

Additional Testimony

September 24, 2019

Joseph Regan, Fraternal Order of Police

Corporal Jerry L. Harper, PA State Police

Annette Myarick, PA Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics

Carly Barragan

Barbara Capper

Craig and Lisa Fraser

Maureen Garrett

Jenny Greenwald

Karl Marking

Randy Maynard

Nancy Moffitt

Tom Marotta

Elizabeth Pezzano

Sara Shute

Judy Szela

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PENNSYLVANIA STATE LODGE

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September 20, 2019

Hon. Martin T. Causer
150 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: HB 1687 PN 4330

Dear Chairman Causer,

On behalf of over 40,000 active and retired Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Officers, the Fraternal Order of Police, Pennsylvania State Lodge, asks your support of HB 1687 PN 4330. This bill addresses the poor implementation of the 2017 "Fireworks Law," Act 43. That law allows a range of pyrotechnics, not previously legal, to be purchased and used in the Commonwealth. The regulations for the use of the fireworks, especially the minimum setbacks/property size requirements and discharge on public or private property without express permission of the property owner, have been marked with widespread "scofflaw" violations. These violations have led to fires, neighborhood disputes and a variety of other consequences that police and other emergency responders must deal with. Many of the violations are due to lack of understanding by the general public as to what the rules are. This bill addresses these concerns by requiring notice to be given of all prohibitions regarding fireworks. These prohibitions include, but are not limited to, specified time limits when fireworks can be discharged, clarification of the definition of allowable fireworks and, finally gives the local jurisdictions the option to enact additional rules concerning fireworks appropriate to their communities.

Making the rules well known, are just common-sense approaches which ensure public safety, and aid in police/community relations. HB 1687 is fully supported by the Fraternal Order of Police, Pennsylvania State Lodge. Thank you for your continued support of Pennsylvania's Law Enforcement Officers.

Sincerely,

Joseph Regan, Chairman
Legislative Committee
Fraternal Order of Police
Pennsylvania State Lodge

Pennsylvania State Police Testimony
House Bill 1687
House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee
September 24, 2019



Corporal Jerry L. Harper
Supervisor, Fire Marshal Unit
Bureau of Criminal Investigation

Good morning, Chairmen Causer and Pashinski and members of the House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee. I'm Corporal Jerry Harper, Supervisor of the Fire Marshal Unit within the Bureau of Criminal Investigation. On behalf of the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP), I would like to thank you for engaging in discussions about a proposed revision to Pennsylvania's fireworks law.

In October 2017, the General Assembly through Act 43 repealed the Fireworks Law of 1939 and replaced it with legislation which would be enforceable under Title 72 in the Tax Reform Code of 1971. Act 43 provides for the ability of Pennsylvanians to purchase and use consumer grade fireworks such as firecrackers, roman candles, or bottle rockets. Other items, such as "M80s" or "quarter sticks" are still illegal and the purchase or use of display fireworks, which are classified as including salutes that contain more than two grains or 130 milligrams of explosive materials, and professional-grade aerial shells containing more than 60 grams of pyrotechnic compositions, are still only to be used by professionals with a permit from the municipality where the display will take place. Prior to the passage of Act 43, only ground-based or handheld products such as sparklers or smokeballs were able to be purchased and used by ordinary Pennsylvanians.

While the passage of Act 43 has given Pennsylvanians an expanded opportunity to enjoy fireworks, it should be noted that there are some inherent dangers associated with their use.

A 2019 report by the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission documented 5 non-occupational fireworks related deaths during 2018. Additionally, fireworks were involved in approximately 9,100 injuries which were treated in emergency

rooms across the country last year. Of those injured, 36% were children under the age of 15.

PSP does not have information available on the number of fireworks complaints or arrests since Act 43 was enacted to the present. Our Records Management System (RMS) does not currently have specific Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) header in the RMS for fireworks complaints/incidents. Anecdotally speaking, it is likely that our Troopers have charged individuals for violations related to fireworks under the unreasonable noise subsection within Disorderly Conduct in Title 18, but the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) does not capture information from the remarks field of the Non-Traffic Citation in their databases and as of this date, we do not have the overall numbers of violations charged of the Title 72 section available. It should be noted that police officers in Pennsylvania are largely unaccustomed to charging individuals with violations related to the Tax Reform Act of 1971 or from Title 72. Most criminal violations charged by police officers, including the PSP, are from violations related to Title 18, Crimes and Offenses.

