

Senator Casey – Half Term Accomplishments - 2013 to 2015: Laws Enacted and Other Accomplishments and Actions.

PUBLIC LAWS – CASEY LEAD

- 1. The Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (Casey Lead).** The Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (Campus SaVE Act) was signed into law as Section 304 of Public Law 113-4, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (VAWA) on March 7, 2013. Regulations to fully implement the law took effect on July 1, 2015. The Campus SaVE Act requires uniform reporting standards for sexual assaults on college campuses and requires schools to provide clear guidelines to students on their sexual assault policies. The new law also emphasizes steps schools can take to educate students and help prevent sexual assault.
- 2. The Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Reauthorization Act – S 242.** Senator Casey was the lead Senate Democrat (with Richard Burr of North Carolina as the lead Republican) in the effort to reauthorize the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA). As a result of the passage of PAHPA in 2006, the federal government, in partnership with state and local governments, took significant steps to strengthen our nation’s medical and public health preparedness and response capabilities. The bipartisan reauthorization in 2013 built on these efforts by enhancing existing programs and authorities using lessons learned since 2006 to maximize our nation’s resilience to threats to public health, whether naturally occurring or deliberate. The Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness Reauthorization Act was signed into law as Public Law 113-5 on March 13, 2013.
- 3. Growing Opportunities for Agriculture and Responding to Markets Act – S 678.** The Growing Opportunities for Agriculture and Responding to Markets Act was enacted as section 5106 as part of 2014 Farm Bill (Public Law 113-79), which was signed into law on February 7, 2014. This act addresses needs of a growing sector of American agriculture by establishing at USDA a pilot program for competitive third-party lending to support local agricultural production. Lenders provide microloans to qualified farmers – along with technical support, business education and financial management expertise.
- 4. Children’s Hospital GME Support Reauthorization Act – S 1557.** Casey led the reauthorization of the Children’s Hospital Graduate Medical Education bill that became law on April 7, 2014. This program provides funding to over fifty free standing children’s hospitals to train residents. There are three hospitals in Pennsylvania – the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh of UPMC and St. Christopher Hospital for Children. These three hospitals together received over \$35 million in funding of almost \$250 million. CHOP has one of the largest, if not the largest,

program in the country. The Children's Hospital Graduate Medical Education Bill was enacted into law as Public Law 113-98 on April 7, 2014.

5. **The Emergency Medical Services for Children Reauthorization Act (Casey Lead)** The Emergency Medical Services for Children Reauthorization Act of 2014, Public Law, 113-180, was signed into law on September 26, 2014. This bill reauthorized an important program that helps improve emergency medical care for children and teens. Some of the program's accomplishments since its creation include the creation of guidelines for the care of children in hospital emergency departments, which were endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Emergency Physicians, and the Emergency Nurses Association.
6. **Starting Early Starting Right Act – S 1155.** This legislation was incorporated into the larger Child Care Development Block Grant reauthorization. It helps families maintain access to child care, creates a strong baseline of health and safety standards for child care providers and facilities, promotes quality and accountability among providers, and requires states to work with their early learning advisory councils when developing their state plans for child care. Major portions of this bill were incorporated into Sections 5 and 6 of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 which became law on November 19, 2014.
7. **The Gettysburg National Military Park Expansion Act – S 782.** The Gettysburg National Military Park Expansion Act expands the boundary of Gettysburg National Military Park to include 45 acres of land at the southern end of the battlefield where cavalry skirmishes occurred during the Battle of Gettysburg in July of 1863. Adds the Lincoln Train Station, located in downtown Gettysburg, which was built in 1858 and is currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The Gettysburg National Military Park Expansion Act was passed as part of a 2014 Public Lands omnibus package in that was included in the FY15 National Defense Authorization Act, HR 3979, PL 113-291, which was signed into law on December 29, 2014.
8. **A Bill to Reauthorize the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area, the Lackawanna Valley National Heritage Area, the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, and the Schuylkill River Valley National Heritage Area – S 1157.** The National Heritage Areas reauthorization bill was passed as part of a 2014 Public Lands omnibus package in that was included in the FY15 National Defense Authorization Act, HR 3979, PL 113-291, which was signed into law on December 19, 2014.
9. **The Stephen Beck, Jr. Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act – S 313.** Since 2009, Senator Casey championed the ABLE Act, which creates tax-free savings accounts for individuals with disabilities. On December 16, 2014, the Senate passed the ABLE Act (76-16) into law, following action by the House of Representatives (404-17) earlier in the month. With its passage, millions of Americans will be able to save for their futures, creating peace of mind for individuals and families across the Nation. Major portions of

the ABLE Act were incorporated into Title I of Division B of H.R.5771, the Tax Increase Prevention Act of 2014, which became Public Law 113-295 on December 19, 2014.

- 10. River Act - S. 407.** Major aspects of Senator Casey’s bill were included in sections 2002 and 2006 of WRRDA, which became PL 113-121; on June 10, 2014. An additional provision to increase the inland waterways user fee from 20 cents to 29 cents per gallon was included Title I of Division B of H.R.5771, the Tax Increase Prevention Act of 2014, which became Public Law 113-295 on December 19, 2014. Combined these projects have helped allocate \$134 million additional funding to the Lower Mon project over the past three years.
- 11. Clean Vehicle Corridors Act - S 1581.** The principles and goals of the Clean Vehicle Corridors Act were included in section 1413 of HR 22, the DRIVE Act. Under this section, the Secretary of Transportation would designate transportation corridors to encourage fueling infrastructure for natural gas, electric, hydrogen and propane vehicles. HR 22, the DRIVE Act, the surface transportation reauthorization bill, which was signed into Public Law 114-94 on December 4, 2015.
- 12. Empowering Parents and Students Through Information Act – S 528.** This legislation helps ensure that America’s six million K-12 students with disabilities and their families have access to necessary information to make informed decisions on their child’s education and future opportunities for pursuing college and career goals. This is accomplished by clarifying clear guidelines for the use of alternate academic assessments, providing greater access to the standard academic curriculum for all students, and requiring additional data transparency on the use of assessments. Major portions of this bill were incorporated into Title IA of the Every Student Succeeds Act, S. 1177, which became Public Law 114-95 on December 10, 2015.
- 13. Continuum of Learning Act – S 643.** This legislation updates ESEA to strengthen connections between existing early learning programs and elementary grades. This bill helps educators from Head Start, child care, other early childhood education programs, and elementary schools work together so young children have successful continuity of learning and development that sets a strong foundation throughout the K-12 school years and beyond. Major portions of this bill were incorporated into Sections 4624 and 9212 of the Every Student Succeeds Act, S. 1177, which became Public Law 114-95 on December 10, 2015.
- 14. Computer Science Education and Jobs Act – S 671.** Adds computer science as a core academic subject within the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and adds supports for teachers who specialize in this subject area. These key provisions, included in the ESSA ESEA reauthorization as part of a definition of “well rounded education,” will provide support and clarity to states and school districts to expand this discipline, ultimately helping to keep the nation competitive in the global high-tech market. Major

portions of this bill were incorporated into Title IIA, Section 4107, and Title VIII of the Every Student Succeeds Act, S. 1177, which became Public Law 114-95 on December 10, 2015.

