



Spotlight on Spending

Delaware taxpayers will pay more than \$3,374,786 to our 62 legislators in 2009.

Through Freedom of Information Act requests, the Caesar Rodney Institute obtained the check book for the General Assembly including payments made by the House of Representatives, the State Senate, legislative council and the Commission on Interstate Cooperation.

The check book shows \$7,137,084 was spent on reimbursements and other various payments to legislators and General Assembly employees for fiscal years 2007, 2008 and 2009. This amounts to \$1,990,401 for fiscal year 2009, \$2,748,519 for fiscal year 2008 and \$2,398,163 for fiscal year 2007.

Of the over \$7 million total, \$527,539 was reimbursed to legislators. The remaining checks were paid to legislative staff, legislative council staff, and Commission on Interstate Cooperation staff.

Between FY 07 and FY 09, \$2,117,645 was spent on association dues and conference fees for members of the General Assembly and staff.

A total of \$439,415 was spent on “cultural” expenses. An additional \$976,921 was spent on outside lawyers, \$72,327 was spent on subscriptions for magazines, pamphlets and newsletters, and \$71,793 was paid to Verizon Wireless.

In three years, \$188,424 was spent on out-of-state lodging; \$23,426 was spent on out-of-state meals and \$24,912 was spent on “other travel out of state” for legislators and legislative staff.

This totals \$236,762 for travel expenses over three years.

Within Delaware, \$366,491 was spent on in-state mileage over the same period.

Legislator Reimbursements for Out of State Travel, Meals and Mileage (FY 2007 – FY 2009)

Legislator	Amount (\$)	Legislator	Amount (\$)	Legislator	Amount (\$)
Joe Miro	13,372.29	Harris McDowell	3,781.20	Nancy Cook	1,281.93
Helene Keeley	11,826.89	Dave Sokola	3,452.20	Hazel Plant	1,249.10
Dave McBride	11,310.26	John Viola	3,436.63	Bobby Walls	1,172.81
Deborah Hudson	8,544.74	Dennis P. Williams	2,806.86	Valerie Longhurst	905.48
George Carey	7,623.46	Pam Thornburg	2,499.50	Joe Booth	887.29
J. J. Johnson	6,992.67	Bob Gilligan	2,172.46	Terry Schooley	427.36
Liane Sorenson	5,775.31	John Kowalko	1,998.56	Greg Lavelle	316.64
Bill Oberle	5,731.61	Larry Mitchell	1,882.69	Margaret Rose Henry	308.83
Gary Simpson	4,385.88	Donald Blakey	1,875.48	Karen Peterson	15.00
Mike Mulrooney	3,977.33	Pete Schwartzkopf	1,352.66		

Complete reimbursements for all categories are as follows:

Legislator Reimbursements for All Categories (FY 2007 – FY 2009)			
Legislator	Amount (\$)	Legislator	Amount (\$)
Joe Miro	24,226.81	Greg Lavelle	5,537.64
Dave McBride	23,147.41	Pam Thornburg	5,430.79
Helene Keeley	18,462.59	Valerie Longhurst	5,418.65
Deborah Hudson	17,791.74	Nancy Cook	4,750.03
Liane Sorenson	14,302.65	Bryon Short	4,646.00
Bill Oberle	14,021.42	Melanie Marshall	4,571.80
J. J. Johnson	13,158.27	Nick Manolakos	4,502.40
Dennis P. Williams	12,098.86	Richard Cathcart	4,184.02
Dave Sokola	11,715.30	Danny Short	3,931.92
George Carey	11,186.56	Bobby Walls	3,356.81
Harris McDowell	10,084.07	Bethany Hall-Long	3,340.59
Mike Mulrooney	9,381.73	Donald Blakey	2,521.88
Pete Schwartzkopf	8,946.06	Dennis E. Williams	2,160.00
Gary Simpson	8,907.62	John Atkins	2,115.00
Cathy Cloutier	8,846.20	Bobby Outten	2,108.00
John Viola	8,586.83	Bruce Ennis	1,955.60
John Kowalko	8,199.16	Michael Katz	1,568.00
Biff Lee	7,899.36	Tom Kovach	1,248.00
Larry Mitchell	7,834.19	Mike Ramone	1,203.20
Joe Booth	7,653.49	Earl Jaques	1,200.80
Bob Gilligan	7,510.56	Mike Barbieri	1,196.80
Karen Peterson	7,252.34	Quinn Johnson	943.80
Robert Venables	7,193.18	Margaret Rose Henry	922.91
Patty Blevins	6,705.18	William Carson	777.60
Hazel Plant	6,688.02	Colin Bonini	607.57
Dori Connor	6,463.46	Dave Wilson	554.40
Gerald Hocker	6,422.61	Anthony DeLuca	554.12
George Bunting	6,215.66	Brad Bennett	88.80
Robert Marshall	6,057.96	Brian Bushweller	87.04
Terry Schooley	5,781.46	Darryl Scott	66.00
Gerald Brady	5,551.20		

In addition to the legislative check book, the Caesar Rodney Institute analyzed the House of Representatives' credit card payments for fiscal years 2007, 2008 and 2009. The information obtained from the Division of Accounting did not identify for whom each expenditure was specifically made; only how much was spent, by what division of the House, and to which vendor. Credit card payment information was provided for fiscal years 2007-2009 for the House of Representatives, the Commission on Interstate Cooperation, Legislative Council and the Office of the Controller General.

