

We support Ruth Yeiser's letter urging reforms in Harrisburg. Every new legislature's first task is voting on procedural rules. These rules usually hand control of all legislation to a very few people who get complete power to decide what bills will be presented to the house or senate. If they do not like a bill, it goes nowhere and never comes up for a hearing or a vote. Our local legislators have their hands tied. They cannot vote a bill out of committee to discuss it on the floor without the approval of the leaders.

Pennsylvania has one of the least productive legislatures in the country, passing only five to seven percent of the bills introduced each year. Even bills that have majority bipartisan support have a hard time making it out of committee. One example is "Victoria's Law," intended to prevent pet stores from selling puppy mill dogs. This bill took many months to get a hearing and still hasn't passed. A less popular bill has almost no chance of a hearing, let alone a vote, even when there's broad support.

If fairer rules applied, members of both parties would have more say in what gets voted out of committee and discussed by all the legislators. The only way to prevent just a few legislators from hijacking the process is to stop these restrictive rules.

Please contact your legislators today to urge them to vote against the usual restrictive rules when Pennsylvania's House and Senate reconvene in January, and to support rules that will allow our legislators, whatever their party, to have a voice in the passage of new bills. Find your legislators here:

<https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/home/findyourlegislator/index.cfm>; for more information about this problem visit FairDistrictsPA.org

Signed,

Sarah Caspar, East Brandywine

Marie Knox, East Goshen

Barbara Lathroum, Upper Uwchlan

Deborah Liczwek, East Bradford

Karen Moynihan, West Chester

Jean Speiser, East Bradford

Members, West Chester-Chester County Branch, the American Association of University Women