- 15. Keep Kids in School Act – S 672.** This legislation requires states and school districts to report on the use of exclusionary discipline and create plans to reduce its use. The bill also provides funding to implement activities that have been proven to create a more positive school climate. Major portions of this bill were incorporated into Sections 1005 and 4304 of the Every Student Succeeds Act, S. 1177, which became Public Law 114-95 on December 10, 2015.
- 16. Better Educator Support and Training (BEST) Act – S 882.** This bill reforms the educator professional development pieces within the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. With the passage of the Every Student Achieves Act (ESSA) ESEA reauthorization, states and districts are now required to implement evidence-based activities that help keep teachers in the classroom, strengthen the teaching profession, and ensure principals have the skills they need to be effective by setting aside specific resources for their professional development. Major portions of this bill were incorporated into Title IIA of the Every Student Succeeds Act, S. 1177, which became Public Law 114-95 on December 10, 2015.
- 17. Depreciation Fairness Act – S 394.** The bill makes permanent the 15-year depreciation period for qualified leasehold improvement property, qualified restaurant property, and qualified retail improvement property. It ensures the depreciation schedule permanently reflects the economic useful life of these types of investments. This change will provide businesses with the certainty they need to undertake capital expenditures, which will fuel economic activity and create jobs. Major portions of this bill were incorporated into Section 123 of the PATH Act, which was enacted into law as division Q of H.R. 2029, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, which became Public Law 114-113 on December 18, 2015.

PUBLIC LAWS – CASEY LEAD DEMOCRAT

- 1. The Traumatic Brain Injury Reauthorization Act (with Senator Hatch) – S 2539.** Senator Casey was the lead Senate Democrat in the effort to reauthorize the Prevention of Traumatic Brain Injury program and the National Program for Traumatic Brain Injury Surveillance and Registries. The prevention program funds educational programs and materials for health departments, community-based organizations, parents, teachers and coaches; and research into effective prevention strategies. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also conducts surveillance work to identify TBI rates of death and rates of hospitalization, and is working to develop pediatric mild TBI guidelines. S. 2539 also required HHS to develop a Traumatic Brain Injury Coordination Plan, for federal activities with respect to TBI, which shall review existing interagency

coordination and identify areas for improvement. Finally, the law requires CDC to conduct a review of the scientific evidence relating to brain injury management in children, identifying ongoing and potential further opportunities for research, and provide to Congress the results of this review within two years. The Traumatic Brain Injury Reauthorization Act was signed into law as Public Law 113-196 on November 26, 2014.

2. **The Protecting Our Infants Act (w/ Senator McConnell) – S 799.** The Protecting Our Infants Act, which was signed into Public Law 114-91 on November 25, 2015. This bill addresses the rise of prenatal opioid abuse and infants suffering from opioid withdrawal. The bill directs the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to conduct a departmental review to identify gaps in research and any duplication, overlap or gaps in prevention and treatment programs related to prenatal opioid abuse and infants born with opioid withdrawal. It also directs the Department of Health and Human Services to work with stakeholders to develop recommendations both for preventing prenatal opioid abuse, and for treating infants born dependent on opioids. Finally, this measure encourages the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to work with states and help improve their public health response to this epidemic.
3. **Small Business Fairness Act (w/ Senator Enzi) – S 958.** This bill was included in section 867 of S. 1356, the Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), which was signed into Public Law 114-92 on November 25, 2015. This bill allows federal agencies to enter into contracts with small businesses that are service disabled veteran owned, economically disadvantaged, women-owned or a qualified HUBZone small business, even if they are part of a teaming agreement. Current law does not allow these designated small businesses to be part of a teaming agreement and also claim a socioeconomic designation.
4. **Support for Bridges Act/FAST Act (w/ Senator Blunt) – S 1370.** The goals of the Support for Bridges Act were included in The FAST Act. The Fast Act continues to provide \$73,796,694 annually for off-system bridges in Pennsylvania which adds up to \$369 million over 5 years. The bill makes an additional \$4.9 billion (FY 16-20 total) available for highway bridges nationwide that lost predictable funding under MAP-21. Incorporated into Section 1106 of the FAST Act, H.R. 22, which became Public Law 114-94 on December 4, 2015.
5. **529 Enhancement Act (w/ Senator Grassley) – S 335.** The provision expands the definition of qualified higher education expenses for which 529 accounts are eligible to include computer equipment and technology, modifies 529 account rules to treat any distribution from a 529 account as coming only from that account. It also treats a refund of tuition paid with amounts distributed from a 529 account as a qualified expense if such amounts are re-contributed to a 529 account within 60 days. This legislation was

incorporated into Section 302 of the PATH Act, which was enacted into law as division Q of H.R. 2029, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, which became Public Law 114-113 on December 18, 2015.

6. **Small Business Tax Certainty and Growth Act of 2015 (w/ Senator Collins) - S.1141.**

Legislation includes 15-year recovery period for qualified leasehold improvement property, qualified restaurant property, and qualified retail improvement property (Depreciation Fairness Act –S.394). It also includes provisions extending bonus depreciation, and a provision making permanent section 179 expensing (\$500,000 expensing with \$2,000,000 phase out) indexed for inflation. Major portions of this bill were incorporated into Sections 123, 124, and 143 of the PATH Act, which was enacted into law as division Q of H.R. 2029, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, which became Public Law 114-113 on December 18, 2015.