House Bill 1687 has many of the same provisions as those contained within Act 43. For purposes of my testimony, however, I'll discuss the provisions of the bill which would impact our agency the most and that is around enforcement of consumer fireworks use.

House Bill 1687 would remove Fireworks from the Tax Reform Code of 1971 and place it in Chapter 9 of Title 3, or the Agriculture Code. It would continue to prohibit individuals from using commercial fireworks on public or private property without the permission of the property owner. They would not be permitted to be utilized within,

directed at or directed from a vehicle, directed at another person or while a person is under the influence of alcohol, controlled substance, or other drug. Additionally, House Bill 1687 would prohibit the use of commercial fireworks within 150 feet of a building or vehicle. Where this proposed piece of legislation differs from existing statute is that it would provide for time restrictions on the use of commercial fireworks. Their use would be prohibited between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m. except on July 2-4 and New Year's Eve. In those cases, they may be used until 1:00 a.m. the following day. Furthermore, when July 4 falls on a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, commercial fireworks may be used until 1:00 a.m. on the immediately preceding and following Friday and Saturday. Many local municipalities have enacted ordinances to restrict commercial fireworks during certain time periods, but PSP does not enforce local ordinances. By placing these restrictions into legislation, PSP would be able to charge for this specific violation without having to revert to citing for the unreasonable noise subsection in Disorderly Conduct.

House Bill 1687 would balance providing for the opportunity for people to celebrate with fireworks without exposing their neighbors to loud noises at all hours of the night. The Pennsylvania State Police is supportive of this piece of legislation.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to permit PSP to discuss the proposed changes to our existing fireworks legislation. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

**Testimony by the Pennsylvania Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics
to the Pennsylvania House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee
Re: HB 1687
September 24, 2019**

Chairman Causer, Chairman Pashinski, member of the Committee, on behalf of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (PA-AAP), I write today to urge your support for HB 1687. To be honest, PA-AAP would prefer that you act to repeal the tax legislation that allowed sales of consumer fireworks in the first place, in order to fulfill government's foremost responsibility of protecting the health and safety of its citizens.

However, knowing that's not a likely scenario, we believe that the General Assembly and state government should do their utmost to protect its firefighters, police officers, and innocent bystanders of all ages, who become victims of other's carelessness.

We also wish to acknowledge the prime sponsor of this legislation, Rep. Frank Farry, and the 28 bipartisan cosponsors of this legislation.

The issue of expanded sales of consumer fireworks has been important to the PA-AAP. For several years, we opposed the expansion of sales to include consumer fireworks, which were only approved when language was slipped into the state's Tax Code in 2017, legalizing purchases of consumer fireworks by Pennsylvanians and levying a 12% tax on all fireworks sales. The act made a huge policy change, repealing the state's law prohibiting the purchase and use of consumer fireworks (aerial rockets and missiles, fountains, firecrackers, and Roman candles) after supporters failed to get legislation on the subject passed.

Our reasons for seeking the provisions of HB 1687 in regulating fireworks in Pennsylvania come from experience.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, in 2018, Fireworks were involved in an estimated 9,100 injuries treated in U.S. hospital emergency departments during calendar year

2018 (95 percent confidence interval 7,000–11,100). The estimated rate of emergency department-treated injuries is 2.8 per 100,000 individuals in the United States.

An estimated 5,600 fireworks-related injuries (or 62 percent of the total estimated fireworks-related injuries in 2018) were treated in U.S. hospital emergency departments during the 1-month special study period between June 22, 2018 and July 22, 2018 (95 percent confidence interval 3,900–7,200).

Ultimately, a reality is that the actual number of fireworks-related injuries is significantly under-reported. Available statistics reflect emergency room visits, and do not capture injuries which are treated by primary care physicians after the fact, by other professionals, or at home.

