



PA State Representative Robert W. Godshall: 2017 Pillar of the Community

PA State Representative Robert W. Godshall will be honored as the 2017 Pillar of the Community by the Greater Harleysville and North Penn Senior Services during its annual dinner on Thursday, September 28, at the North Penn Commons. Bob is being recognized for his many contributions to the community both locally and abroad.

Bob Godshall was elected to represent the citizens of Montgomery County's 53rd Legislative District in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in 1982. He is now the most senior member in the House with 34 years of service to the citizens of Pennsylvania.

Throughout his lengthy career in public service, Godshall has worked to encourage business development, job creation and quality of life in the Commonwealth. He has guarded the interests of taxpayers and vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children and the less fortunate.

As chairman of the House Consumer Affairs Committee since 2007, Godshall has worked to ensure consumers are informed and protected. He championed legislation to phase in electric rate increases when rate caps were lifted. He also supported measures to ensure the safety of natural gas pipelines and the expansion of benefits for senior citizens through the Property Tax/Rent Rebate program and the PACE/PACENET prescription assistance programs.

A former member of the House Tourism and Recreational Development Committee, Godshall crafted legislation to invigorate the state's \$39 billion travel and tourism industry, which provides jobs for about 479,000 Pennsylvanians. Godshall was chairman of the committee during the development of the National Constitution Center and served 12 years on its board of directors with such notables as presidents George W. Bush and Bill Clinton, each of whom served a term as chairman of the board.

A member of the House Insurance Committee, Godshall has worked to ensure that breast cancer patients have reasonable coverage for reconstructive procedures. He

also supported a law guaranteeing in-patient care for new mothers and an HMO patient bill of rights, which establishes consumer protection and managed care accountability measures that give Pennsylvanians access to quality, affordable health care.

Godshall has been recognized for his pro-taxpayer votes in the Legislature. His legislation to require unannounced inspections of child care facilities aims to protect small children, and he has expended significant effort to increase state funding for basic education. An avid hunter and fisherman, Godshall also is widely recognized as one of the premier advocates for sportsmen's issues in the General Assembly.

Throughout his career, Godshall has received numerous awards, citations and special recognition, but none more personally satisfying than the 2011 American Hero Award from the National Kidney Registry. The recipient of a life-saving bone marrow transplant, Godshall's groundbreaking legislation to provide tax breaks to employers who grant workers time off to donate an organ or bone marrow was intended to increase donations by living donors. His legislation is being used as a national model to encourage similar measures in other states.

Godshall received the first ever Government Award from the "Water Resources Association of the Delaware River Basin" for his 20-year effort to bring a viable surface water supply to the drought-prone North Penn and Indian Valley areas. In fact, 85 percent to 90 percent of the water supply in this area is a result of this effort.

Godshall's family roots in the North Penn area of Montgomery County date back more than 250 years. He was raised on the family farm near Souderton and attended Souderton schools. After graduating from Juniata College, he attended the University of Pennsylvania, Wharton School of Business, before returning home to help run the family's poultry business.

He was soon drawn into public service. He served 17 years on the Souderton School Board. He is a long-time member of the Hatfield, Indian Valley and North Penn Chambers of Commerce; and he is past president and former board member of the Perkiomen Valley Watershed Conservancy where he worked on the development of the Montgomery County park system along the Perkiomen Creek. Godshall also served on the boards of trustees of the National Constitution Center, the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee, the Harleysville Senior Adult Activity Center, the American Red Cross (North Penn Branch), and as a member of the Indian Valley Public Library Steering Committee. He was serving as Montgomery County comptroller when he was elected to the House.

We are proud that State Representative Robert Godshall joined the ranks of past pillar awardees: Regina and (the late) Benny Alderfer, Ed Molnar, Sanford A. Alderfer, Bob Henning, Philip A. Clemens, Harold F. Detwiler, William S. Aichele, Mark and Karen Cummins, Ella Roush, Jack Clemens, K. Leon Moyer, and Syed Afzal. Proceeds from the dinner will support GHNPSS, operating Encore Experiences in Harleysville and The PEAK Center in Lansdale.