By division of the General Assembly, the following amounts were charged to credit cards.

- The Commission on Interstate Commerce charged \$208,228;

- The House of Representatives charged \$9,048;
- Legislative Council charged \$276,523; and
- The Office of the Controller General charged \$320,764.

In total, \$814,562 was charged over this time period.

Payments to airlines and hotels account for approximately one-eighth of the total credit card expenditures. Over the three year period, \$50,978 was paid to various airlines and \$51,555 was paid to various hotels.

An additional \$31,098 was spent at restaurants; \$2,357 was spent on passenger railways and \$5,875 was paid to various political organizations.

Supplements to Legislative Salary

Payments to legislators for mileage reimbursement, travel and meals are a supplement to each member's annual salary.

Legislators receive a base pay of \$41,681 (down from \$42,750 after the 2.5% pay reduction). In addition, they receive \$7150.65 annually in taxable income that is to be used for communication with constituents. What's more, if a legislator serves in leadership, on one of the budget writing committees or on the Sunset Committee, they are entitled to an increase in pay ranging from \$19,396 for the President Pro Tem of the Senate and Speaker of the House, to \$3,756 for members of the Sunset Committee or Bond Bill Committee.

It doesn't end there. Legislators receive in-state mileage reimbursement on days they attend session. Between fiscal year 2007 and fiscal year 2009, legislators were reimbursed \$317,413 of the \$366,491 paid for in-state mileage.

In 2009, a year in which travel has been reduced, reimbursements to legislators are down compared to previous years. However, taking base pay along with the supplements to salary paints a much clearer picture of legislator compensation, and just how the General Assembly uses its time and our money.

In total, Delaware taxpayers will pay more than \$3,374,786 to our 62 legislators in 2009. This figure only includes reimbursements through June 30, 2009. It does not include health and retirements benefits.

The data raises more questions than answers. Specifically, the credit card payment information only shows which vendor was paid – it does not include the legislator or individual who initiated the request. Initial purchase requests that identify the specific purchases will reveal the complete picture and may change the numbers for how much a specific legislator has expensed using taxpayer dollars.

As the state continues to negotiate its way out of the financial crisis, knowing just how much Delawareans are actually paying legislators, and how money is spent within the halls of our capitol, is important to hold elected officials accountable for their decisions. Expensed items such as mileage reimbursement, travel reimbursement and meal reimbursement are necessary to view a complete picture.

As the General Assembly only recently applied the state's Freedom of Information Act law to itself, Delawareans can now, for the first time, see how the legislative branch is spending taxpayer dollars within Legislative Hall. The inclusion of the General Assembly under FOIA has been a long time coming and is a positive step. Now that the information is available, it is time to review the data and hold our elected officials accountable.

Legislator Compensation (Calendar Year 2009)