7. **Patient Protection and Medicare Protection Act (w/ Senator Portman) – S 2425.**

This bill does three key things. It implements a one year delay of the CMS proposal to apply competitive bid pricing to complex rehab accessories. It freezes the current payment rates for certain radiation therapy services for 2017 and 2018. This provision would ensure that cancer patients have the option to receive care in their preferred setting. It gives CMS the ability to process physician and hospital applications for a hardship exemption from complying electronic health record meaningful use requirements more efficiently. An increase in the submission of hardship applications from requirements in effect for 2015 is expected for reasons beyond provider’s control. This bill was passed in the Senate and the House on December 18, 2015 and became P.L. 114-115 on December 28, 2015

OTHER LEGISLATIVE WORK

HEALTH

- **Funding for the National Institutes of Health.** Senator Casey is one of the leaders of the effort to provide more funding for the National Institutes of Health. Pennsylvania is one of the top five states for medical research, with about \$1.4 billion per year in NIH grants flowing to PA researchers. Since 2010, Senator Casey has gathered a bipartisan group of Senators each year to write to the Committee on Appropriations in support of NIH funding; the 2015 letter had 54 signatures. The House included an additional \$8.75 billion for the NIH in the 21st Century Cures Act, and the Senate is considering the same.
- **Building Support to End Discrimination Against Pregnant Workers.** Senator Casey is the author of the bipartisan Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, which would provide important

workplace protections for pregnant workers to ensure that they can keep working safely throughout pregnancy. He offered an amendment to the FY 2016 Budget Resolution in support of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act that received unanimous support in a 100-0 vote.

- **Continuing Oversight of Domestic Pandemic Preparedness.** During the Ebola epidemic in late 2014 and early 2015, Senator Casey pushed federal officials to take swift action to ensure that the United States would be appropriately prepared for any cases of Ebola that arrived. He advocated for additional funding for the Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP), which has been chronically under-funded, and his advocacy helped secure an additional \$194.5 million in funding for HPP in the emergency supplemental appropriations bill for Ebola. Of that funding, \$10.4 million went to Pennsylvania.
- **GAO study into nursing homes.** At Casey's request, the Government Accountability Office agreed to conduct a study into the overall accuracy and reliability of the five-star rating system and its usefulness as a consumer tool.
- **Ongoing Success of the Creating Hope Act – S 606.** In 2012, to speed the development of cures of rare pediatric diseases, Senator Casey established a program based on his Creating Hope Act. This law established a pediatric priority review voucher program at the FDA to incentivize the development of new drugs to treat rare pediatric diseases. Since the vouchers can be sold, they are worth millions of dollars to companies seeking faster market entry.
- **Joint Health Efforts.** As a member of both the Senate HELP and Senate Finance Committees, the two Senate committees with primary jurisdiction over health policy, Senator Casey is exceptionally positioned to participate in debates regarding health policy. As a member of these committees, Senator Casey has also,
 - **Helped limit Medicare Part B Premium Increases.** In 2015, a relatively small group of Medicare beneficiaries were slated to see very large increases in their Medicare premiums, putting their financial security at risk. Senator Casey cosponsored legislation to prevent these premium increases. Toward the end of 2015, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015, which Senator Casey supported, included a provision to significantly reduce the premium increases.
 - **Sustainable Growth Rate repeal (“Doc Fix”).** Unsustainably low Medicare reimbursements to doctors have long been a problem in the Medicare program, leading doctors to threaten to stop accepting Medicare, and thus seniors' access to health care. In the Spring of 2015, Congress enacted a bill to fix the SGR formula.

- **Protected the six protected classes in the Medicare Part D program** -- The Medicare Modernization Act required Part D plans to include on their formularies “all or substantially all” drugs in six protected classes, including antidepressants, antipsychotics, and antiretrovirals. However, the Affordable Care Act allowed the CMS to specify criteria for identifying protected classes through notice-and-comment rulemaking. Accordingly, in 2014 CMS proposed to eliminate three of the protected classes. Senator Casey joined all of his Senate Finance colleagues in a letter to CMS opposing this change and CMS did not include this change in the final rule.

EDUCATION

- **Funding for Early Childhood Education.** Senator Casey has led the fight each year to increase the funding for federal early learning programs. Marshalling bipartisan outreach to Senate appropriators, increased funding in Fiscal Year 2016 was a particular victory. This included a \$570 million increase for Head Start, a \$326 million increase for the Child Care and Development Block Grant, a \$35 million increase to early intervention services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and restoration of funding for the Preschool Development Grants.
- **Secured Two Year Extension of the Perkins Loan Program.** Working with Senator’s Baldwin, Collins, and Portman, Senator Casey helped to push through a two year extension of the Perkins Loan program. The *Federal Perkins Loan Program Extension Act* was signed into law in December 2015. Senator Casey helped lead several colloquies on the Senate floor, held numerous events across PA, and helped organize a diverse coalition of higher education groups, universities, and colleges. Perkins loans are vitally important to the nearly 40,000 college students in PA that rely on them. These loans are often the last resort for many students and can make the difference between dropping out and finishing school.
- **Promoting and Expanding Access to High Quality Early Learning.** In addition to the expansion of the CDCTC mentioned earlier and the other pieces of early learning legislation, Senator Casey has worked vigorously behind the scenes to promote early learning. During the HELP Committee’s negotiations on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorization in Spring 2015, he authored a letter to HELP Committee Chair and Ranking Member that called for a major expansion of early learning in any ESEA reauthorization. The letter was signed by every member of the Democratic Caucus. Ultimately, a new expansion grant was included in the reauthorization and this is the first time ESEA is so aligned with preK. Senator Casey also was successful in getting a vote on the Senate floor for an amendment that would add over 3 million new pre-K seats for four year olds. Though the amendment did not pass, it is the first time in years such a substantial early learning expansion has been voted on.

- **Fighting for Students with Disabilities.** During the ESEA reauthorization, Senator Casey frequently raised the issue of ensuring that students with disabilities were provided the proper supports in school so they could succeed at the highest levels academically. In addition to Senator Casey's legislation that was included in the reauthorization, he also authored an amendment that was included in the legislation to make it easier for students with disabilities to use computer adapted tests. Finally, in November 2015, Senator Casey sent a letter to the Department of Education requesting they update and improve the data that is collected and shared with families on disability services provided by institutions of higher education. This information would make it much easier for college students to access those supports and succeed in higher education.
- **Making College More Accessible & Affordable.** Using his position on the Senate HELP and Finance Committees, Senator Casey has been a strong voice for making college more accessible and affordable. In 2015, Senator Casey joined his Democratic HELP colleagues in asking the President to use his authority to simplify the FAFSA by allowing families to use tax data from an earlier year when applying for Federal financial aid. Known as "prior-prior year," this data is nearly as accurate and is much better aligned with the financial aid process, saving colleges' time and money and giving students and families a more accurate aid picture before selecting a school to attend. In September 2015, President Obama instituted this change in the FAFSA through executive order and it will go into effect beginning with applications for aid in the 2017-2018 school year. Senator Casey has also worked with the Senate Finance Committee to provide better information and simplify the provisions in the tax code that help families afford college.

