



Bicycle Access Council News & Digest

www.BicycleAccess-PA.org

November 2008

Hello Members and Supporters of the Bicycle Access Council.

It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania!

LIVING ON THE FRINGE FOR BICYCLE COMMUTERS...

Is now possible since fringe benefits have been included in legislation passed October 3, 2008. In 25 words or less, bicyclists commuting "regularly" may be given "up to" \$20 per month by their employers who can claim a tax credit.

The Bicycle Commuter Benefits Act was first introduced by Representative Earl Blumenauer in May 2001 with much fanfare at the National Bike Summit. The 107th Congress did not pass it. Neither did the 108th or 109th. The 110th Congress did pass it, but only as part of the massive financial bailout package totaling \$850B.

The League of American Bicyclists (LAB) has been very active in promoting this Bicycle Commuter Benefits bill for the last seven years, however, the LAB was just as surprised to learn it actually passed when it did. The LAB has an extensive Q&A section on their website with the limited information available. Check out: www.bikeleague.org

What we don't know about this bill is curbing some celebration enthusiasm. For example,
What does "commutes regularly" mean? Every work day? Once a week?
What incentive does a government or tax-exempt organization have to offer this benefit?
What documentation to give or claim this benefit is necessary?

The Bicycle Access Council is very interested in the amended IRS Tax Code details and will pass along the specifics when promulgated. For anyone familiar with the Fringe Benefits Compensation Exclusion rules, they may be found in the IRS Regulations section 132(f).

THE PENNDOT BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN COORDINATOR POSITION IS OPEN..

Due to a change in the central office job description and location within the bureaucratic organization. **Dave Bachman** who held the Bike/Ped Coordinator's position for sixteen years since it was created by ISTEAF funding, has been reassigned within the Bureau of Highway Safety and Traffic Engineering (BHSTE). No date has been set to fill the new position that will also include ADA policy and design issues. Additionally, no one has been assigned as acting Bike/Ped Coordinator in the central office. District Bike/Ped coordinators are not affected by this change. Safe Routes to School programming is not affected by this change since it is managed by a different individual in another bureau.

Information regarding the change will be an agenda item at the next PPAC meeting in December.

THE PENNSYLVANIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY...

Maintained its balance of power following the November elections. There will be no change in 2009—the Senate remains in a Republican majority and the House Democrats maintained their majority. State House Democrats increased their majority slightly.

SPEAKING OF BIPARTISAN POLITICS...

In Pennsylvania, Governor Ed Rendell, a Democrat, is not likely to resign his office to accept any post in the Obama administration now that the Lt Governor's office is held by Republican senator, Joseph Scarnati, who succeeded Catherine Baker Knoll following her untimely death. As Senate President Pro Tempore, he assumes the additional duty of Lt Governor as well and would become governor if Governor Rendell leaves office.

Dates to remember:

Dec 18: Pedalcycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PPAC), Harrisburg.
1-3:00 pm. Open to the public. Contact BAC for details.

Note: this is a change in date from the previously scheduled December 11.

MISSION STATEMENT...

The Bicycle Access Council is a non-profit advocacy organization that serves as a forum for Pennsylvania bicyclists and as an ombudsman for bicycling issues.

It is the objective of the Bicycle Access Council to make bicycling on roads throughout the Commonwealth safe, respectable and a transportation choice by educating its members and the motor-ing public.

All funding for the Bicycle Access Council comes from memberships and donations. Annual membership is \$20 per year. BAC does not share membership information.



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