

Governor Candidates Debate At Farm Bureau Forum

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ship, and promotion here and abroad, preserving farmland, and "making the Department of Agriculture as user-friendly as possible."

On question three, the Bottle Bill-type legislation, Singel said that since recycling began in the state in 1988, "we have been developing new markets for recyclable materials. We recycled less than five percent of the waste stream just three years ago. We now recycle 17 percent of the waste stream, and we're moving very aggressively in that direction." He said 5 million people recycle material in the state today. "I want to make sure all commodities get recycled, not just bottles." He wants to work with the program they have now.

On the preserving wetlands question, Singel said that his general philosophy is that "where reason prevails, progress follows. I will ask the farming community to help me define once and for all wetlands, so that we can strike that proper balance between environmental and economic concerns."

On the question of property devaluation, Singel said that "if some action of government results in the devaluing or taking of property, then, yes, you are entitled to compensation, period."

On the transient worker law question, the lieutenant governor said that transient farm workers "are human beings."

"I'm really disheartened by any suggestion that we can throw them off into the streets and deny legitimate benefits. But in addition to that, there are legitimate economic concerns that impact on all the farm community in Pennsylvania."

Mike Fisher

The number one issue facing the state is how to create new jobs for Pennsylvania, according to Mike Fisher, who has served 18 years in state government, according to a release prepared by his campaign.

Fisher's platform will include also the number two goal, he said, which concerns improving the educational system for the future of the state. "What I think we need to do in education is get back to the basics," he said. "That's why I think we need to get back to reading, writing, science, arithmetic, rather than trying to get into new efforts such as outcome-based education and other issues that get us away from the basics." Fisher said he has been a leader in opposing outcome-based education in the state senate.

Bills that Fisher helped put forth in the Senate include those to improve economic growth, reform the state's product liability laws, reform the state's welfare system, improve accountability in education, and others.

On the property tax reform question, Fisher said before that is done, it is important to start making spending cuts and other curbs on spending. On the PDA funding priority, because of agriculture's status as the number one industry, he said programs are needed that are effective. On the Bottle Bill legislation, he said we need more public education, and more markets for bottles and cans. On preserving wetlands, he said we have to go back "to the common-sense approach. Some wetlands need to be protected," he said, but that no bureaucrat should have the right to tell a farmer what he can and can't do with land. On the devaluation compensation question, Fisher said we need to find a way to create

a fund to provide monies so that people can be compensated, but not through new taxes. On the transient worker question, Fisher said that employment costs need to be focused on, and his platform dictates that more significant reform is needed in the state.

Earl Baker

Baker is running for governor "because I'm concerned our people have lost faith in Pennsylvania's future," according to the campaign flier. He is strong on local tax reform and said, at the banquet, that as a Chester County commissioner, realized how important agriculture was to the county and state.

"We worked hard to keep the New Bolton Center open, because that's so important to our entire agricultural industry," he said. "It's one of the things that this administration has been a failure on."

He told the forum that DER needs reform, but "no matter what we do with DER, we can cut it into two pieces or three pieces or five pieces — it doesn't really matter, unless we change the attitude of the people in DER to be more cooperative and educational, rather than adversarial."

On the property tax reform question, he said he was in favor of an adaptable local tax system.

According to Baker, his legislation, the Real Estate Property Tax Relief Act, could help agriculture. On the PDA funding question, he said he would make marketing his first emphasis, and it "would have to be much stronger than it is right now." On the Bottle Bill legislation, he said "I think we need to seriously study other states that have enacted the deposit laws." On the preserving wetlands question, Baker said that he served on the conservation district of Chester County for 12 years, and there are gradations of wetlands. "We should establish those that are the most high value in sensitivity and really work hard to preserve them." On the devaluation compensation question, according to Baker, more research on applying zoning to ag is needed. On the transient worker question, Baker said he is against the "blanket extension of labor laws to cover seasonal and migrant workers."

Ernie Preate

"We have problems in this state, mostly problems created by people, people who were short on vision and long on partisanship," Ernie Preate told the forum.

The current administration, according to Preate, has been a failure in many ways. "They gave us the highest corporate net income tax on employees in the United States." He decried the failing welfare system, an environmental system that "strangles initiative," and lots of red tape in productivity and regulation.

"What this state needs is an advocate to the private sector, an advocate for the small businessman, an advocate for the farmer," said Preate.

On the property tax reform question, Preate said he would support reform, but that local government should be allowed to select a mix of taxes which is most important for their community. He wants to end the partisanship and gridlock in Harrisburg, he said, because "everybody agrees that it's time for leadership and vision." On the PDA funding priority, Preate said that he would support

strong funding for PDA. "I would support funding for a veterinary school," he said. "I think it was a tragedy that we left the University of Pennsylvania Veterinary School go twisting, slowly, in the wind, while it was debated whether to fund it." On the Bottle Bill legislation, he said he thought it was time "we had a mandatory recycling law in this state" and that the legislature should "step up and stop ducking the issue." On the preserving wetlands question, Preate said that a "drainage ditch or a man-made farm pond is not my idea of a wetland, and all the language and the mumbo-jumbo that comes out of the Department of Environmental Resources in Harrisburg is not going to change what is reality." He said we need more sensible and reasonable regulations and DER. "If there's ever an agency that needs to get reformed, it's that." On the property devaluation question, we need regulation that is sensible and that farmers should be compensated if they could no longer use the property for how it has been historically used. On the transient worker question, Preate said the state should go through a "cost-benefit analysis" to determine exactly what the economic impact is going to be before passing regulations. "We have to have government that works in partnership with the farm community."

