

Governor Wolf's First Year

A Comparative Analysis

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Tom Wolf's first year as governor was dominated by the challenges of reaching a budget compromise with the Republican-dominated General Assembly. This article provides an overview of the difficulties and accomplishments of the first year of the Wolf administration. The article draws a historical comparison with seven other governors—Leader, Scranton, Shafer, Shapp, Thornburg, Rendell, and Corbett—four Republicans and three Democrats, and it concludes with some observations drawn from these previous governors' experiences that may inform the Wolf administration as it navigates its remaining years.

By the end of 2015, approximately 30% of the public rated Governor Tom Wolf's performance either good or excellent. But should the public's approval rating be the only assessment of the Wolf administration's first year in office? To evaluate his achievements, we need to assess objectively and carefully his accomplishments from both a legislative and managerial perspective and to compare them to his original list of first-year goals. Moreover, Governor Wolf's performance must be placed in a context that allows for comparison with previous governors, as it is important to understand the political, social, and economic environments in which a chief executive governs.

According to Governor Wolf's official blog, his first-year's theme was "jobs that pay, schools that teach and a government that works" (Nicastre 2016). The governor's office cites 27 specific accomplishments in his first year. Table 1 provides a summary of the results by category. Most notably, Governor Wolf expanded Health Choices to provide 500,000 people with health insurance through Medicaid's expansion. He initiated online voter registration resulting in 61,000 citizens either switching party or newly registering online. He allowed the phaseout of the 171-year-old Capital Stock and foreign Franchise Tax, which was implemented under Governor Tom Corbett, and he instituted a gift ban for all political appointees and state workers under his authority. He also created the Heroin Task Force to address the opioid addiction crisis spreading across the state (Bonner 2016).

Yet by December 2015, only about 30% of Pennsylvanians rated his performance as good or excellent, a rating comparable to those of Governors Ed Rendell and Tom Corbett at the conclusion of their first year in office (Nicastre 2015; Giammarise 2016). (See Figure 1 for a comparison of four governors' approval ratings.) Unfortunately for Governor Wolf, his first year accomplishments were overshadowed by failure to reach a budget agreement with the Republican-controlled General Assembly. Republicans believed that he had overused the media, because on many occasions, Wolf held press conferences during which he criticized the Republican leadership. As Senate Majority Leader Jake Corman (R) put it "his staff is still in campaign mode." The

Table 1. Governor Wolf's First-Year Accomplishments	
Innovation	Online Plow Truck Tracking
Economy	Elimination of Capital Stock Tax
Health Care	Expansion of Medicaid
Infrastructure	Bridge repairs
Transparency	Ban on gifts for executive branch employees
Public Safety	Heroin Task Force
Improved State Services	Elimination of means test for SNAP
Environment	Ban on drilling in state forests
Equality	Easier access to contract bidding
Education	76 Schools that Teach visits
Hunger/Homelessness	Food Security Partnership
<i>Source:</i> From www.governor.pa.gov/topic/year-in-review .	
<i>Note:</i> With the exception of the elimination of the Capital Stock Tax, all accomplishments were achieved through executive action only.	

