



# NEWS RELEASE

*from*

STATE SENATOR

**CHRISTINE M. TARTAGLIONE**

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2nd Senatorial District

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**TARTAGLIONE QUESTIONS CUTS IN JOB SAVING PROGRAMS**

**HARRISBURG**, Feb. 23, 2009 - At the launch of Senate budget hearings today, state Sen. Christine M. Tartaglione questioned the state's top labor and industry regulator about proposed budget cuts to programs designed to create and preserve jobs in Pennsylvania.

"I'm concerned that this budget falls short of the needs of Pennsylvania businesses and workers," Tartaglione told Sandi Vito, acting head of the state Department of Labor and Industry.

Vito appeared before the Senate Appropriations Committee at the first of a series of hearings on the state's bleak budget.

"I understand that these are hard times," Tartaglione said. "But we have programs that are helping put people to work and cutting them seems shortsighted."

Tartaglione expressed concerns in three key areas: Pennsylvania's Labor-Management Committees, the fledgling Center for Health Careers, and Workforce Investment programs. All three face funding cuts or even elimination under Gov. Rendell's current budget proposal.

In last year's budget negotiations, Tartaglione fought to restore funding for the Labor-Management Committees, organizations across the state that bring together business, labor and government officials to find ways to make businesses successful and jobs secure.

"Trust and cooperation have proven to be valuable tools in job creation and preservation," Tartaglione said. "Economic recovery can't come with too high a cost for businesses or workers. These committees are critical to a fair and shared recovery."

The Center for Health Careers is still less than five years old, but has already proven successful in helping to stem a growing nursing shortage in Pennsylvania. The Department of Labor and Industry recently reported that projections of future nurse shortages have eased by as much as 10 percent since the center first assessed the problem in 2005.

"This program squarely addresses the two biggest concerns in

my district: jobs and health care," Tartaglione said. "Without adequate staffing, any other efforts to improve health care will go to waste."

Vito, Tartaglione's former chief of staff, has been nominated by Gov. Rendell to be formally appointed as the next Secretary of Labor and Industry. Tartaglione supported that nomination in a separate Senate hearing last week.

"We have the right people on the job," Tartaglione said. "We just have to give them the right tools to do it."