

**SENATOR
DAN LAUGHLIN
49TH DISTRICT**

dlaughlin@pasen.gov
senatorlaughlin.com



**SENATE BOX 203049
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-3049
(717) 787-8927**

**1314 GRISWOLD PLAZA
SUITE 100
ERIE, PA 16501
(814) 453-2515**

Senate of Pennsylvania

January 4, 2017

The Honorable Tom Wolf, Governor
Office of the Governor
508 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Wolf:

Yesterday, I took the oath of office. As one of my very first official acts, I am asking you to reconsider your position against any additional Keystone Opportunity Zones (KOZ) and City Revitalization and Improvement Zones (CRIZ).

Both programs have proven to be critical to the growth and development of properties and communities that would not otherwise be improved, such as many of those which I now represent in Erie County. Keystone Opportunity Zones were originally championed by Erie's Gov. Tom Ridge and have demonstrated success across the state. According to your own Dept. of Community and Economic Development's website, KOZs are responsible for nearly 10,000 jobs and over \$1.5 billion in private capital investment. The website calls the program a "tremendous success."

The CRIZ program has also proven its success. In 2013, when the legislature approved the tax code package including the CRIZ program, 47 senators and 119 representatives supported the bipartisan proposal. Bethlehem and Lancaster are now demonstrating positive results only a few years after receiving their CRIZ designations. In its first year, Lancaster's new CRIZ produced \$3.4 million in benefits for that community. This program could be a game-changer for many third class cities, including Erie.

The CRIZ and the KOZ programs have proven their value. While not every CRIZ or KOZ project is guaranteed success, the sheer volume of success stories, under both Republican and Democratic governors, has demonstrated that these programs should be continued, especially in troubled communities such as Erie.

Since the start of 2016, DCED is authorized to approve two additional CRIZ zones every year. The legislature has done its job with strong bipartisan support for both of these programs throughout the years. You, as the governor, have the sole authority to direct DCED to create these new economic development zones and spur revitalization in communities across the state.

On behalf of the residents of the 49th Senatorial District, please reconsider your position. Erie County needs your help. Please don't let us down.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Laughlin", written over a large, stylized graphic element that resembles a leaf or a signature flourish.

DAN LAUGHLIN
State Senator
49th District