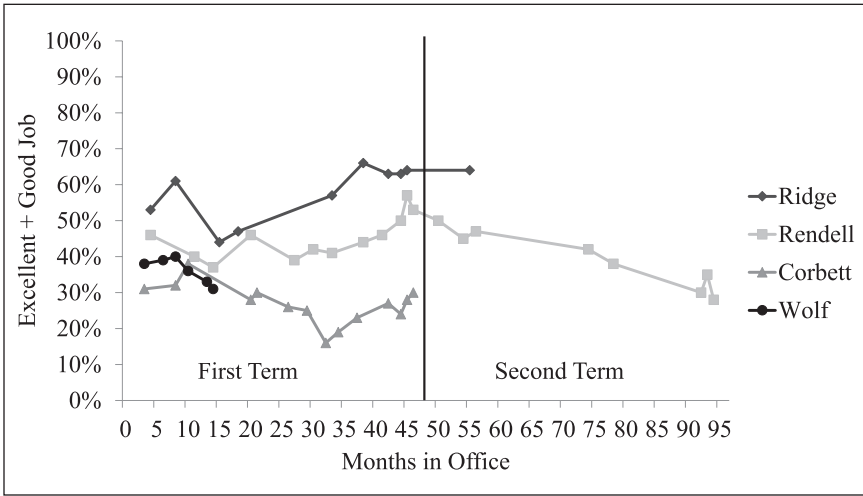


Figure 1. Comparison of Pennsylvania Governors' Job Performance Ratings. (Berwood Yost, Franklin and Marshall College Poll, Center for Opinion Research, Floyd Institute for Public Policy, Franklin and Marshall College, 2016.)

staff members referenced by Senator Corman were likely Wolf's chief-of-staff, Katie McGinty, and his policy director, John Hangar. Republicans generally regarded both as excessively partisan, while many journalists and political analysts also noted their ideological passion rather than pragmatism as well as their propensity to draw attention to their personal actions rather than working quietly and anonymously behind the scenes.

In fact, the majority of Wolf's accomplishments involved executive and not legislative action (Giammarise 2016; Comisac and Zwick 2016a, 2016b, 2016c, 2016d).¹

The struggle over the FY16 budget was intense and dramatic and will likely be long remembered as a test of political wills between a Republican Party holding significantly large majorities in both houses of the General Assembly and claiming an electoral mandate for its small government/no taxes agenda (but whose leadership was relatively inexperienced),² and a novice politician in Governor Wolf, who also claimed a mandate because of his convincing victory over incumbent Governor Corbett. Both sides had reason to dig in their heels and test the mettle of the other, for to experience defeat in this first major confrontation could result in the losing side feeling marginalized and being viewed as weak by the press and the public. The resulting delayed budget was not a surprise. Research suggests that the factors most associated with late state budgets are divided government, a faltering economy, weak or no "shut-down" rules,³ and the governor's request for higher taxes; all four factors were present in Wolf's first year (Klarner, Phillips, and Muckler 2010).⁴

Governor Rendell experienced his own budget battle with the legislature during his first year, 2003. He sent a minimal, first-stage FY04 budget that required no new taxes to the Republican-controlled General Assembly in order to have a budget submitted on time. He expected that the legislature would not act on it until several weeks later when he submitted what was effectively a large, supplemental budget proposal that required higher taxes to support additional spending, largely for new education and economic development programs. To his dismay, the General Assembly passed the frugal budget without even holding hearings, embarrassing the new governor. But Rendell learned a lesson, recovered, and worked with the legislature to pass most of his policy agenda, including tax increases over the next seven years (Giammarise 2016).

Compared to Rendell or to any other governor in modern times, Wolf's first budget proposal was extraordinarily ambitious. A former secretary of revenue under Rendell, Wolf sought a large increase in the state's personal income tax, a significant broadening of the sales tax base, the closing of loopholes in the state's business taxes, as well as a new tax on Marcellus Shale. He also proposed sweeping property tax relief.

For Wolf, negotiations began cordially with each side presenting its priorities. Some areas for agreement and compromise appeared, particularly the desire to provide property tax relief. Important side issues such as privatizing and/or modernizing the state liquor system, addressing the yawning unfunded liability in the state's pension fund as well as reforming the pension system, imposing an extraction tax on Marcellus Shale gas, and increasing public school funding complicated the budget discussions. Both sides eventually agreed that a \$1.2 billion budget deficit existed, but there were differences over how to eliminate the deficit. Republicans argued for more cuts in government spending, while Wolf and fellow Democrats in the General Assembly supported tax increases and additional state spending, especially to support public education. It is important to remember that state funding for public schools was the major issue that differentiated Governor Corbett and candidate Wolf in the 2014 campaign, with Wolf vowing to restore state school funding to the levels Governor Rendell had achieved at the end of his administration, albeit with the use of one-time federal stimulus aid. Wolf sought to add at least \$1 billion more to the budget for education. When the budget talks stalled, with the threat of a government shutdown looming as the June 30 deadline approached, Republicans passed their own budget, which, in a highly unusual action, Governor Wolf vetoed in its entirety. Republicans claimed to be shocked, even though he had indicated that he would veto a Republican budget (Scolforo 2015a).

