



Distinguished Service to Families Award 2006

The Distinguished Service to Families Award, under the auspices of the Mid-Atlantic Council on Family Relations, is given in recognition of exceptional leadership and/or service to improve family living. Contributions to Public Service “action” programs recognize the importance of family issues in the future rather than the past. This year’s award is given to Senator Pat Vance in acknowledgement of her years of advocacy on behalf of families in Pennsylvania in her roles as State Representative and Senator.

Sen. Patricia H. Vance, a professional nurse, is the only member of the Senate with a medical background. She has been a member of the body since 2005 after serving 14 years in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. In the Senate, she is vice chair of the Aging and Youth Committee, and is a member of the Public Health and Welfare, Finance, Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Community and Economic Development, and Law and Justice committees. She also serves on the Capitol Preservation Committee and Intra-Governmental Council on Long Term Care.

While a member of the House, she authored more than a dozen laws. These laws include creating a HMO bill of rights; prohibiting discrimination against domestic violence victims by insurance companies merely because they were the victims of abuse; expanding of the Commonwealth’s prescription drug program for 100,000 low-income seniors; granting parents the authority to be involved in the drug and alcohol treatment decisions of their minor children; and requiring municipal zoning boards to send written notice to adjacent property owners stating proposed rezoning plans and to notify them of public hearing dates before any zoning changes are made.

Other laws permitted additional health care professionals to conduct and certify medical examinations for handicapped parking license plates and re-evaluate drivers who are required to have medical examinations by PennDOT, and allowed First Class Townships, just like Boroughs and Second Class Townships, to construct fire houses without voter referendum.

Vance continues to be active in her community as a member of several charitable, community and religious organizations, including as a board member of the American Trauma Society, Pennsylvania Division; Caring Place; West Shore YMCA; and Visiting Nurses Association; as a trustee of Harrisburg Area Community College; and as a member of the advisory committee for Domestic Violence Services for Cumberland and Perry Counties.

She also serves on the Holy Spirit Hospital Capital Region Maternal Assistance Committee, Keystones of Public Health Steering Committee and United Cerebral Palsy Advisory Committee, and is a member of St. James Presbyterian Church.