Children and young adults suffer a disproportionate share of these injuries. Children younger than 15 years of age accounted for 36 percent of the estimated injuries. Similar to the last ten years of data, nearly half (48%) of the estimated emergency department treated fireworks-related injuries were to individuals younger than 20 years of age. Children 10 to 14 years of age had the highest estimated rate of emergency department-treated, fireworks-related injuries (5.2 injuries per 100,000 people). Older teens, 15 to 19 years of age, had the second highest estimated rate (3.1 injuries per 100,000 people).

We have been unable to locate any Pennsylvania specific data, or any agency in Pennsylvania government charged with tracking and reporting on these and similar types of injuries – I ask that you please consider incorporating such a system in any final deliberations.

As for HB 1687 itself, we consider the bill a positive step in helping protect the health and safety of the public with commonsense recommendations from the fire, police and emergency responder communities and urge its passage.

Recognizing the huge proportion of injuries to those 19 and under, we strongly support the prohibition against anyone 18 years of age purchasing, possessing or using consumer fireworks. Simply put, this legislation moves toward steps that surely would have been considered if the

expansion had taken place in the traditional legislative process of passing a one subject bill, rather than being tucked into the omnibus tax reform code bill.

We urge you to favorably report HB 1687 from Committee, and if possible, to strengthen its requirements to ensure future state actions regarding fireworks can rely on state level data.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony, and for your consideration of our concerns over the sales and use of consumer fireworks.

Annette G. Myarick, Executive Director
Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
1400 N. Providence Road, Bldg. 2, Suite 4000
Media, PA 19063

Phone: 484-446-3042

Email: amyarick@paaap.org

Thursday, September 19, 2019
Firework complaint

I am writing this email to provide testimony in support of getting backyard fireworks in PA banned.

Our neighbors were setting off fireworks every single weekend and some weeknights from Mother's Day through after the 4th of July. Their property directly borders our pasture/property, and they live on a very small piece of land surrounded by three other neighbors who have homes even closer. These are the huge fireworks that are blasted into the sky and make the house shake. They have startled and upset my family, prevented us from getting sleep (again, on Sunday nights and other week nights), and have frightened our animals (we have horses who could easily run through a fence, and cats who run for shelter and remain hidden in fear). It is completely unacceptable. I have had to call the police out for noise complaints (not something the police should have to be devoting resources to) but nothing helped. It is a fire hazard as homes and pastures and trees and hay bales are RIGHT by these explosives. I urge you to take into account the thousands of people upset by this, the ones who have kids needing to sleep at night, those who own pets, those who perhaps are veterans with PTSD, etc. It is unacceptable for homeowners to have to tolerate this, when no good comes from it.

Carly Barragan
1410 Beaver Rd
Julian, PA 16844

Sep 20, 2019

To whom it may concern:

I live in East Coventry township, Chester County, PA. Starting around May each year, several times a month people in my area set off loud fireworks. This goes on all summer and into the fall. While I can understand, tolerate, and prepare for holiday weekends, I cannot do so when it's random, frequent, and all summer long. The loud bangs terrify my dog, and I have to drug him whenever he hears fireworks. It becomes a more serious problem when I feel that I cannot leave my house because someone within earshot to my dog might feel like blowing some things up. I live across the road from a farm where there are nine equines and twelve goats. These animals are also terrified every time. My ex husband, a Vietnam veteran, drops to the ground whenever there is a loud bang. I am sure there are other people in the area with diagnosed PTSD who react in a similar manner. And then there is the wildlife. I have learned that fireworks sales earn revenue for Pennsylvania. But at what cost? I am tired, no...WEARY of this crap. There has been no peace around my neighborhood since the fireworks sales law changed. I am SO disappointed in the elected lawmakers in my home state.

Barbara Capper
705 Schoolhouse Rd.
Pottstown, PA 19465

9/19/19

PA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

RE: HOUSE BILL 1687

Dear Representatives,

Please accept this letter as my plea to further amend HB 1687. First I would like to thank you for working to amend this bill. I have read through it to the best of my ability and would like to add my personal thoughts, please consider this my personal testimony.