The 2016 fiscal year began without a budget and talks continued intermittently through the fall and into the winter behind closed doors. In February 2016, the governor was forced to propose a budget for Fiscal 2017 without an enacted budget for Fiscal 2016, the first time such an event had occurred since Governor Milton Shapp was forced to do so in 1971. However, Shapp's unfunded budget that year was the one that had been proposed by his predecessor, Governor Shaefer. Wolf is thus the only governor since the 1968 Constitution to have to propose a new budget with the enactment of his own current-year budget.

The governor, his staff, and surrogates criticized the Republicans publicly using rather caustic terms. Even more unusual, the governor's political apparatus began attacking Republican legislators in swing districts with direct mail to their constituents, infuriating the GOP caucuses. Republicans felt that Wolf's tactics violated tradition in Harrisburg and responded with attacks on the governor. By December 2015, however, a budget deal between Wolf and the Senate's Republican leadership emerged, but when the House Republican leadership presented the budget to its caucus, the most conservative members killed the deal, because it would have required higher general fund taxes. Recognizing that if the budget and required tax legislation were brought to the House floor, they might pass with a combination of maverick Republicans and solid Democratic votes, Speaker Mike Turzai abruptly recognized a motion to adjourn. This time, it was Wolf who felt shocked (Scolforo 2015a).

Without a budget, nonessential state services and operations were halted, including funding for public schools. Many school districts were forced to borrow money, while others reduced activities. The public backlash against the General Assembly and the governor over their failure to deliver a budget was vocal and harsh, but neither side appeared willing to concede. Pressure from parents, school boards, and teachers' unions moved a bipartisan majority of the legislature to pass a \$30 billion, no frills budget, with no tax increases that became law without the governor's signature on March 28, an embarrassing and unprecedented outcome.⁵ This made Wolf's budget late by 272 days, the second latest in Pennsylvania since 1956 (Stafford, et al. 2012, table B1) and the second to last budget enacted in the nation in FY 2016.⁶ Unfortunately, the budget simply delayed the impending deficit for fiscal year 2017. Currently, Pennsylvania faces a roughly \$2 billion deficit for the fiscal year ending in June 2017 (Kiefer 2016).

In addition to failing to enact a budget for nearly a year, the governor also was unsuccessful on other important issues. His goal of a severance tax on natural gas did not materialize; in fact, the 2016 budget contained no new taxes. The GOP-controlled General Assembly passed one of its priorities, a

pension reform bill, but Wolf vetoed it, drawing the ire of Republican leaders (Anderson 2015). While education funding did not increase, a revised school funding *formula* developed by a bipartisan legislative commission established in the last year of the Corbett administration and cochaired by Republican legislators, was passed.⁷

Beyond the struggle to achieve a budget, Governor Wolf also committed several missteps that contributed to his administration's slow start and rocky relationship with Republicans in the legislature. The first was his firing of Eric Arneson, Governor Corbett's appointee to lead the Office of Open Records, which administers the right to know law, as well as also recalling 28 nominations to boards, commissions, and judgeships announced by Corbett shortly before he left office (Worden 2015a). Arneson, a former spokesperson for the Senate Majority Caucus and a popular figure in the Capitol, was instrumental in the design and passage of the Open Records Act in 2008. Arneson sued, and his case was heard by the Commonwealth Court, which found for Arneson. Of the other 28 Corbett nominees, a compromise with the Republican leadership was achieved and twelve of Corbett's nominees were approved. However, on May 7, 2015, Senate Republicans refused to take action on Wolf's nominees (Levy 2015; Worden 2015b; Scolforo 2015b). Eventually, an accommodation was reached, and Wolf's nominees began to be processed and confirmed as of this writing as well as more than 30 state judges to fill vacancies.⁸