TAX RELIEF FOR WORKING AMERICANS

- **Supporting Military Families.** In February 2015, the Senate Finance Committee passed the Military Spouse Job Continuity Act of 2015, which provides the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces, who moves to another state, a tax credit for up to \$500 of qualified relicensing costs.
- **Promoting Early Learning.** In March, Senator Casey introduced S.820, the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit Enhancement Act of 2015 will help working parents afford childcare by making the full Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit available to most working families (up to \$120,000 in income) -- more than 85 percent Pennsylvania taxpayers with children would receive the full credit. Increasing the maximum amount of the credit for children under five from \$1,500 to \$3,000, thereby reducing the cost of childcare by about 35 percent.
- **Helping Foster Children Transition to Self-Sufficiency.** In November, Senator Casey introduced the Foster EITC Act to increase the EITC and lower eligibility to age 21, for

all working Americans, and age 18 for youth formerly in foster care. Across the United States, approximately 20,000 to 25,000 youth between ages 18 and 21 age out of foster care each year. Young people exiting the foster care system often face economic instability, making the bridge to successful, independent adulthood more challenging.

- **Adoption Tax Credit.** The adoption tax credit was made permanent in the American Taxpayer Relief Act in January 2013. However, that law did not extend the refundability provisions that applied to the adoption tax credit in 2010 and 2011. In 2015, taxpayers were allowed a credit up to \$13,400. The Adoption Tax Credit Refundability Act will make the credit fully refundable. Adopting a child can cost families tens thousands of dollars. According to the Department of Health and Human Services, one-third of all adopted children live in families with annual household income at or below 200 percent of the poverty level. Because many of these families' tax burdens are so low, a refundable adoption tax credit could play a significant role in lower-income families' ability to adopt and support a child from foster care.

TAX RELIEF FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

- **Promoting Capital Investments.** Senator Casey has led efforts on the Senate Finance Committee to provide small businesses with tax relief that will allow them to grow their businesses and create jobs, and enacted into law the Depreciation Fairness Act at the end of 2015. The bill makes permanent the 15-year depreciation period for qualified leasehold improvement property, qualified restaurant property, and qualified retail improvement property. Passage of the law will ensure that the depreciation schedule permanently reflects the economic useful life of these types of investments, allowing businesses to undertake the capital expenditures necessary to grow their businesses and support the U.S. economy.
- **Growing Small Businesses.** Senator Casey also teamed with Senator Collins to pass legislation to increasing expensing for small businesses, specifically a provision making permanent section 179 expensing (\$500,000 expensing with \$2,000,000 phase out) indexed for inflation.

MAKING GOVERNMENT WORK FOR PENNSYLVANIANS

- **Protecting Taxpayers.** Senator Casey successfully included an amendment to the Finance Committee's taxpayer ID theft mangers amendment to require the IRS to provide, in its notification to taxpayers of the suspected theft of their or their dependents' identities, instructions for filing police reports and forms allowing taxpayers to authorize disclosure of their personal information to investigating officials. The Finance Committee legislation is still awaiting markup.

- **Protecting Families from Identity Theft.** Senator Casey helped lead the charge to prevent access to deceased American's Social Security numbers through the so-called Death Master File (DMF.) In July 2013, Senator Casey encouraged the Finance Committee to limit access to the DMF as a part of tax reform legislation. Senator Casey supported inclusion of legislation thereby limiting access to the DMF in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013.
- **Preventing Access to Social Security Benefits for War Criminals.** Senator Casey led efforts in the Senate to close a loophole that allowed Nazi war criminals to receive Social Security benefits. The Senate passed legislation closing the loophole on December 4, 2014.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND VETERANS

- **Containing Iranian Aggression and Nuclear Proliferation.** Senator Casey remains steadfastly committed to ensuring the Iranian regime does not acquire a nuclear weapons capability. After years of work on this issue and months of careful study, Senator Casey decided to support the **Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)** between the P5+1 and Iran, because he believes it is the best option available to protect our national security and that of our partners. His 18 page analysis was one of the most detailed and thoughtful produced by any member of Congress. In the days following his announcement, many other Democrats came to the same conclusion, and implementation of the JCPOA has moved forward following a vote that blocked a joint resolution of disapproval of the deal.
- **Fighting ISIS and Terrorism.** Since the terrorist group ISIS emerged in Iraq and Syria, Senator Casey has been calling for the Administration to couple military action against the group with non-military efforts to attack the financial networks that support it. In letters, he has pressed the Administration to more aggressively investigate and designate **financiers and facilitators that support ISIS**; the Treasury Department has designed many ISIS supporters under EO 13224, but more needs to be done. After learning that ISIS was trafficking in looted antiquities to help finance its operations, Senator Casey introduced the bipartisan **Protect and Preserve Cultural Property Act**, a bill to restrict the import to the United States of antiquities illicitly removed from Syria since the beginning of the conflict.

He is also concerned that ISIS employs **improvised explosive devices (IEDs)** on an unprecedented scale, posing a threat to soldiers and civilians alike. He has pressed the

Department of Defense to ensure that partner forces in the region have the training and equipment necessary to combat this threat.