I live in beautiful Haycock Township in Upper Bucks County, my husband and I have a small horse farm. Since the fireworks law was changed our summer weekends have become firework shows from all directions. Some associated with parties and events, some just because. We never know what the weekend will bring.

New Year's Eve 2018/2019, at around 530pm I was in a stall with one of our horses tying up a hay bag for her when the neighbor across the street decided to begin his 7 hours of random fireworks. The mare and I were both startled and she spun as she does every time he shoots. This put me in a very dangerous situation with a scared 1200 pound horse. Fortunately I was able to leave the stall safely. Over the summer our horses stay indoors during the heat (and bugs) of the day, they stay out overnight in the comfort of the dark. Multiple times this summer soon after going outside for the night fireworks have started, again startling them enough to make them run wildly. My fear is one of them running into a fence or gate in their pasture and injuring themselves.

Therefore, I do not understand why regular folk need to have access to carnival style fireworks. Do we really need to take away from local municipalities that put a show on professionally and safely? My children now in their 20s grew up happy with sparklers, stinky smoke bombs and the typical drum of fireworks from Walmart, and then we packed them up and took them to the nearest town to watch the professionals on a blanket under the stars with the rest of the community.

My husband is the business manager of our local Catholic Church and School. After a professional fireworks display in August held as part of our local fire companies carnival, a water mark was noticed on a ceiling tile in the elementary school, further investigation found firework casings on the roof. It had burned a hole through the roof and water damage marked the ceiling tile INSIDE of the building. My husband had the fire marshal come out who then sent pictures to the fireworks company who paid for a roofer to come out and fix the roof. So even under professional conditions things can happen! And we all know that many consumer fireworks are being fired by people under the influence. Anyone thinking that isn't happening is fooling themselves.

In reading over this bill, if the original law is not repealed, I have a few suggestions: A one o'clock am stop time is absurd. Most towns start around 930 pm and are over between 10 and 10:30 pm, if this bill must be, can it at least follow that rule? How about 11 pm and its lights out. The only exception of course is New Year's Eve.

I think requiring a bond or permit to shoot fireworks is a waste. Have you ever lived in a community that requires permits to hold garage sales?? No one gets them, no one enforces them and people hold their sales outside of the required dates and times. If someone is diligent enough to get the bond, they are probably someone who is doing this for the first and only time for a special occasion and actually researched the process and is most likely acting responsibly!

Please reconsider safe distances, the current 150 feet from an occupied structure is much too close. Please consider barns, garages, and animal pastures in your distances.

I plead with all of you to reconsider this bill. Pennsylvanians don't need to be shooting professional grade fireworks. I can't believe revenue from taxes collected is more important than the life of even one individual or animal, or the heartache of losing a home, barn or school. Please do right with this and completely repeal the original bill or place very stringent rules on the new bill.

Thank you for your time,
Respectfully submitted,
Craig R and Lisa M. Fraser
685 Apple Road
Quakertown, PA 18951
(Haycock Township, Bucks County)



9/19/19

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I plead with all of you to reconsider this bill. Pennsylvanians don't need to be shooting professional grade fireworks. I can't believe revenue from taxes collected is more important than the life of even one individual or animal, or the heartache of losing a home, barn or school. Please do right with this and completely repeal the original bill or place very stringent rules on the new bill.

Thursday, September 19, 2019
HB1687

Hello,

I read HB1687 looking for added protections for the average homeowner who has been under siege from neighbors who are now throwing off these professional type fireworks in their own neighborhoods, and I see nothing. There has been no change to the type of explosives any consumer can buy, no change to the distance one must be to set them off from homes, cars, barns, wooded areas etc.. Please note that once they are set off, there is no control over the direction they will travel. In addition, there are no restrictions as to how the consumer should store them once purchased. They did however tighten the restrictions on where they can be sold, such as requiring sprinkler systems (which is why they can't be sold under tents anymore), fire alarms, and they are not to be stored around propane tanks, gasoline, flammable products etc... But once the explosives are sold, then they can be stored wherever the purchaser desires. If you live in a neighborhood like I do where some of the homes are fairly close together, imagine what would happen if one explosive malfunctions in your neighbors garage or shed 30 feet from your home or car??

