

Officials disagree on changes to sales tax

By Brendan McNally
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Local leaders have mixed feelings on a proposed tax that could have Penn State students paying more for everything from candy to legal fees.

The tax, which Gov. Ed Rendell proposed Tuesday to replace expiring federal stimulus funds, would lower the state sales tax from 6 to 4 percent and broaden it to include 74 items that are currently exempt.

Rendell wants to tax candy and gum, newspapers and magazines, caskets, dry cleaning and professional service fees in order to cover a projected \$2.3 billion budget shortfall for the fiscal year 2011.

press secretary Gary Tuma said. He said the changes would both raise revenue and make the sales tax fairer.

"It's a matter of fairness," he said. "Right now everyone is paying 6 percent, but a lot of special interests have succeeded in getting special exemptions into the tax code."

Tuma said that goods and services usually consumed by upper-income people have remained exempt from the sales tax, placing a greater burden on lower-income consumers. Investment gold bullion, helicopters and legal and accounting fees are a few exempt items that help upper-income consumers more than anyone else, he said.

State Sen. Jake Corman, R-Centre, could not disagree more.

"It's not just higher-end services," he said. "It's across the board — it's a \$1 billion tax increase."

He said he would not support changes in the sales tax or an increase in the income tax, especially during a recession.

Tuma said the sales tax changes are necessary to raise funds for a projected shortfall in 2011. He said the state is receiving \$2.8 billion in federal stimulus funds this year that it will not receive next year.

"If there is no stimulus money next year, there is a \$2.8 billion hole we need to fill," he said.

Tuma said additional revenue raised by the change in the sales

tax would go to a Stimulus Transition Reserve Fund, which could not legally be tapped into until next year, after Rendell is out of office.

State College Mayor Elizabeth Goreham said more questions need to be asked about how the tax will affect the average consumer. She could support the changes if it took some of the tax burden off the average consumer and put it on higher-income earners, she said.

"If it spreads out the load, it sounds good," Goreham said. "But if it just lowers taxes in one place and raises them in another, then I don't know."