- **Fighting for a Leadership Change and for Civilians in Syria.** Senator Casey has consistently been one of the most vocal lawmakers on **Syria** policy. Believing there can be no lasting defeat of ISIS without a political transition that ends Bashar al-Assad's rule in Syria, Senator Casey has forcefully urged the Administration to demonstrate U.S. leadership on the political, humanitarian, and multilateral dimensions of this problem. He has pressed for greater humanitarian assistance to the region, knowing that the displacement of Syrians is affecting stability in neighboring countries.
- **Supporting the PA National Guard.** The transition from combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan has led to significant changes in our military, including end strength reductions in the Army National Guard and Air National Guard. Senator Casey has been working to help **Pennsylvania's National Guard** personnel manage these changes without detrimental impacts on readiness or capability. For example, he's fought to keep the combat attack aviation (Apache helicopter) capability in the Guard. Pennsylvania is now slated to retain one company of Apache helicopters.
- **Helping Vets Get Their Earned Benefits.** 21st Century Veterans Benefits Delivery Act passed the Senate unanimously on November 10, 2015. Senator Casey introduced (with Senator Heller) the bill this year to fix the disability claims process and bring a measure of accountability to the VA. While the VA has made improvements to the claims system since Senator Casey and Senator Heller first formed the VA Backlog Working Group in 2013, there are many gaps in the claims process that remain. Specifically, S.1203 will improve the following three areas of the claims process: benefits claims submission, VA regional offices practices, and government accountability. The bill passed unanimously out of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee as the vehicle for a major veterans' package, which includes several other substantive provisions to improve veterans' healthcare, education services, and employment and transitional assistance. On November 10, 2015, the 21st Century Veterans Benefits Delivery Act passed the Senate unanimously.
- **Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention Act.** Senator Casey is an original cosponsor of the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention Act which was signed into law on February 12, 2015. This law will improve access and quality of mental health care and help reduce veteran suicides.
- **Continued oversight of the VA.** Senator Casey continues to conduct vigorous oversight of the VA, specifically on its management practices and benefits delivery system.

- Senator Casey sent a letter to the VBA on April 20, 2015 in response to the VA OIG's report on the Philadelphia VA Regional Offices, which confirmed numerous troubling allegations of widespread mismanagement and data manipulation that resulted in either delayed or missed delivery of benefits to thousands of veterans. In his letter, Senator Casey expresses concern with the findings and calls for the VA to work expeditiously to implement the recommendations put forth in the OIG report
- Senator Casey led a letter to Secretary McDonald on October 16, 2015, regarding a VA OIG report titled, "Administrative Investigation: Inappropriate Use of Position and Misuse of Relocation Program and Incentives." The report substantiated allegations that the Philadelphia VARO Director received nearly \$300,000 in relocation bonuses and also found that she and former Undersecretary Allison Hickey used their positions of authority to manipulate the VA system for personal gain. Allison Hickey resigned from her position as Under Secretary for Benefits in October 2015.
- On November 9, 2015, Senator Casey cosponsored two amendments to the FY16 MilCon- VA appropriations bill. Both were included in a manager's package and passed in the final bill. Amendment 2774 (with Senators Blumenthal, Toomey, and Moran) would prohibit the use of funds for home relocation for senior employees after such funds were improperly used by VA employees in Philadelphia and elsewhere. Amendment 2785 (with Senator Toomey) prohibiting funds for Fast Letter 13-10 or secret waitlists.

PROTECTING AMERICANS WORKERS AND INDUSTRY

- **Currency manipulation.** Senator Casey is an original cosponsor of the Currency Undervaluation Investigation Act, introduced on 2/10/2015, which provides consequences for countries that fail to adopt policies to eliminate currency misalignment and includes tools to address the impact of currency misalignment on American manufacturers, including use of the countervailing duty law to impose tariffs on imports benefitting from foreign government subsidies. The text of this bill was added to the Senate-passed version of H.R. 644, the Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act of 2015. But was struck during negotiations with the House of Representatives.
- **Export Import Bank.** Senator Casey strongly advocated for the reauthorization of the Export Import Bank. It was reauthorized in 2015 through the end of FY2019 by the Export-Import Bank Reform and Reauthorization Act of 2015 (Division E, P.L. 114-94). This act lowered the Bank's statutory lending authority ("exposure cap" for outstanding portfolio) to \$135 billion for each of FY2015-2019 subject to certain conditions,

- **Black Lung.**
 - **CLAIMS.** Senator Casey is a leader in the effort to reduce the Black Lung claims backlog that is denying miners the benefits they need and are owed. In July 2014, he chaired a Senate hearing to seek answers and push for action. He has called for increased funding for Administrative Law Judges so that they can hear more cases and do so in a timely manner. To protect coal miners from Black Lung, improve care and reduce the backlog of benefits claims, Senator Casey has cosponsored the *Black Lung Health Improvements Act*.
 - **Improving Black Lung Claims Process.** In November 2014, Senator Casey introduced legislation that would make major reforms to a broken system that left Pennsylvania miners suffering from black lung without the care they need. The *Black Lung Benefits Improvement Act of 2014* would seek to end schemes that prohibit miners from accessing their own medical records and that throw roadblocks in front of miners as they see legal representation.
 - **Securing Funding for Claims Backlog.** To help coal miners waiting for black lung claims, Senator Casey helped to secure an additional \$4.86 million in the 2014 omnibus funding bill for the Black lung disability trust fund account that “Shall be used to reduce the backlog of black lung cases”. In February 2014, Senator Casey led a letter to the White House and later the Senate Appropriations Committee requesting additional funding for the Office of Administrative Law Judges to address the growing case backlog and long wait times for claimants, specifically black lung claimants.
- **Mine Safety.** Senator Casey has introduced comprehensive mine safety legislation that would strengthen whistleblower protections and increase penalties for those who knowingly violate mine safety laws. The bill, *The Robert C. Byrd Mine and Workplace Safety and Health Act*, specifically takes into account the investigations and reports on the Upper Big Branch tragedy, and incorporates provisions which families of the victims have said they are looking for.
- **Union Election Rules.** Senator Casey supported the modernized and streamlined election rules finalized in December 2014 by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) that will help workers across the country exercise their right to organize. The rule, which he supported in an April 2014 letter to the NLRB, will update election rules and remove unnecessary obstacles and roadblocks that will benefit employees and employers. The strength of our country’s middle class and the ability of workers to freely organize and bargain for wages is directly linked. This balanced rule will strengthen the economy and give middle class families in Pennsylvania and across the country more security.