The second miscue was naming Marcus Brown to lead the State Police. Brown, a state police commander from Maryland, generated controversy when he wore the Pennsylvania State Police uniform despite not graduating from the state's police academy and for pulling up lawn signs questioning his appointment. The state's Troopers Association and Senate Republicans requested that Wolf withdraw the nominee, but Wolf refused. Then on June 1, Wolf announced he would withdraw the nomination, but the Senate proceeded by a vote of 26 to 22 to reject the nominee. As an acting Police Commissioner, Wolf was not required to fire Brown, but he later moved Brown to the Department of Homeland Security and nominated Col. Tyree Blocker, a retired State Police Commander, for the Commissioner's post (Coulombus and Palmer 2015; Esack, 2015).

So given the political struggles and his unfinished agenda, how does the Wolf Administration stand up under historical scrutiny? While the constitutional changes of 1968 altered the budgeting landscape, it is instructive to examine more closely several governors prior to the Constitutional Convention, viz. Governor George Leader (1955–1959) and Republican governors William Scranton (1963–1967) and Raymond Shafer (1967–1971), as well as Governors Shapp (1971–1979), Rendell (2003–2011), and Corbett (2011–2015).

Leader was included because, like Wolf, he was a Democrat from York County who faced a Republican-dominated General Assembly. Scranton and Shafer's administration operated under the pre-1968 state Constitution, while Shapp was the first governor under the current Constitution. Rendell and Corbett, as his two immediate predecessors, set the stage for Wolf and, in Corbett's case, dealt with the same political environment in the legislature.

George Leader came to power in an upset victory over the Republican lieutenant governor Lloyd H. Wood, winning 54% of the vote, the biggest Democratic sweep since 1857. Leader, however, faced deep economic and fiscal challenges. The unemployment rate in the state was the highest since the Great Depression at 8.8% (and as high as 15% in the coal and steel regions). He inherited a \$58.2 million budget deficit from the Fine administration, and while the Democrats controlled the House during his first two years in office, the Republicans remained firmly in control of the Senate. Leader endured many epic budget battles during his four years in office. He first tried to balance the budget by enacting the highly unpopular personal income tax. The fight over the income tax proposal in his first budget went on for 17 months. During this time, the press turned against the governor, claiming the tax would hurt the working class. Finally, in March 1956 a compromise was reached. The sales tax was raised to 3%, the corporate net income tax rose from 1% to 6%, and the gasoline tax rose one cent to six cents (Beers 1971; PHMC 2015).

Leader's image was that of a progressive intellectual, a proponent of good government. He staffed his cabinet with college professors and policy wonks. He was a strong supporter of civil rights and the rights of the disabled. He angered his party by adding 10,000 civil service jobs to the state roster and weakening the patronage system. Among his accomplishments were the creation of the Department of Administration, the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority (PIDA), and reform of the state's mental health hospital system. Although author Paul Beers dubs him "Mister Clean," his administration was rife with scandal and he lost his bid for the U.S. Senate in 1958 (Beers 1980).

Governor Scranton came to office after eight years of Democratic dominance of the executive branch as well as much of Pennsylvania and national politics. He was adept at melding the image of traditional Republican values to a modestly liberal economic agenda. The Republicans retook control of both the Senate and House giving Governor Scranton a legislative advantage. Scranton wisely allowed the legislature to avoid the issue of a statewide income tax. In his first year in office, he increased state spending by 38% and capital debt by nearly a third, but managed to fund the increased spending with

politically palatable sales and business taxes, including taxes on liquor and cigarettes. With the extra millions, he increased school subsidies and teacher salaries, opened vocational technical schools and community colleges, and expanded the Pennsylvania Industrial Development Authority (PIDA). All of these legislative victories must be viewed in the light of single party government and a very robust Pennsylvania economy. In fact, Pennsylvania gained 528,000 jobs from 1963 to 1970, with an unemployment rate of 3.6% in 1966.

