

# CAPITOL HILL UPDATE

REP. JIM GERLACH (PA-06)

Friday, April 29, 2005

[www.gerlach.house.gov](http://www.gerlach.house.gov)

## *Open space preservation discussed during District stops*

**NORTH COVENTRY** -- As part of their ongoing efforts to protect Pennsylvania's farmland and open space, Congressmen Jim Gerlach (PA-06) and Joe Pitts (PA-16) met on April 22 with local officials and area farmers to tout their plan to preserve farmland.

"This legislation ensures that tax relief is targeted at those farmers under the most pressure from development. Farmers in this area know all too well the costs of staying in farming. Our tax code shouldn't add to that cost," said Congressman Gerlach.

"We have worked together to introduce a bill that will remove a barrier in the tax code to farmland preservation. This bill capitalizes on the power of the market, not government mandates or wishful thinking," said Congressman Pitts.

Current law allows a farmer to sell the development rights to his/her property to any person for the fair market value of the rights. The proceeds from the sale generally are subject to capital gain taxes. Capital gains and exorbitant estate taxes are forcing many to sell their farms



*Rep. Joe Pitts, left, and Rep. Jim Gerlach discuss their farmland preservation legislation at the Sunny High Farm in North Coventry.*

*See FARMLAND*

*Visit to Kutztown University*



*Congressman Jim Gerlach spent the morning of April 25 visiting with the students, faculty and the president of Kutztown University.*



## *House votes out Gerlach Financial Services legislation*

**WASHINGTON** -- On Tuesday, the House voted out *H.R. 749, the Expanded Access to Financial Services Act of 2005.*

The legislation, introduced by Rep. Gerlach in February, would amend the Federal Credit Union Act to authorize Federal credit unions to provide check-cashing and money-transfer services to a non-member of the credit union as long as the individual is within the credit union's field of membership.

This would help bring millions of "unbanked" Americans, a great number of whom are recent immigrants, into the financial mainstream.

*See FINANCIAL SERVICES*

*Remember to visit [www.gerlach.house.gov](http://www.gerlach.house.gov) for more news, photos and links to helpful government services*

# CAPITOL HILL UPDATE

REP. JIM GERLACH (PA-06)

Friday, April 29, 2005

[www.gerlach.house.gov](http://www.gerlach.house.gov)

## *Gerlach legislation moves to Senate for consideration*

### **FINANCIAL SERVICES**

“This is a good, bipartisan piece of legislation that reaches out to communities that have historically been left out of the financial services arena,” Rep. Gerlach said. “It is my hope that the underserved persons who are reached through this bill will be able to use these services to establish a credit history that can then allow them to take advantage of other financial services. An initial positive experience with a depository institution may encourage them to explore other financial products.”

Recent immigrants often have fewer choices when it comes to financial services which increase their reliance on check-cashing and pay-day lending businesses. The bill would increase consumer choice by expanding the number of mainstream deposit institutions that offer basic banking services.

An identical version of the legislation, section 307 of H.R. 1375, passed the House in the 108th Congress by a vote of 392-25.

### **FARMLAND**

at higher rates to developers simply to make the sale worth the tax burden. The Family Farm Preservation Act creates real incentives for farm owners owners to keep their farms intact.



*(Above) Rep. Gerlach discusses the open space legislation with a constituent after the event. Reps. Gerlach and Pitts address the crowd gathered in North Coventry (Right)*



H.R. 658, The Family Farm Preservation Act, exempts the sale of farm development rights from capital gains taxes provided that the farmland is located in a county with a population of 100 persons or more per square mile and the sale is made to a qualified non-profit organization.

Data from the 2000 Census suggests that H.R. 658 would benefit farmers in 40 Pennsylvania counties and hundreds of others around the nation.

## **Washington News in Brief**

**The following are some of the more relevant votes cast by Rep. Jim Gerlach during the week ending April 29:**

*On Wednesday, April 27, Rep. Gerlach voted for: H.R. 902, The Presidential \$1 Coin Act of 2005; H.R. 748, the Child Interstate Abortion Notification Act; and H. Res. 241, amending the Rules of the House of Representatives to reinstate certain provisions of the rules relating to procedures of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to the form in which those provisions existed at the close of the 108th Congress.*

*Please visit the Legislation Section of Rep. Gerlach's Web site for more information regarding his voting record*

**Visit Rep. Gerlach's homepage:**  
[www.gerlach.house.gov](http://www.gerlach.house.gov)



Rep. Gerlach presents the Kimberton Fire Co. with a Federal Homeland Security grant. The Department will use the money to improve its equipment and services.