- **Strengthening Workplace Protections.** Senator Casey is a cosponsor of the Workplace Action for a Growing Economy (WAGE) Act would strengthen employee protections under the National Labor Relations Act. This bill would remove incentives for employers to break the law by increasing remedies for workers and would impose new penalties on employers who act illegally. When workers can exercise basic worker rights without interference from their employers, it will expand economic security and help ensure the economy grows from the middle out, not the top down.
- **Protecting Older Workers from Discrimination.** Senator Casey, together with 5 other senators, introduced the Protecting Older Workers Against Discrimination Act. This legislation would reverse a Supreme Court decision that made it extremely difficult for workers to prove they have been victims of age discrimination. The bill establishes that employers are liable for discrimination if it was a motivating factor, even if not the decisive factor, in an adverse employment decision.
- **Paycheck Deception.** In February 2014, Senator Casey wrote a letter to Senate Majority Leader Dominic Pileggi and House Majority Leader Mike Turzai calling on them to abandon their effort to prohibit voluntary payroll deductions. The paycheck deception effort in the legislature is nothing more than an attempt to unfairly target the rights of hard-working Pennsylvanians and silence their voices as they fight for better wages and benefits to help their families. The Pennsylvania Senate passed a paycheck deception bill in October 2015. There has been discussion of pursuing a constitutional amendment to get around a Gov. Wolf veto.
- **Paid Sick Leave.** Senator Casey is a cosponsor of Senator Murray’s Healthy Families Act which would allow workers to earn paid sick days (1 hour of sick time for every 30 hours worked), up to 7 days a year.
- **Minimum Wage.** Senator Casey is a cosponsor of legislation to increase the minimum wage to \$12 an hour by 2020 and then index the minimum wage to median wages. The bill would also phase out the tipped minimum wage which has not increased in over 20 years. He had previously voted to increase the minimum wage to \$10.10. Senator Casey cosponsored and voted for the 2007 effort that increased the minimum wage from \$5.15 to the current \$7.25.
- **Overtime Pay.** To restore overtime protections for low- and mid-wage salaried workers, Senator Casey is cosponsoring the Restoring Overtime Pay for Working Americans Act, In April 2014, Senator Casey joined his colleagues in sending a letter to the President calling for a strong proposal to strengthen overtime protections for American workers. The letter called for new proposed regulations to increase the overtime salary threshold to the same level as set out in Senate legislation – to increase the threshold

from \$455 a week to \$1,045 a week to adequately reflect the inflation adjusted value since the last increase in 1975. On June 29, 2015, President Obama directed the Department of Labor (DOL) to update the rule that determines which workers are eligible for overtime pay. The DOL's proposed rule update would raise the salary threshold for receiving overtime pay from \$23,660 to \$50,440 a year and automatically adjust the threshold going forward based on inflation. This means that salaried workers who earn up to \$50,440 a year will earn time-and-a-half for hours worked over forty hours a week.

- **Coal Dust.** Senator Casey applauded the implementation of new protections to protect the health and safety of coal miners and prevent black lung disease saying that: "While this rule is a great step in reducing the number of miners exposed to coal dust and preventing new cases of black lung disease, we cannot forget about our commitment to those miners and their families' who have lost loved ones or are struggling with the disease today."
- **Improving Job Corps.** Senator Casey's bipartisan amendment with Senator Hatch to increase accountability and transparency in the Job Corps program was adopted in the HELP Committee by voice vote. The amendment requires additional reporting on a number of measures including the financial status of the Job Corps program and implementation of changes recommended by the OIG as well as an assessment by the OIG of the administrative changes made in Job Corps. This amendment was signed into law as part of the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act*. Senator Casey chaired a March 12, 2013 hearing on Job Corps. He also advocated for an end to the enrollment freeze. The end of the 12-week freeze was announced on April 22nd.
- **Keeping Pittsburgh NLRB Office Open.** Following Senator Casey's efforts to preserve the NLRB office in Pittsburgh, the NLRB has decided to keep the location open. The NLRB had been considering a merger between the Pittsburgh and Buffalo offices, which would result in fewer resources for workers and businesses for one of the two regions. Both the Pittsburgh and Buffalo offices will remain open.
- **Protecting Consumers and Workers.** To protect consumers and workers, Senator Casey and his colleagues introduced the *Hide No Harm Act of 2014*, a bill that would make it a crime for a corporate officer to knowingly conceal the fact that a corporate action or product poses a danger of death or serious physical injury. The bill, which would create punishments of fines and up to five years in prison, would also create a safe harbor from criminal liability in cases where a corporate officer notifies a federal regulatory agency and individuals subject to the danger.

- **Whistleblower Protections.** In April 2014, Senator Casey held a hearing on protections for whistleblowers in the private sector. Thousands of workers encounter employer retaliation each year for raising safety concerns or reporting injuries, but the Occupational Safety and Health Act's whistleblower provisions are too weak to provide adequate protections for these workers. As a result, known safety and health issues go unreported because workers fear losing their jobs or being otherwise harassed if they speak up.
- **No Federal Contracts for Labor Law Violators.** In July 2014, Senator Casey spoke out in support of the Fair Pay and Safe Workplaces Executive Order. The order requires, among other things, the disclosure of labor law violations such as wage and hour and health and safety violations, during the bidding process. It would also ensure that repeat offenders do not receive federal contracts. Companies that break the law shouldn't benefit from taxpayer-funded contracts.
- **Targeting Call Center Outsourcing.** Senator Casey has introduced the *United States Call Center Worker and Consumer Protection Act*, a bill that would list companies that outsource call center jobs and deny those companies access to federal grants and loans.
- **Payroll Fraud and Misclassification.** Senator Casey continued to work to highlight the problem of payroll fraud following his November 2013 subcommittee hearing and the introduction of his legislation to protect workers from being misclassified as independent contractors. The *Payroll Fraud Protection Act* would prevent companies from cheating their employees out of fair compensation by deliberately misclassifying them thereby ensuring access to safeguards like fair labor standards, health and safety protections, and unemployment and workers' compensation benefits. It also prohibit employers from using misclassification to avoid paying their fair share of taxes. Such action would be made a violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act.
- **A Fully-Functioning NLRB.** Senator Casey was a vocal advocate for the confirmation of a full slate of five National Labor Relations Board Members. He spoke out in committee hearings and in two floor speeches on the importance of filling the board and of the National Labor Relations Act.
- **Negotiating in Good Faith.** In February 2014, Senator Casey called on UPMC, the employees and their representatives to respect the rights of employees and employers protected under the National Labor Relations Act and negotiate in good faith to reach a settlement agreeable to all parties.

