

Government Affairs July 29, 2010

- Both the Pennsylvania House and Senate are in recess until September.
- **We are meeting** with State House of Representatives Urban Affairs **Chairman W. Curtis Thomas** for lunch in Philadelphia next week. Representative Thomas (D, 181) heads the Committee to which most of the new bills that affect the apartment industry are sent.
- Republican gubernatorial candidate **Tom Corbett** reiterated his “**no new tax**” pledge this week during a campaign function. The jury is still out on whether he can sustain his campaign momentum in light of the other factors affecting the race, including his efforts as Attorney General to prosecute alleged “Bonusgate” miscreants, which have come under fire.
- In March of this year Stephen Keefer of Lebanon, a former information technology director for the Democratic Caucus and one of the figures caught up in the Bonusgate saga, was acquitted on charges of helping to divert public funds to political campaigns. This week Mr. Keefer filed a lawsuit in federal court in Harrisburg against State Representative Bill DeWeese, who had fired Mr. Keefer, Attorney General Tom Corbett, House Majority Leader Todd Eachus, and House Speaker Keith McCall, among others. Keefer’s complaint alleges the criminal investigation and charges against him were politically motivated and deprived him of his civil rights. DeWeese has his own Bonusgate troubles and is awaiting trial, while he tries to keep his own campaign for reelection afloat.
- **To Rent or Own, that is the Question** – which may have a new more sensible answer in our changing times. The general public, and hopefully the federal government, are finally catching on to what we in the apartment industry have known all along: renting is not for everyone and public policy exclusively devoted to home ownership over renting has never been sound. AAGP recently highlighted the issue in Metro Newspapers, and the mainstream press also seems to be catching on. An interesting article in CNN Money .com traces the origins of today’s massive government programs that support ownership over renting. The one good thing to come out of the foreclosure crisis is some fresh, clear thinking about the efficacy of those policies. You can read the article at http://money.cnn.com/2010/07/28/real_estate/housing_debate_rent-vs-buy.fortune/index.htm
- **Does anyone have any experience with submetering natural gas?** We are in the process of polling our members about this issue. Apparently some gas company tariffs will allow submetering, some will not. If you have any experience with your natural gas company and submetering your properties, please contact Christine at cgertz@pa-apt-assoc.com Thanks very much.