Governor Raymond Shafer took office in 1967 with an unblemished political career, victorious in elections for district attorney, state senator, lieutenant governor, and finally, governor. His last electoral success, however, proved to be a failure for the Commonwealth. When Shafer became governor, the state was running a \$1-million-per-day deficit. Although Shafer had a majority in the General Assembly during his first two years in office, he failed to remedy the government's fiscal ills by having a state income tax passed. According to statistics from the Pennsylvania Economy League, by 1969 Pennsylvania was running a \$400 million deficit and was \$242 million in debt. Shafer's experience mirrors that of the current governor. Shafer was unable to pass a budget for 16 months (248 days, second longest after Governor Leader's first budget), and he was unable to convince the General Assembly to increase taxes to close the state's budget deficit. The legislature refused to confirm Shafer's appointments. Many blamed his inability to compromise or engage in legislative horse trading. But Shafer was unfailingly moderate in his politics, continuing and enlarging the Scranton legacy in education, welfare, and conservation. Many, however, viewed his administration as a failure, leaving the Commonwealth on the brink of bankruptcy. Though Shafer was the major force behind the Constitutional Convention of 1968, he wisely chose to have no role at the convention (Beers 1980; PHMC 2015).

Following the 1968 constitutional reforms, Milton Shapp became the first two-term governor in Pennsylvania's history. An idealist with no elective office experience, he was a self-made millionaire. Unfortunately, his administration, particularly in its second term, was riddled with corruption. Despite his tireless efforts in 1972 following the flooding caused by Hurricane Agnes, and his ability to handle the financial woes of the Commonwealth, he was perceived as an outsider and was highly unpopular within his own party by the end of his second term. Nevertheless, he had notable legislative successes, including enactment of the first personal income tax; the establishment of a state lottery to fund free public transportation for senior citizens and property tax relief for low-income seniors; no-fault auto insurance; strong consumer protection laws; legislation to protect the rights of the mentally ill; the establishment of the "Clean and Green" program to preserve agricultural farmland;

and an environmental amendment to the Pennsylvania Constitution. These were all ranked among the most important laws of the Pennsylvania General Assembly under the 1968 Constitution in a 2010 Temple survey of current and former legislators, political scientists, and journalists. Indeed, the personal income tax was ranked the single most important law of the modern era in the Temple survey (*The Temple Papers on the Pennsylvania General Assembly, Volume II*). On the other hand, Shapp failed to achieve property tax reform, privatize liquor stores, or establish a free Pennsylvania Turnpike.

In 1970 the Democrats attained majorities in both houses of the General Assembly, which allowed Shapp to quickly push through his preferred progressive income tax early; however, it was overturned by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court as a violation of the “uniformity clause” of the Pennsylvania Constitution. As noted above, Shapp and the Democratic legislature then enacted the flat tax that is still the Commonwealth’s most important revenue producer. Pennsylvania was the 43rd state to adopt an income tax. Shapp used the veto liberally, but he was also overridden 15 times. Governor Shapp’s battles with the legislature on everything from abortion restrictions to the death penalty continued to the end of his second term (Beers 1980; PHMC 2015).

Moving to the twenty-first century and our two most recent governors, we find that the issues remain much the same, but the political arena has been forever changed because of the 24/7 news cycle, easier access to previously unavailable government information, passage of the Open Records Act, emergence of social media as a political force, and the increasingly divisive and polarized politics on both left and right. Reforming property taxes, achieving equitable funding for basic and higher education, reforming the criminal justice system, and protecting the environment persist on Pennsylvania’s twenty-first-century political agenda. In the past, governors were better able to control the distribution of their messages, as the number of news sources that covered Harrisburg were relatively few, while today any person or group can gather information and post it online at any time. The rise of the Tea Party in Pennsylvania, changing political alignments in Philadelphia’s suburban counties, and the rightward drift of previously Democratic counties in Southwestern Pennsylvania led to an east/west, conservative/liberal divide.