Please make appropriate changes that actually protect the people of Pennsylvania who are at risk from fire and death from the careless use and storage of these explosive fireworks.

Regards,

Maureen Garrett

208 Stallion Lane

Schwenksville, PA 19473

610-287-5775

To: Chairman Causer

From: Noelle Greenwald and all the animals at Lilliput Farm

Dear Chairman,

My name is Jenny Greenwald and I am speaking on behalf of all the animals at Lilliput Farm, Upper and Lower Salford Townships, Montgomery County, PA.

I am thrilled to read HB 1687 and hear about the effort to repeal the new Fireworks Law.

However, there is no mention of protecting our innocent animals from the abuse of fireworks. It is a commonly known fact that fireworks create fear and unnecessary anxiety in animals. Dogs panic and livestock can stampede. For the past 2 years, I have have had to go to extreme lengths to protect our horses, goats, sheep, cow, donkeys, chickens, ducks, peacocks, pigs and our dog Wrangler from the **unwanted exposure to fireworks being blasted by my neighbors over my pastures.**

Most livestock are prey animals. They feel under attack. It is cruel. Animal cruelty is not allowed!

May I demand that a provision be added that fireworks cannot be set of 300 yards from livestock.

Pease advocate for our animals who cannot advocate for themselves!!

Jenny Greenwald

Lilliput Farm

833 Camp Wawa Rd.
Schwensville, PA 19473



Noelle is available to give testimony. She would be happy to come to Harrisburg!

To: Chairman Causer

From: Noelle Greenwald and all the animals at Lilliput Farm

Dear Chairman,

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Pease advocate for our animals who cannot advocate for themselves!!

Jenny Greenwald

Lilliput Farm

833 Camp Wawa Rd.
Schwengersville, PA 19473

Thursday, September 19, 2019
HOUSE BILL No. 1687

Hello,

I live in Coatesville, PA and am a registered voter. I have also served as an elected official at the local level. I'm writing to provide my testimony as work precludes me from attending the public hearing.

I grew up in Elkton, MD at a time there was a fireworks company in the town. I have seen too many children (and adults) wounded or crippled by fireworks. They are dangerous, disruptive, and in the face of climate change, reckless and short sighted. Yes, they are also beautiful, they are iconic for celebrations like 4th of July and New Years Eve - and professional displays are wonderful ways to bring communities together. However, not everyone can abide them.

I personally have PTSD and the randomness of them is incredibly disturbing to me. I have dogs - and the same thing, the randomness is disturbing and causes them to be truly terrorized. I have a neighbor with an autistic child - also terrorized by them. You may think - then don't attend. I live in a valley. The fireworks my municipality sets off reverberate along the walls of the valley in such a way that I cannot escape it without leaving my home and township. I have neighbors who will obtain them and then set them off for days leading up to and following ever increasing numbers of holidays. And the police don't care. It's little more than a nuisance call to most police departments and if they do come, it causes strife among neighbors at a time in American history when we need to come together, not divide.

I would like to see tighter controls on non-professional displays. And in an ideal world - I would like to see legislation that mandates the purchase of carbon offsets based on the number of fireworks utilized in any given public display.

Thank you .

Karl Marking
844 Stirling St
Coatesville, PA 19320

Thursday, September 19, 2019
Ban Backyard Fireworks

We need HB1687, even though it isn't as much as it should be, it's a start in the right direction.

My 6 dogs are absolutely terrified of fireworks, and when they start going off there is no consoling them. We've tried light medication, but I don't want to damage their health. They bark, run around inside the house, I can't even imagine letting them outside, and sometimes they even fight each other out of fear. Not typical behavior for them.....unless there are fireworks.

Also, my next door neighbor is a Vietnam Veteran, and I know it is not easy for him to deal with the fireworks either. We've never talked about his PTSD, but I know it's a struggle for him. He deserves better!!!

Please pass HB1687, and then start on another bill to make more adjustments to the current fireworks law. Serious mistake allowing this current fireworks law to be passed.