But the tax changes are almost certain to face resistance in the

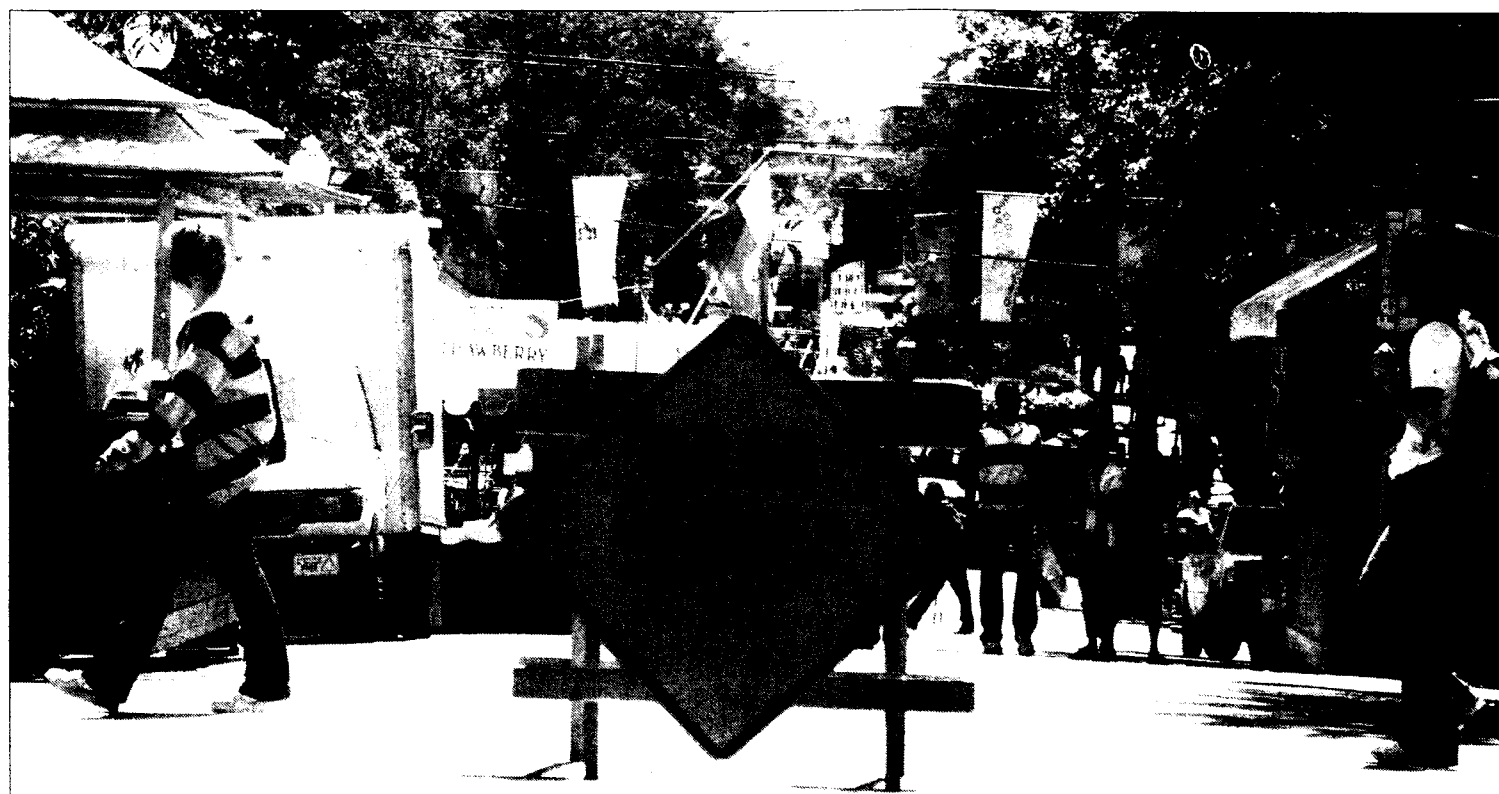
Proposed tax

- Lower the state sales tax from 6 to 4 percent
- Levy the tax on 74 additional items, including candy and gum, newspapers and magazines, caskets, dry cleaning, helicopters, gold bullion and professional service fees

Republican-controlled Senate, where Republicans favor cutting spending over raising taxes.

"I don't think there is much support for it in our caucus," Corman said.

To e-mail reporter: bwm5147@psu.edu



Marissa Gutierrez/Collegian

Locals watch as construction workers set up for the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts on Allen Street in 2009. In a State College Transportation Commission meeting Tuesday, the possibility of converting the 100 block of Allen Street into a pedestrian mall, as is done annually for Arts Fest, resurfaced. The council also discussed making other streets — such as Burrowes, Fraser and Pugh — one way.

Businesses welcome street proposal

By Nathan Pipenberg
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Some Allen Street business owners said they would support plans to make select downtown streets one way — even if it means removing some on-street parking.

One day after officials met to discuss making some downtown streets one way and converting the 100 block of Allen Street into a pedestrian mall, managers at McLanahan's Downtown Market, 116 S. Allen St., and Appalachian Outdoors, 123 S. Allen St., said they would welcome plans that would increase foot and bicycle traffic in front of their stores.

Justin Penfield, an assistant manager at Appalachian Outdoors, said while he couldn't

speak for owner Geoff Brugler, he personally felt the best option would be to turn the 100 block of Allen Street into a pedestrian mall by closing the street.

He said the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts shows shutting down the block can work well.

"Most of our customers don't actually park in the spots in front of our store," Penfield said. "I'd like to see it be exactly how it is during Arts Fest all the time."

Brugler could not be reached for comment.

Karlen Jovanis, a manager at McLanahan's, said she didn't think the loss of on-street parking would affect business.

"[McLanahan's] isn't really a store that people drive to," she said.

The idea resurfaced at

Tuesday's State College Transportation Commission meeting, when members discussed plans to change up to six streets — Burrowes, Fraser, Allen, Pugh, Heister and Garner streets.

Mayor Elizabeth Goreham and Transportation Commission member Paul Jovanis agree that trial runs shutting down the 100 block of Allen Street could determine whether a pedestrian mall is feasible. Goreham suggested keeping the block closed for up to a week after Arts Fest ends.

Borough officials still had a lot to discuss at the meeting, including problems with any plan that would create room for bike lanes.

Transportation Commission Chairman Rick Hirsch said making changes to parts of Allen Street could affect traffic down to

where it intersects with Atherton Street.

"What we do to the 100 block could severely impact the blocks south of it," said Hirsch.

Jovanis said a big concern of his was backlash against removing on-street parking.