Governor Ed Rendell faced many of the same problems as his twentieth-century predecessors. Confronting a General Assembly in Republican hands, his first budget was completed six months late, with the enactment of school funding and a personal income tax increase making Pennsylvania the last state in the nation to finish its budget. (See discussion of Rendell’s 2003 budget above.) In fact, Rendell never managed to complete a budget on time; the 2009 budget was also the last in the nation to be passed. However, when the ink

dried on a giant supplemental appropriation that completed the first Rendell budget, it included \$1 billion in new revenues and a 10% increase in the state income tax. Rendell used administrative cuts to create \$1.75 billion in savings, which he used to increase funding for the state's public schools. Rendell was legendary for his larger than life personality, his willingness to speak frankly with the media on nearly any topic, and his ability to wheel and deal with the legislature. In the end, despite many political differences with the General Assembly, his accomplishments included eliminating or cutting property taxes for the Commonwealth's senior citizens, bringing casino gambling to the state, increasing education funds, particularly for preschool education, and bringing Sunday liquor sales to the state store system.

Despite his many noteworthy successes, however, he failed on several major issues that remain unresolved today. He could not expand the sales tax, privatize the Pennsylvania Turnpike to raise additional revenue, nor consolidate Pennsylvania's 501 school districts to 100 districts. Perhaps Rendell's most troubling failure was his unwillingness to seek a severance tax on Marcellus Shale gas shortly after the rapid expansion of drilling and production from the new wells (*PennLive* Editorial Board 2015).

Governor Tom Corbett was elected to office with a reputation as a strong state prosecutor and corruption fighter. As Pennsylvania's attorney general, he empaneled a grand jury that indicted legislators of both parties and issued a strident—and many thought gratuitous—report blasting the General Assembly's culture and operations. He thus began his term as governor with a legislature that, although controlled by his party, regarded him as hostile to the institution. His relationships with legislators of both parties remained strained throughout his term. He departed office as Pennsylvania's first governor to lose reelection since the 1968 constitutional reforms that allowed the state's governor to serve two terms. He campaigned as a pro business fiscal conservative and made the “no new taxes” pledge championed by Grover Norquist's organization, Americans for Tax Reform.

Corbett's legacy is mixed at best. While he did cut state taxes, he also reduced funding for public education and social services in order to balance the budget, though in his last year, he did substantially increase the state's subsidy to basic education.⁹ In the end, he increased a variety of state fees and raised the state's excise tax on auto fuels to fund a \$2 billion transportation program designed to repair the state's deteriorating roads and bridges. He also accepted the federal offer to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, although only after obtaining a waiver that critics said left millions of federal dollars on the table and provided far less coverage for poor and working-class families. Achieving four of his major objectives—pension reform, liquor

privatization, property tax elimination or reform, and the sale of the state's lottery system to raise several billion dollars in new revenue—proved elusive, however, perhaps because of his reserved character and inability to communicate effectively with the public, at least in the opinion of many Republican legislators. During his administration the state's credit rating was downgraded four times (*PennLive* Editorial Board 2015).

So what conclusions can we draw from an examination of the accomplishments and failures of the Commonwealth's governors since the 1950s? The following are a few conclusions and observations:

- It does not necessarily appear to be an advantage to present oneself as a political outsider. Additionally a successfully business career does not appear to translate into a successful political career.
- A working relationship with the General Assembly is critical. Compromise is essential, as is a willingness to listen to and accept as legitimate the concerns of the legislature's members. Of course, this assumes that members of the General Assembly are willing and able to compromise. Knowing when to “hold 'em and fold 'em” is key, and having something to trade is even more important.
- Social media's influence must be considered at every turn. It can make or break a governor, and like the forces of nature, it cannot be controlled. Every legislative office can be its own public relations operation, which makes it very difficult for the governor to control the message that the public and the traditional media outlets receive.
- Government corruption is corrosive and will quickly diminish the legitimacy of a governor's administration and undermine its credibility with the public.
- While political division is nothing new to Pennsylvania politics, the intense polarization confronting the Wolf Administration has taken division to a new level. The transformation of the General Assembly's membership since the pay raise vote and the Bonusgate scandal of 2006–2007 has dramatically increased the difficulty of finding common ground with the legislature.