Thanks,

Randy Maynard
340 Paxinosa Road West
Easton, Pa. 18040

Thursday, September 19, 2019
HB 1687

Regarding HB 1687:

The proposed changes do not go NEARLY far enough. You have created an untenable living situation for the people of Pennsylvania in your transparent effort to benefit big business. This is shameful. Thousands of state residents and their pets now feel as if they live in a war zone. It should not be legal to shoot off dangerous and LOUD explosive whenever one might want to, literally right next door to neighbor's homes. Our dogs and horses are living in a daily state of terror. MANY people are watching and voting based on your response to this problem, that YOU created. Turn back the clock to the old regulations - PERIOD.

Sincerely,

Nancy Moffitt
504 Fulmer Road
Pottstown PA 19465

East Coventry Township
Chester County

Friday, September 20, 2019
Fireworks Testimony

Hello,

My name is Tom Marotta - I have an animal sanctuary in New Hope, PA on 10.5 acres. I have neighbors on THREE sides of my property (all new neighbors since I moved here, I would not have chosen this location otherwise) that routinely set off fireworks throughout the year. Not just on holidays, but random days of any week - and sometimes even later than 11pm.

As many others have probably said, the sheer volume of these fireworks is incredibly traumatizing for our animals here. To date, we've had injuries to our dogs, donkeys, a horse that have required veterinary care, repairs to our fencing, barn, etc. and an ongoing concern, almost nightly, for whether one of the neighbors are going to decide to set them off. I have spoken with two of them, very nicely, who simply just replied that it's perfectly legal for them to set off fireworks, and I should 'Train my animals' to endure fireworks. The volume of their fireworks is BEYOND deafening. From within my own home, I can hear AND feel the fireworks in a way that makes it hard for me to imagine they could even get enjoyment out of setting them off.

The other issue, is that I have a shed full of hay, and also 3 wood outbuilding for the animals. The fireworks almost ALWAYS make their way over to my property - and in one case, I believe the neighbor does this on purpose. As you can imagine, there is a significant threat to a fire due to these fireworks landing in our dry hay or even on the buildings.

I ask that you PLEASE, at a minimum, impose the restrictions that some townships have taken it upon themselves to impose (Doylestown Township, for example) - but better yet, to ban fireworks from private homes. There are many, many venues - even in just our area, that set off fireworks on all of the major holidays.

Thank you very much for your time and attention - and I do hope very much that PA will adopt new laws to stop this extremely dangerous activity.

Tom Marotta
Bright Side Sanctuary
2010 Street Road
New Hope, PA 18938

Thursday, September 19, 2019

Please Totally Repeal House Bill 1687

As a Montgomery County PA resident, much more must be done 1 AM is over-generous. People with pets need a safe time to let them out after dark. There is no need for a local resident to be setting of these types of fireworks to begin with. A repeal of the new law would be best.

Elizabeth Pezzano

3612 Worthington Rd

Collegeville, PA 19426

September 19, 2019

Fireworks Hearing Testimony

Attention Committee Chair Causer

I am writing to request your consideration of tightening the Fireworks Amendment bill HR 1687 from its current state into something with yet more teeth than the amendment provides. I would like to state that I would prefer a complete BAN on the consumer fireworks due to the serious and ongoing impact on me and others like me with horses.

I live on Little Conestoga Road, Glenmoore, PA, with a small horse farm with 3 horses. I have been literally surrounded all summer with people shooting fireworks off.

The impact on me is two-fold – the danger it poses to my horses (physical injury, fear, panic, colic, etc) and secondly the danger to me as I have to remain on-guard every night so that I can protect my horses, and I have to try to catch them when they are running and I am forced to wait up and not leave the property in case it starts. During the time frame around July 4th, I had to stay in place, with the horses stuck inside until usually after 11 PM every night to TRY for it to be safe to let them out in their fields. If they were out and it started, I had to risk getting hurt, while they ran in a panic, while I tried to get them in. If they were in, I had shut windows and doors and crank the fans on to try and drown in out (even on hot nights) and then had to give tranquilizers to one horse when the people on the Andrew Drive cul-de-sac shot huge mortars off for THREE HOURS straight on July 5th. Others would be at unknown times, and durations. It's exhausting and honestly, totally unfair that I should have to deal with this.

