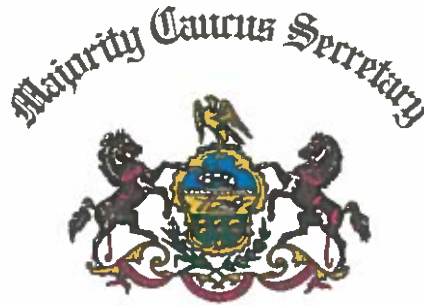


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August 3, 2021

The Honorable Elder Vogel, Chairman  
Senate Agriculture Committee  
362 Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

Dear Chairman Vogel,

I am writing to respectfully request a hearing for the purpose of reviewing Pennsylvania's fireworks law.

As you know, the law was amended in 2017 to expand access for Pennsylvanians to purchase certain consumer-grade options which were previously not permitted. Since that time, my office has fielded dozens of calls and emails with complaints about the current law, with most coming from areas where it is still illegal to set off fireworks due to the proximity to homes and buildings, an obvious violation of the 150 ft. rule. Nevertheless, these constituents are frustrated as their local police departments do not have the manpower or resources to investigate their complaints.

The Senate Resolution 6 Report, issued in 2018, recommended a total repeal of the law or, at the very least, tougher penalties for violations and more flexibility to municipalities to adopt their own fireworks ordinances. Following this report, numerous proposals have been introduced to address the issues caused by the fireworks expansion but yet the law has remained unchanged and the grievances persist. It is my opinion that sufficient time has passed to see whether the initial issues stemming from the new law would work themselves out. Unfortunately, we have seen things only get worse, not better.

Though complaints are mainly due to the nuisance these fireworks cause, numerous contacts are from families whose loved ones struggle with PTSD and whose animals are traumatized by the thunderous sound of fireworks that are now being set off long before and after Independence Day.

However, this past 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend saw preventable tragedies that should force the legislature to review our current law. In Wilkes-Barre, a family of eight was left homeless after an aerial firework landed on their porch as they were getting ready for bed, setting their home ablaze. And in York, an eight-year-old boy was killed and his family hurt when their house caught fire from fireworks that were improperly disposed.

These most recent examples of the loss of life and property were absolutely avoidable. It is for this reason I respectfully request a hearing for the purpose of reviewing the 2017 expansion of the sale of fireworks and potential ways to address the issues created by this law. We ought not continue to put the onus on our law enforcement and firefighters to fix and clean up the issues created through this law when a legislative change is necessary.

I appreciate your consideration of this request and, as always, I would be happy to discuss this issue in more detail at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan P. Aument". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "A".

RYAN P. AUMENT  
State Senator  
36<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District

RPA/slb