

Letter to the editor(s) – Lancaster Intelligencer Journal/New Era

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Campaign pledges ought to count

Lancaster County certainly has its elected officials who make pre-election pledges. There is Rep. Joe Pitts who years ago pledged to only serve a limited amount of terms in Congress. But he forgot about that after he was elected, and is still there.

Rep. Tom Creighton is living up to one of his pledges. He will not run for a seventh term. But he also made a pre-election pledge to turn down a legislative pension if he served long enough to become eligible for one. He has now changed his mind and declines to give a reason for his change of heart.

A pledge is defined as a solemn promise or agreement to do or refrain from doing something. I guess campaign pledges do not fit into this category.

In fact, a campaign pledge should be defined as any promise made by a candidate for public office that they feel will help them get elected.

Legislators are certainly entitled to draw pensions if they qualify. The rub is when they pledge not to take the pension, and then do it after they are ready to retire.

I urge the Pennsylvania Legislature to enact a law that would bind those running for public office when they make a pledge involving term limits or pensions, that it be in the form of a written contract that would be enforceable -- and if the person making the pledge refuses to sign it then we, the people, would know that the candidate really does not mean what he says.

Carl Harnish, Manor Township