It meant I could not leave my property virtually all summer in the evenings. Especially on Friday and Saturday nights as I had to ensure for their safety. All of these properties were likely in violation of the 150 set-back, but they didn't care and the police would not enforce the law and said "it was legal" which it wasn't. The map below shows the homes circled which chose to set them off, so you can see how I was surrounded.

It was like I developed a sort of PTSD – waiting night after for it to start. Then I would have to deal with the aftermath every time. It also costs me actual money as I had to keep them in an use up more bedding (shavings) and more hay and the associated extra labor of them being in the stalls longer.

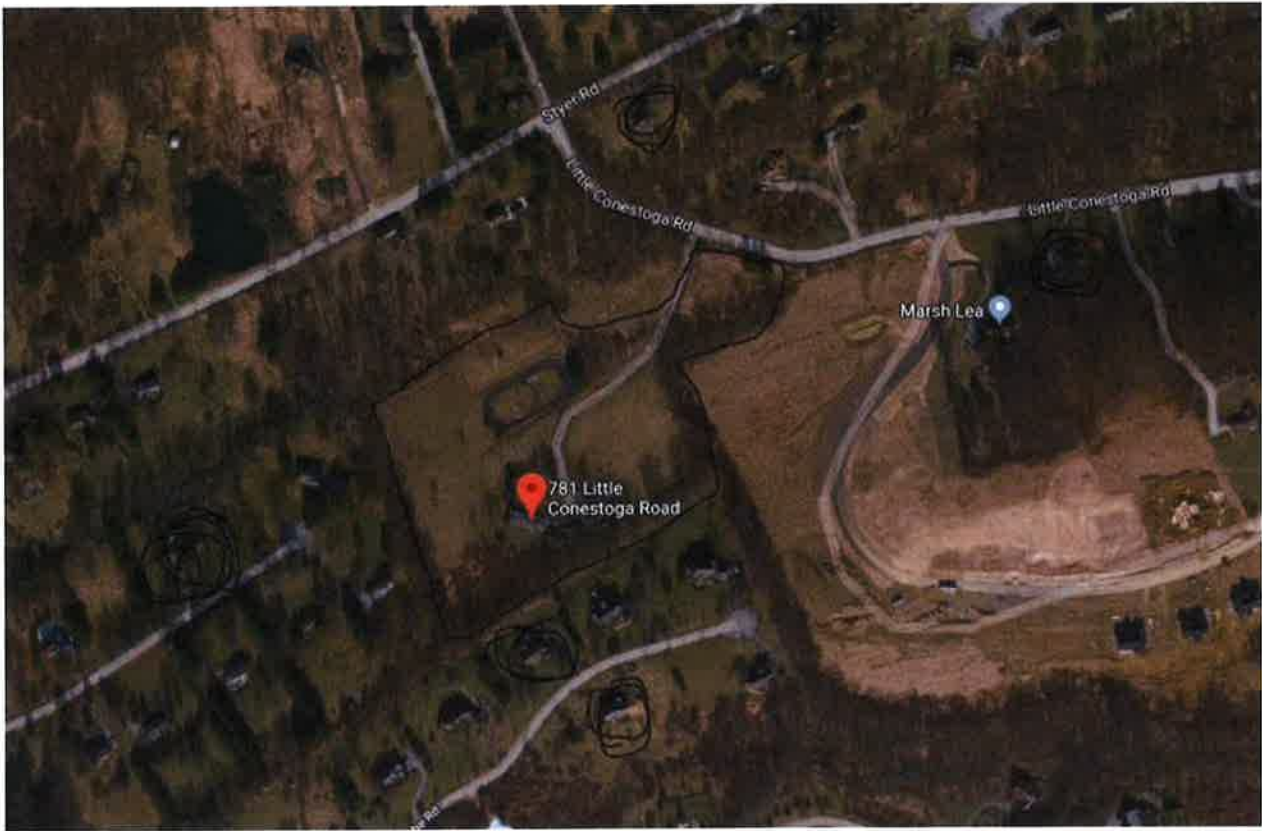
There is nothing positive in the existing bill or the revision for me. Nothing. The revised setback is slightly better, the fine is a hair better, but allowing until ONE AM on certain nights is completely off-base. All so that some selfish person can get a momentary thrill while negatively impacting the ENTIRE neighborhood.