Bob O'Donnell

O'Donnell, democrat, said he is "a city boy, born and bred," and has relied on the PFB to provide him information and observation on what to do regarding ag issues. But as for the future of farming, he said it is "not clear to me that we will be able to follow in that way of live," he said. "We're losing approximately 1,000 farms a year in Pennsylvania. And I think that puts that way of life severely in jeopardy."

O'Donnell said he believes that regarding state government, "I think we've lost our way, and state government is no longer fulfilling its commitment to the working people in this state." He said the school system has falling standards and rising violence and an economy where jobs are at risk and

the future is in doubt.

On the property tax reform question, O'Donnell said that he supports change to permit greater flexibility at the local level, including a de-emphasis of property tax and a move to more income and sales "mix." The state has been picking up 50 percent of the cost of education, and "we're not getting our money's worth." On the PDA funding question, he said the PDA is a "catalyst and strategist for this industry" and funding would have to be commensurate with the role of the department. On the Bottle Bill, he said he favors the deposit law. "I'm a co-sponsor of the bill, period." On preserving wetlands, O'Donnell said that he said that more needs to be done on looking at the impact this has on jobs and economic development. On the devaluation question, he said you can't take property without due process of law, and, as importantly, when economic activity has been impaired. "If you're losing money, you ought to get reimbursed." On the transient worker question, he said that he has experience in drafting and crafting legislation that embodies most of what the forum has heard on the subject, and a "useful experience" is seeing what the executive branch of the government does to it. He said in his administration that he would make an executive branch to take these conflicting values of farmers and be able to draw the line "in the way that reflects the common sense and is able to make the distinction between operating a family farm and a steel mill."

Charles Volpe

"I'm the only person not holding elective office on this state," said Volpe, who said his campaign will not accept "one cent of any PAC (Political Action Committee) or special interest money."

"We need an independent governor in Harrisburg, and I find that we have lost that connection," said the insurance-businessman, who operates a 32-employee firm and is in charge of many of the week-to-week operations of the business.

Volpe, running as democrat, in his flier, said we are taxing "small businesses to death. Once again, I'll fight the insurance industry for

lower workers' compensation rates and lower insurance rates."

Volpe said that he spends time at farms. He was told a "fairly scary story" about a dairy farmer, who obtains \$12.75 a hundredweight for milk, how that price has remained constant for 13 or 14 years. But the farmer then showed Volpe a farm tractor, bought five years ago, that cost \$15,500 now cost \$25,000. "We need to change the way we do business in Harrisburg," he said.

On the property tax reform question, Volpe said he supports reform, but that he advocates a per-district, by county, median income. "All houses below the median income should be given a home-stead exemption, and senior citizens on fixed income should receive an exemption, depending on ability to pay." He said that his plan to announce property tax reform will be released later this year on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

On the PDA funding question, Volpe said he will strongly support the department. "What's good for how farmers and agriculture help our economy is good for the entire business community and economy in Pennsylvania." He said he would widen the responsibility of the PDA at the expense of the DER. "We have too many environmental people coming out of DER, environmental engineers, who know very little about what the farmer does, in imposing stringent regulations that farmers can't live with."

Volpe said he would support Bottle Bill legislation. On wetlands, Volpe said that farmers told him that what constitutes a wetland, according to DER, "is that every time a cow urinates on a knothole in the fence on the farm, that seems to constitute a wetland." Meaningful reform about the definition and regulation is needed. On the devaluation question, Volpe said that farmers need more protection from government and that farmers need to be compensated if property is taken. Also, the economic security zone needs to be expanded beyond just farmlands. On the transient worker question, he said it is too easy to obtain welfare in the state, and that reform is necessary.



Suzet, a Holstein, set a world milk record. Honored at the recent World Dairy Expo are from left, Robert and Mariann Thomson, Nancy Thomson and daughter Laura; Alton, Janet and son Eric Ling, and Steve Kerr, CEO, National Holstein Association.

New World Milk Record of 59,300m Set

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. — A new world record for milk production has been set by Robthom Suzet Paddy in the herd of the Robert M. Thomson Jr. family of Springfield, Missouri.

Born December 1, 1986, Suzet recently completed a 365-day production record with 59,300 lbs. milk, 2,297 lbs. fat and 2,038 lbs. protein on a twice-a-day milking as verified by the Holstein Association.

During her lactation, started at 5 years, 6 months, Suzet peaked at 200 lbs. and averaged 162 lbs. per day.

DHIA Supervisor Janet Nash of (Turn to Page A38)