If Allen Street were to change to one way, on-street parking would be moved to only one side of the street.

If one block of the street were to become a pedestrian mall, all on-street parking on that block would be lost.

That said, he also thinks it could improve Allen Street's appearance.

"If we have the courage to eliminate parking, we could have a better streetscape," Jovanis said.

To e-mail reporter: ndp5045@psu.edu

Hot water in dorms repaired

By Matt Scorzafave
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

Housing is in hot water with some dorm residents.

Students living in North Halls have experienced lukewarm water in their bathrooms since Saturday, sparking some hot tempers.

Conal Carr, Penn State director of housing, said a failing heat pump is to blame for the lack of hot water in the past few days. Housing employees were notified of the issue when water temperatures began dropping Monday. Officials immediately attempted to resolve the issue with little success. But by Tuesday evening, housing employees were able to rewire the failing heat pump and bring water temperatures up to par.

Carr said the heat pump supplying hot water to North Halls' residents most likely failed due to old age. Mackenzie Kraus, a resident of Leete Hall, and said she received an e-mail from North Halls Housing and Food Services detailing the problem.

But that didn't help during her morning routine.

"It's freezing outside," Kraus (sophomore-elementary education) said. "And it is difficult to not be able to take a warm shower."

While some students showed agitation, others were more understanding.

"Housing gets things done quickly — I trust their work," Will Woods (sophomore-management) said.

Samantha Taylor (junior-biology) said she noticed the lack of water last week — but found a solution.

"I've taken a few showers at my boyfriend's," Taylor (junior-biology) said.



1215 North Atherton St.
814.861.5540

SHAKIN' AND STIRRIN' WEEKLY SPECIALS

- SUN \$4 Ultimates
- MON \$1 Miller Lite Drafts
- TUES \$2 Nachos (8pm-midnight)
- TUES \$2 Captain & Cokes
- 25¢ Wings (8pm-midnight, 6 Minimum)
- WED \$2 Long Island Ice Teas
- THURS \$2 Margaritas
- FRI \$4 Yuengling Pitchers
- SAT \$4 Jager Bombs

\$4 Select Appetizers*
10pm - midnight
*Excludes JD Sampler & Pick Three

OPEN UNTIL 2AM!

YOU CALL WE DELIVER!
State College Area Only

EVERY DAY 4PM-10PM
Call 814-861-5540

Full Menu Available For Delivery
\$2 Delivery Charge
\$15 Minimum Order

\$5 OFF \$20
Food Purchase

Valid on T.G.I. Friday's State College delivery orders only.
One coupon per order. Not valid with any other promotions or discounts including 3 Course. Tax and gratuity not included. Expires 2/28/10.

Call or Order From
StateCollege.com
LionMenus.com




View Full Menu @ www.fridays.com

COLLEGE HOOPS FANS




WEAR A HEADBAND

TO SUPPORT COACHES VS. CANCER!



I LOVE COLLEGE HOOPS
BEAT CANCER WITH
FEB 21-28, 2010

Wear a headband to college hoops games from Feb. 21-28 and show your support for the fight against cancer.

WIN A TRIP TO NEW YORK CITY
FOR THE 2010 COACHES VS. CANCER CLASSIC

Text 'HOOPS' to 44144 for a chance to win!

Support Coaches vs. Cancer by purchasing team-specific I Love College Hoops headbands at campus bookstores or athletic department team shops. For more information and contest rules visit ilovecollegehoops.com.

TONIGHT!

LADY LION BASKETBALL

vs. MINNESOTA

BEAT THE GOPHERS!



THURSDAY FEB. 11 AT 7:00PM

★ NATIONAL GIRL/WOMEN IN SPORT DAY

★ THON SAAB GAME: ALL STUDENT TICKET SALES WILL BE DONATED TO THON BY THE STUDENT ATHLETE ADVISORY BOARD

★ FANS CAN RECEIVE A BLINKING SHAKER AT THE GATES (while supplies last)

★ PNC BANK MEMBERS CAN PURCHASE 2 ADULT TICKETS FOR \$16!

STUDENT TICKETS ARE ONLY \$5!

GRAB 'EM AT THE HUB INFO DESK FROM 11AM TO 2PM WEEKDAYS

814.865.5555 | GoPSUsports.com | BJC Ticket Center | Eisenhower Auditorium | Downtown Tickets | The HUB