It should be noted that if a major disaster or tragedy occurs during the first few years in office, and *if* the response to the disaster is handled properly, a governor may benefit. For example, after just eight months in office, Governor Scranton faced a national tragedy and political upheaval with the assassination of President Kennedy. Governor Shapp dealt with Hurricane

Agnes and the total devastation along the Susquehanna River, including the flooding of the Governor's Mansion. Governor Thornburgh experienced the nation's first nuclear disaster at Three Mile Island in 1979. And of course, Governor Ridge had to respond to the devastation and the public's fear following the 9/11 attacks, which included the downing of Flight 93 in Somerset County, Pennsylvania.

During emergencies, the public turns to the governor for leadership and will rally behind a governor who demonstrates competence, composure, and decisiveness. This improves the governor's chances of winning a second term. However, any natural disaster or emergency disrupts the normal flow of business in the Capital and possibly across the entire state, causing a governor to delay or entirely eliminate one or more major items from the governor's policy agenda. Few governors would wish for such catastrophes to occur on their watch. To date, while Governor Wolf has experienced political challenges, most particularly from the Tea Party wing of the Republican-controlled legislature, he has yet to face a significant disaster, tragedy, or even severe economic downturn, though a winter snowstorm that stranded motorists on the Pennsylvania Turnpike did prove embarrassing.

Governor Wolf's legacy thus far is mixed. Unless he can resolve some of the unfinished business of the Corbett administration, namely pension reform, property tax reform, closing the budget deficit, and education funding reform, future generations may evaluate the Wolf Administration as less than successful. Political corruption and much-needed campaign finance reform continue to dog the system generally as does a largely ineffective legislative branch.

NOTES

1. In fairness, President Obama also has been criticized for attempting to govern by executive action, given his difficulties in persuading a Republican Congress to move on his legislative agenda, a reflection of the polarized state of American politics.

2. New to their roles were Senate Majority Leader Jake Corman, Whip John Gordner, Appropriations Chair Pat Browne, and House Speaker Mike Turzai, Majority Leader Dave Reed, and Whip Bryan Cutler.

3. Pennsylvania's "shut-down" rules, bringing vital spending to a halt without enacted appropriations, were greatly weakened by the 2009 Supreme Court decision, *Council 13, Ex Rel. Fillman v. Rendell* 986 A. 2d 63 (2009), which effectively relieved pressure on the governor and legislature to agree on a budget by continuing to fund most state programs.

4. For a fuller overview of the struggle to achieve a state budget, see Comisac and Zwick 2016a, 2016b, 2016c, and 2016d.

5. According to the Pennsylvania Policy Database, only four bills since 1979 have become law without the governor's signature, none having the significance of the general appropriations act. Such rare actions sometimes reflect a governor's judgment that a veto would be overridden.

6. Only Pennsylvania under Governor Wolf and Illinois under Governor Bruce Rauner lacked an FY 2016 state budget in the spring of 2016. Wolf and Rauner were both business executives new to elective office, who faced legislatures controlled by the opposition party. Although most state programs were operating, Rauner's budget was still incomplete at year's end.

7. The new school funding formula was widely praised by school officials and education advocates. The Wolf administration and the advocates lost an effort to delay its implementation until after the Corbett administration's school spending cuts were restored. The new formula will incrementally increase funding each year, leaving in place large inequities in the distribution of school resources in Pennsylvania accumulated over many years.

8. An anonymous source within the Wolf administration provided information about the agreement between Wolf and Senate Republicans.

9. Governor Corbett argued that his last budget did increase state support for basic education to record levels, because he used state money rather than the federal stimulus funds as Rendell had. The stimulus money eventually ended, leaving the public schools short of money.

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