

# Bowles Rice VIEWS & VISIONS

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**Camera Bartolotta**  
Pennsylvania State Senate

Camera Bartolotta is Pennsylvania's senator for the 46th District. Senator Bartolotta currently serves as Chair of the Senate Labor and Industry Committee. She also co-chairs the Senate Gas and Oil Caucus, a bipartisan legislative body that focuses on issues impacting the gas and oil industry, and has co-founded the bipartisan Criminal Justice Reform Caucus, which helps promote safer communities, reduce prison costs and ensure better outcomes for individuals who are part of the criminal justice system.

# Positioning Pennsylvania for Long-term Success

As I work for you in Harrisburg, there are many initiatives that are top priority, among them: improving the economy, keeping prices low and making our communities more secure.

One of the ways we have positioned the Commonwealth for long-term success is approving a budget that makes substantial changes to help the state recover economically from the aftermath of the pandemic and Governor Tom Wolf's mandatory and detrimental business closures. This budget is based on fiscally responsible decisions, which will ultimately help attract new business and make the state more attractive for existing businesses to expand.

With recent landmark legislation that was enacted into law, Pennsylvania will have a 4.99 percent Corporate Net Income (CNI) tax rate by 2031 – the eighth lowest in the nation. This is a significant CNI cut from our current highest-in-the-nation 9.99 percent rate.

Further, the new spending plan brings state tax law governing expense deductions in line with federal law, eliminating the unequal treatment of small businesses in Pennsylvania. The increase in limits makes it easier for employers to buy equipment and to invest, which promotes job growth.

These changes will make Pennsylvania more competitive with surrounding states and send a strong message to employers that our Commonwealth is open for business. Just as critical to Pennsylvania's long-term financial health is the smart use of our energy resources, particularly as we are all struggling with rising costs at the grocery store and gas station. We simply cannot stand to face uncharted energy cost increases as well.

That is exactly why my Senate Republican colleagues and I are working so hard to block Governor Wolf's unilateral decision to have the Commonwealth join the Regional

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**“Financial predictability, energy independence and stronger communities will bring prosperity for all of us.”**

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The legislation also eliminates a disadvantage faced by Pennsylvania small businesses when competing with those in other states. Under federal tax law, a “like-kind” exchange under the Internal Revenue Code allows for tax deferral when property is exchanged for similar property. Every state but Pennsylvania provided for a similar deferral on the state level. Now, we do too.

Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a multi-state compact designed to enact a carbon tax on energy producers.

The legislature, with bipartisan support, voted not to join RGGI, as it could nearly quadruple energy costs by 2030 with a virtually imperceptible reduction in carbon emissions. Despite this, the Governor is still attempting to force us into this detrimental compact.



As the Chair of the Labor and Industry Committee, I can promise you that this initiative strikes a death blow to both of those, labor and industry. We live in the corner of Pennsylvania. The energy production will move west, out of state, to West Virginia and Ohio. The Commonwealth will be paying the price for the increased carbon emissions that blow over the border, while at the same time suffering the tax consequence of this unconstitutional initiative.

That is also why the Senate Republicans stepped up and challenged Wolf's decision to silence the voice of Pennsylvanians in court. The Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court issued a temporary ruling, blocking the state's entrance into RGGL, and I remain hopeful we can prevent this egregious and irresponsible move by the Governor from ever getting implemented.

Of course, I hope for more than Pennsylvania to simply not be penalized for its amazing energy resources, which are extracted every day, safely to both our neighbors and our environment. Instead, the goal should always be to use what we have to our advantage, which is exactly what the Impact Fee on unconventional natural gas wells does.

This year, our corner of the state received \$36.4 million in grants; 27 percent of all county and municipal distributions

for the entire state, thanks to the Impact Fee. As the 46th Senatorial District has communities affected by drilling, we receive higher rates for projects such as road and bridge repairs, housing and other infrastructure needs.

As a mother, I am also pleased that this year's budget helps to ensure our schools are safer and more secure by appropriating funding and additional resources to address school-based mental health programs and to address physical safety and security.

We all deserve to feel safe in our communities, which is why I am pleased to have worked with local stakeholders, including local sheriff's departments, chiefs of police, county commissioners, and experts in security to create a pilot program to benefit our communities in Beaver, Greene and Washington Counties. Specifically, this initiative will provide intensive, expert training for law enforcement, school resource officers and other security personnel to protect schools and public buildings.

Financial predictability, energy independence and stronger communities will bring prosperity for all of us. These opportunities drive the work I do and the legislation I support on your behalf. I encourage everyone to take a proactive role with your government and the work it does. Through collaboration, we will achieve success for generations to come. **V**