LEGISLATOR	REIMBURSED (1/1/09 - 6/30/09)	BASE SALARY	SUPPLEMENT	CONSTITUENT SUPPLEMENT	TOTAL COMPENSATION
Darryl Scott	66.00	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	48,896.65
Donald Blakey	144.00	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	48,974.65
William Carson	355.20	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	49,185.85
Bobby Outten	496.00	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	49,326.65
Dave Wilson	554.40	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	49,385.05
Bobby Walls	608.00	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	49,438.65
Greg Lavelle	836.00	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	49,666.65
Bethany Hall-Long	836.59	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	49,667.24
Quinn Johnson	943.80	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	49,774.45
Nick Manolakos	1,058.40	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	49,889.05
George Bunting	1,060.80	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	49,891.45
Karen Peterson	1,089.60	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	49,920.25
Robert Marshall	1,142.40	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	49,973.05
Mike Barbieri	1,196.80	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	50,027.45
Earl Jaques	1,200.80	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	50,031.45
Mike Ramone	1,203.20	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	50,033.85
Tom Kovach	1,248.00	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	50,078.65
Deborah Hudson	1,264.80	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	50,095.45
Hazel Plant	1,382.40	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	50,213.05
Gerald Hocker	1,460.40	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	50,291.05
Joe Booth	1,497.60	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	50,328.25
Bryon Short	1,518.00	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	50,348.65
Gerald Brady	1,554.00	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	50,384.65
Dennis E. Williams	2,160.00	41,680.00	0	7,150.65	50,990.65
Brian Bushweller	87.04	41,680.00	3,756.00	7,150.65	52,673.69
Brad Bennett	88.80	41,680.00	3,756.00	7,150.65	52,675.45
Colin Bonini	137.76	41,680.00	3,756.00	7,150.65	52,724.41
George Carey	682.00	41,680.00	3,756.00	7,150.65	53,268.65
Terry Schooley	1,240.80	41,680.00	3,756.00	7,150.65	53,827.45
John Atkins	1,260.00	41,680.00	3,756.00	7,150.65	53,846.65
Mike Mulrooney	1,296.00	41,680.00	3,756.00	7,150.65	53,882.65
Biff Lee	1,556.00	41,680.00	3,756.00	7,150.65	54,142.65
Michael Katz	1,568.00	41,680.00	3,756.00	7,150.65	54,154.65
Bill Oberle	1,710.53	41,680.00	3,756.00	7,150.65	54,297.18
Dave Sokola	1,320.00	41,680.00	4,464.00	7,150.65	54,614.65
John Viola	2,103.37	41,680.00	3,756.00	7,150.65	54,690.02
Robert Venables	1,436.40	41,680.00	4,464.00	7,150.65	54,731.05
John Kowalko	1,744.00	41,680.00	4,464.00	7,150.65	55,038.65
Helene Keeley	3,471.57	41,680.00	4,464.00	7,150.65	56,766.22
Danny Short	883.92	41,680.00	7,599.00	7,150.65	57,313.57
Valerie Longhurst	1,440.00	41,680.00	7,599.00	7,150.65	57,869.65

LEGISLATOR	REIMBURSED (1/1/09 - 6/30/09)	BASE SALARY	SUPPLEMENT	CONSTITUENT SUPPLEMENT	TOTAL COMPENSATION
Margaret Rose Henry	1,967.53	41,680.00	7,599.00	7,150.65	58,397.18
Bruce Ennis	526.32	41,680.00	9,385.00	7,150.65	58,741.97
Melanie Marshall	1,560.00	41,680.00	9,385.00	7,150.65	59,775.65
Cathy Cloutier	1,672.00	41,680.00	9,385.00	7,150.65	59,887.65
Dave McBride	1,686.91	41,680.00	9,385.00	7,150.65	59,902.56
Larry Mitchell	2,240.00	41,680.00	9,385.00	7,150.65	60,455.65
Joe Miro	2,519.92	41,680.00	9,385.00	7,150.65	60,735.57
J. J. Johnson	2,565.47	41,680.00	9,385.00	7,150.65	60,781.12
Richard Cathcart	719.20	41,680.00	12,067.00	7,150.65	61,616.85
Liane Sorenson	1,766.00	41,680.00	11,355.00	7,150.65	61,951.65
Pam Thornburg	224.00	41,680.00	13,141.00	7,150.65	62,195.65
Dennis P. Williams	2,304.00	41,680.00	11,173.00	7,150.65	62,307.65
Pete Schwartzkopf	1,654.40	41,680.00	12,067.00	7,150.65	62,552.05
Harris McDowell	1,254.88	41,680.00	13,141.00	7,150.65	63,226.53
Dori Connor	1,728.00	41,680.00	13,141.00	7,150.65	63,699.65
Nancy Cook	588.00	41,680.00	14,929.00	7,150.65	64,347.65
Gary Simpson	1,027.40	41,680.00	15,823.00	7,150.65	65,681.05
Patty Blevins	1,396.42	41,680.00	15,823.00	7,150.65	66,050.07
Anthony DeLuca	1,090.40	41,680.00	19,396.00	7,150.65	69,317.05
Bob Gilligan	1,545.60	41,680.00	19,396.00	7,150.65	69,772.25

* The chart does not take benefits such as health insurance, dental insurance and pension into account.

Full Transparency

While the state has recently launched its own spending website, it lacks payroll information and data on the legislative and judicial branches of government. It is with the goal of putting all spending online, for every Delawarean to see, that the Caesar Rodney Institute has published all state spending, county spending and school district spending at DelawareSpends.com.

Though a FOIA request to the Senate was issued at the same time as the request was sent to the House, no information has yet been provided by the upper chamber of the General Assembly. As such, the Senate data is likely only a partial picture of the Senate's check book. No information was provided for the Senate's credit card expenditures.

The Caesar Rodney Institute is a 501(c)(3) non-partisan research and educational organization and is committed to being a catalyst for improved performance, accountability, and efficiency in Delaware government.

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