- **Chemical Facility Safety and Security.** In December 2014, Senator Casey co-chaired a joint hearing of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee and the Environment and Public Works Committee on improving chemical facility safety after tragedies at places like the West, TX ammonium nitrate facility and the Le Porte, Texas chemical release. The hearing highlighted the imperative that relevant agencies work together to prevent chemical accidents and keep our workers and communities safe by sharing relevant information and ensuring facilities are held accountable for complying with applicable regulations.
- **Unemployment Insurance.** Senator Casey has been a vocal supporter of extending emergency unemployment insurance that expired on December 28, 2013. He called for an extension through 2014 and voted for numerous attempts to find a compromise to pass the Congress and provide relief for workers as they try to find new jobs and support their families.
- **Safety of Temp Workers:** In July 2014, following the tragic death of a worker in Bucks County Senator Casey pressed the Occupational Safety and Health Administration on safety protections for temp workers.
- **Child Labor in Tobacco:** In June 2014, Senator Casey sent a letter with 16 other senators to the ten largest tobacco companies urging them to prohibit child labor in their supply chain. The letter comes on the heels of a new report by Human Rights Watch which found that nearly three-quarters of the child tobacco workers in the four largest tobacco-producing states had experienced the sudden onset of serious symptoms, including nausea, vomiting, loss of appetite, headaches, dizziness, difficulty breathing, skin rashes, and irritation to their eyes and mouths; while working on tobacco fields and in curing barns.
- **Workplace Harassment:** In March 2014, Senator Casey along with 12 other Senators, introduced the *Fair Employment Protection Act*, which would provide American workers the chance to thrive in a workplace free of harassment. This legislation addresses the U.S. Supreme Court's June 2013 decision in *Vance v. Ball State University*, which significantly weakened the ability of workplace harassment victims to seek legal recourse
- **Flexible Work Schedules:** The *Flexibility for Working Families Act*, introduced by Senator Casey, would guarantee employees the right to request flexible work arrangements in terms of hours, schedules or work location while also maintaining the protections of the 40-hour workweek. The bill provides employers with flexibility by encouraging them to

review these requests, propose changes, and even deny them if they are not considered in the best interest of their business.

- **Improving Worker Safety:** Senator Casey cosponsored the *Protecting America's Workers Act*, which amends the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSHA) to update penalties for repeated and willful safety and health violations and expands OSHA coverage to federal, state and local government employees. The legislation also updates OSHA whistleblower protections by incorporating successful administrative procedures adopted in other laws to better protect workers from illegal employer retaliation.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

- **Correctional Staff Safety and the Eric Williams Correctional Officer Protection Act.** Senator Casey introduced this legislation with Senator Toomey to require the Bureau of Prisons to dispense pepper spray to correctional staff at medium and high security federal prisons. This program will help keep thousands of correctional staff safe at federal facilities around the country, including 7 in Pennsylvania. The Eric Williams Correctional Officer Safety Act passed the Senate on December 16, 2015 and the House of Representatives on February 24, 2016. It has been sent to the President to be signed into law.
- **Support for Law Enforcement Funding.** Senate Casey has consistently fought for funding for Department of Justice programs that aid state and local law enforcement.
 - **COPS Hiring Program.** Senator Casey has fought to maintain funding for the COPS Hiring Program despite repeated attempts to defund it. In 2015, Pennsylvania law enforcement agencies received \$2.4 million in COPS Hiring Program grants supporting the hiring of 16 new police officers. Since 2013, Pennsylvania law enforcement agencies have received a total \$6.4 million in COPS Hiring Program grants supporting the hiring of 48 new police officers.
 - **Bulletproof Vest Program.** Senator Casey has been a longtime advocate for funding this program, which awarded \$873,955 for 2,042 bulletproof vests to 301 jurisdictions around Pennsylvania in 2015. Since 2013, Pennsylvania law enforcement agencies have been awarded a total \$2.54 million for 6,733 bulletproof vests.
 - **Byrne JAG.** Senator Casey's amendment increasing funding for the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grants Program passed the Senate with unanimous support as part of the 2014 Fiscal Year budget. Senator Casey has also consistently fought efforts to eliminate funding for the program. Since 2013, Pennsylvania has

received \$14,818,654 through the state Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program. At the local level, Pennsylvania jurisdictions received 38 awards totaling over \$5.8 million over that time period.

- **The Prohibiting Detention of Youth Status Offenders Act of 2015.** There are more than **2,700 juveniles** in detention in Pennsylvania, and thousands more with some connection to the system. Senator Casey recognizes that these children are not just little adults, and is fighting to make sure our juvenile justice system recognizes their needs. Senator Casey introduced the Prohibiting Detention of Youth Status Offenders Act, which would prevent young people from being incarcerated for committing so-called “status offenses.” These are infractions that would not be considered criminal if committed by adults, like skipping school or breaking a curfew. The main provisions of the Prohibiting Detention of Youth Status Offenders Act of 2015 were included in a piece of major juvenile justice legislation, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act, which passed the Judiciary Committee.
- **The Youth PROMISE Act.** Senator Casey introduced this bill, which would provide the resources and structure to empower local communities to evaluate, fund and implement evidence-based youth violence prevention and intervention strategies and break to school-to-prison pipeline.
- **The Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act.** Senator Casey is a cosponsor of this bill, which would rebalance sentencing rules to reduce unnecessarily strict mandatory minimum sentences for nonviolent offenders and target sentencing policy toward those who pose the greatest risk to society. This bill would also allow eligible prisoners to earn time off their sentences for participating in recidivism reduction programming. This programming would help current prisoners prepare to successfully reenter society after their release.
- **The MERCY Act.** Senator Casey cosponsored this bill, which would restrict the use of solitary confinement for juveniles. Research shows young people are particularly vulnerable to psychological harm from solitary confinement, yet the DOJ found that 47 percent of juvenile detention centers lock youths in solitary confinement. On January 25, 2016, President Obama announced that he was prohibiting the solitary detention of youth in all federal prisons.
- **Investigating Fees in the Juvenile Justice System.** Senator Casey partnered with Senator Whitehouse to shine a light on a potentially unfair system of fees targeting the parents

of kids in juvenile placement. These parents are being forced to pay support fees for the time their kids are in placement, a practice that can create severe economic and legal problems for families and one with no obvious connection to the rehabilitative goals of the juvenile justice system. In January 2016, Senators Casey and Whitehouse sent a letter to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention drawing attention to this issue and urging the agency to review their processes and how the levying of these fees fits with their mission and the goals of the juvenile justice system.

