--therapies developed in Pittsburgh are being used at Fort Sam Houston to treat our soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. Incredibly, there is a study underway right now to regenerate an ear of a soldier who was injured in the Iraq War. The potential benefits of this research are boundless, and I am proud to have consistently supported the NTEC and its mission.