Please consider a total ban on consumer fireworks. At the very least – please raise the fine considerably higher, the set-back should be 1,000 feet from a structure (not just a dwelling), the time allowed (if ever) should be like July 4th and Dec 31st only and from 9-9:30 maximum. At least I could plan for that.

Otherwise I NEVER KNOW when it is going to happen and it is ALWAYS a very bad event. ALWAYS.

I am completely tired of it and I am furious that the PA legislators pushed this through previously.

Sara Shute
215-778-5979
781 Little Conestoga Road
Glenmoore, PA 19343



September 19, 2019

Fireworks Hearing Testimony

Attention Committee Chair Causer

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215-778-5979
781 Little Conestoga Road
Glenmoore, PA 19343

Thursday, September 19, 2019
Fireworks HB 1687

Chairperson Rep Causer,

I want you to see what happened to my family on Labor Day. Please look at video 2087 first as it is the clearest. Please be sure to read the narrative next to each video. In the second video you can hear me say, at the 6 second mark, I was hit.

https://www.youtube.com/user/Snuffleshuffle/videos?view_as=subscriber&fbclid=IwAR2nYXiquYIQ6F7mlAhz43y_BEEvJd_23W_YjXDzpX9CuokiwdhyAPL-Gis

This is the third dangerous episode we have endured from our new neighbor.

HB 1687 will not protect me, my family, my horses or other pets. The distance needs to be much greater, the fines need to be much stiffer.

Better yet take these dangerous devices out of the hands of God Knows who they are and put back into the hands of professionals.

Only discharge at designated safe locations.

Only discharge on special occasions such as July 4th.

Right now it's a free for all in PA never knowing when an explosion will occur.

Did you know a recent facebook page has been started? Ban Backyard Fireworks

Did you know a recent petition has been started? Pennsylvania State House: Stop Terrorizing Pets with Fireworks!!!

Please return our communities to peaceful, normal, safe havens for all of us.

Thank you,

Judy Szela
1920 Allentown Road
Quakertown, PA 18951
215-529-5562
scoutszela@aol.com

Friday, September 20, 2019
Change the Fireworks law please

Good Morning !

I'm happy to see that our lawmakers are working to make changes to the current Fireworks law. We all know that fireworks are dangerous for adults, children, pets and animals. I have two friends who lost fingers from fireworks.

This past July 4th, I had an issue with my neighbor setting off very loud fireworks very close to my house in the middle of the afternoon. I have an issue with my heart and the medicine I take makes me very tired. I was taking a nap when they set off the first firework. It was so loud and woke me up from a sound sleep. My heart was racing which isn't good. My dogs were freaked ! I went outside to see what was going on and they were setting off the fireworks right outside of my fenced yard. Also, they were drunk. I asked them to stop and they just laughed at me. I told them the law requires that fireworks should not be set off within 150 ft of a home. They didn't care. They homeowner texted me to let me know that they would stop but would be setting off more at 9:00. They completely disregarded my heart issue.

If you live in a development or in an area where houses are close together, 150 ft is not far enough. Sparks can land on a roof or tree and start a fire. Not, to mention, that some people setting off fireworks are drunk and can hurt themselves and others. So many people have pets that freak out from fireworks. Many dogs go missing on holidays when fireworks are involved. This law needs to be revised for the protection of everyone. Why do private citizens have to have access to fireworks? People don't follow the law and set them off at all hours of the day and night and any day of the year and anywhere that they feel like it. Police don't respond to complaints. Bottom line, the law needs to be changed to protect the majority of the citizens of Pennsylvania and not protect the people who are breaking the law !

Thank you !

Laura Whitman
232 Wartman Rd
Collegeville.Pa 19426