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

- **Farm Bill and Agriculture.** Senator Casey fought for years to enact a comprehensive Farm bill to provide long-term certainty for our farmers. The 2014 bill includes policies that are good for Pennsylvania.
 - More than 35 of Pennsylvania’s agriculture products are top ten in the nation. That is why Senator Casey fought for strong provisions to support specialty crops, such as the Specialty Crops Research Initiative (SCRI), Specialty Crops Block Grant program and Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program to support crops like pumpkins, apples, and mushrooms that are a key source of business for Pennsylvania farmers.
 - Senator Casey pushed for a microloan program, based on his *GO FARM Act*, which will help provide business planning support to small, beginning and veteran farmers to ensure their success and foster economic development in agriculture.
 - Senator Casey also fought to secure provisions to help make it easier for Pennsylvania farmers in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed – which is one half of the state – to implement important conservation practices. Pennsylvania farmers work hard to protect their land and environment and we should be doing everything we can to help them succeed.
 - Senator Casey included a provision in the 2014 Farm Bill that will help Pennsylvania multi-million dollar honey industry by pushing the Administration to curb China’s smuggling of illegal, potentially unsafe honey into the U.S. Pennsylvania is a major player in the honey industry and is home to 24,000 colonies of bees that produce over 1 million pounds of honey at a total value of \$2.3 million annually (2010).
 - Senator Casey strongly supported funding for the Agricultural Management Assistance program, which was increased and included help for organic

transition assistance. Providing funding through risk management, conservation and agricultural marketing agencies to underserved states, the Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) program helps to make the Farm Bill more equitable among regions.

- Senator Casey ensured improvements in promotion programs within the Farm Bill, which also directed USDA to allow organic producers to participate in an organic foods promotion program. Pennsylvania ranks third in organic sales.
- Senator Casey secured language to fix USDA's Biopreferred Program to even the playing field for Pennsylvanian forestry products. Revenues from Pennsylvania's forest products industry exceed \$5.5 billion annually and over 10% of the state's manufacturing workforce is involved in the forest products industry.
- **Fighting Hunger and Promoting Child Nutrition.** As a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee and the senior democrat on the nutrition subcommittee, Senator Casey has prioritized policies to fight hunger and promote proper nutrition, especially among kids.
 - Senator Casey's support for The Emergency Feeding Assistance Program (TEFAP), which assists food banks in providing food to people in need, garnered \$250 million in additional funding for the program in the 2013 farm bill.
 - Senator Casey helped to authorize a Healthy Food Financing Initiative in the Farm Bill, which will help improve access to healthy foods year round and across the nation in underserved areas; and would revitalize communities by developing and renovating stores, generate local tax revenue, create and retain jobs, and bring development to low-income neighborhoods.
 - Nearly half of all infants participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, or WIC. As a result of Senator Casey's efforts, the Senate Agriculture Committee-passed child nutrition bill allow States to extend eligibility for children to age six and give States the option to certify infants for two years.
 - The Child and Adult Care Food Program, or CACFP, provides healthy, nutritious meals to more than 3 million children each day who are in Head Start, Early Head Start and child care programs in both center and home day care nationwide. Senator Casey's championed changes to allow CACFP participants to provide an extra snack for children in care for 9 or more hours, which was included in the Senate Agriculture Committee-passed child nutrition bill.

- **Public lands.** Senator Casey introduced or supported legislation to protect several public lands areas in Pennsylvania. He successfully pushed for these provisions to be included in a public lands package that was signed into law in December 2014. This legislation protected four National Heritage Areas in PA until 2021, expands the boundary of Gettysburg National Military Park to include 45 acres of land at the southern end of the battlefield where cavalry skirmishes occurred during the Battle of Gettysburg in July of 1863, authorizes the First State National Historical Park in Pennsylvania and Delaware, and designates nine more miles of the White Clay Creek as “Wild and Scenic.”
- **Land and Water Conversation Fund** - Senator Casey has consistently supported the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Since 1965, PA has received over \$283 million (50/50 federal/state). LWCF has supported PA projects, such as assisting in the acquisition and maintenance of Gettysburg National Military Park, Alleghany National Forest, the Johnstown Flood National Memorial, the Flight 93 National Memorial, the Cherry Valley and the John Heinz Tinicum National Wildlife Refuge.
- **Climate change, EPA Clean Power Plan.** Senator Casey believes we must rise to the challenge of climate change and revitalize our economy by increasing our efforts in the areas of energy efficiency; developing and adopting cleaner ways of producing electricity; and creating jobs. Senator Casey supports the need for a comprehensive climate change plan and EPA’s Clean Power Plan to reduce carbon pollution from existing power plants. In 2013, Senator Casey sent an extensive letter to the Environmental Protection Agency commenting on the previously proposed “Clean Power Plan” to reduce carbon pollution from existing power plants. His comment letter regarding EPA’s Clean Power Plan addressed limitations in EPA’s proposed rule that called for higher burdens on Pennsylvania relative to other states, particularly in renewable energy targets that could not be made up from additional pollution reductions from other sources targeted in EPA’s rule. Senator Casey supports the need for a comprehensive climate change plan but believed EPA’s previous Clean Power Plan calculation imposed a disproportionate and unfair burden on Pennsylvania.
- **Asian Carp.** Senator Casey continued to fight the spread of the invasive Asian Carp from reaching the Great Lakes and further up the Ohio River. Among other things, he wrote to the Office of Management and Budget requesting a feasibility study to stop Asian Carp in the Chicago Waterway System, urged the US Army Corp of Engineers to implement short and long-term measures to halt the spread of carp, requested funding from the Senate Appropriations Committee for emergency funding for Asian carp mitigation, and wrote to the White House Council on Environmental Quality regarding Asian carp and other invasive species in the Great Lakes.

- **Other Invasive Species.** Senator Casey continues to fight the spread of invasive species throughout the Commonwealth, including Spotted Lanternfly (detected in Berks County in 2014), the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid in the Allegheny National Forest, and the Emerald Ash Borer, which has killed more than 40 million ash trees in states where it has been located. Senator Casey sent a letter to the U.S. Forest Service urging it to continue to take all appropriate actions to prevent gypsy moth from harming the health of the Allegheny National Forest and that the Forest Service work with others to ensure that private land owners in Pennsylvania have the best information on how to address gypsy moth on their properties.
- **Avian Influenza.** Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) became a huge concern for the poultry industry as the disease spread across the U.S. infecting hundreds of flocks and killing about 50 million birds in 2014. Senator Casey sent several letters to the Senate Appropriations Committee regarding funding for several efforts that are important to avian influenza detection and monitoring.