



Update on Partners

U.S. Senator Arlen Specter Discusses Preservation and Faith-based Issues with Partners Audience

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PHOTO BY KATYA HELD

Senator Arlen Specter invites Bob Jaeger to kick off the town hall meeting.

United States Senator Arlen Specter conducted a town hall meeting in Philadelphia Monday, October 1, teaming with Partners and Arch Street United Methodist Church to highlight the public sector's role in helping community-serving faith-based organizations.

Specter, the senior senator from Pennsylvania, addressed the room for about ten minutes before taking questions. His comments addressed the preservation of historic religious buildings and their importance to social service programs. Citing examples like the "Save America's Treasures" program that protects sacred buildings, he noted the federal government's support for community and faith-based social agencies.

Attracting an interfaith audience of approximately 150, the afternoon event was hosted by Arch Street United Methodist Church, recipient of a \$100,000 grant from Partners' Philadelphia Regional Fund for Sacred Places. University of Pennsylvania professor and author Ram Cnaan attended the meeting, as well as Department of Health and Human Services Regional Director Gordon Woodrow, and many other influential community partners.

Neighborhood Interfaith Movement's Rabbi George Stern addresses the Senator.



PHOTO BY KATYA HELD

Partners Executive Director Bob Jaeger, Arch Street UMC Senior Pastor Robin Hynicka, and Eastern Pennsylvania Conference Bishop Marcus Matthews shared the podium with Senator Specter. The Rev. Hynicka opened the event with a welcome and an acknowledgement of Partners' role, "Partners for Sacred Places provides stellar technical assistance to those of us, both secular and spiritual, who seek to live the mandate, 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.'"

Following his planned remarks, Specter fielded about 20 questions from the audience, varying from federal funding possibilities for religious buildings to technical questions for grant applications. The senator answered all queries and indicated that his office would follow up with those who had questions regarding community-serving faith-based organizations.



PHOTO COURTESY OF RAY TORRES

Partners' Elizabeth Terry, Bishop Marcus Matthews, and First United Methodist Church of Germantown's Anne Ewing reflecting at the town hall.