

February 6, 2024

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SESSION STATUS

At 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, the Joint Session adjourned.

At 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, the House stands adjourned until Monday, March 18, 2024, at 12:00 p.m., unless sooner recalled by the Speaker.

At 12:19 p.m. on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, the Senate stands in recess until 11:00 a.m. Wednesday, February 7, 2024, unless sooner recalled by the President Pro Tempore.

UPCOMING SESSION DAYS

House

March 18-20, 25-27
April 8-10, 15-17, 29, 30
May 1, 6-8, 20-22
June 3-5, 10-12, 17-18, 24-28

Senate

Feb. 7
March 18-20
April 8-19, 29-30
May 1, 6-8
June 3-5, 10-12, 24-30

Press Conferences

PLS coverage of Capitol events including press conferences, bill signings and media availabilities

GOV. SHAPIRO PRESENTS SECOND ANNUAL BUDGET ADDRESS

By Zoe Buchmann, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | February 6, 2024

Gov. Josh Shapiro presented his budget address for 2024-2025 before the General Assembly in the Main Capitol Rotunda today.

Gov. Shapiro thanked Lt. Gov. Austin Davis, House Speaker Joanna McClinton (D-Philadelphia), President Pro Tempore Kim Ward (R-Westmoreland) and the Republican and Democratic leadership in the House and Senate for convening the special session and for the opportunity to present his address. He noted that Rep. Joe Kerwin (R-Dauphin) is currently on deployment with the Pennsylvania National Guard and extended his gratitude to all service members of the Pennsylvania National Guard for their “service to our commonwealth and to our country.” He asserted, “You are the very best of us.”

Gov. Shapiro recognized his wife Lori Shapiro, his senior staff and cabinet, the Department of General Services (DGS) and the Commonwealth Media Services (CMS), thanking them for their work and commitment.

Gov. Shapiro indicated that he is the first governor in Pennsylvania to deliver a budget address in the Capitol Rotunda within the past 118 years. He described the ceiling art, alluding to William Penn, who wrote the words as his dream “of a place where people of all religions, all backgrounds could live together in peace.” He continued that Penn had a vision for the state “of a commonwealth that would welcome people of all backgrounds, a commonwealth where the government is responsive to the needs of the people— and words to get stuff done.”

“I am mindful that we are all part of that lineage,” Gov. Shapiro said, emphasizing that he is looking to “doing our part.”

Gov. Shapiro explained that Pennsylvania is the only state with a divided legislature, stating, “That means nothing gets done unless it has support from members of both parties,” and emphasizing the need for compromise and bipartisanship. He continued that they have learned to work together to deliver commonsense solutions, which he addressed last year. He listed the accomplishments of last year. “Children are now learning on full bellies, there are more cops on the beat, and we trained an additional 6,000 apprentices last year,” he said. He added that they have helped poultry farmers, made Pennsylvania more attractive to businesses and cut costs for seniors and working families, stating, “Here in Pennsylvania, we get stuff done. Together.”

Gov. Shapiro reported that one year after taking office, Pennsylvania is on “strong financial footing,” and that due to sound fiscal management, all three major credit rating agencies improved the outlook and gave Pennsylvania an upgrade. As a result, he indicated, taxpayers are saving nearly \$100 million that otherwise would have gone to bigger banks and investment firms as a result of higher interest rates. He added, “Those savings are on top of the nearly \$14 billion surplus available to us at the end of the fiscal year.” He reaffirmed that this year’s budget does not include a tax increase and continues to cut taxes. But, he argued, “Now is the time to invest some of that \$14 billion surplus squirreled away in Harrisburg.” He agreed that the state needs to be prepared for emergencies and a rainy day but stated that his budget does that. He emphasized, “We need to build a more competitive Pennsylvania that starts in our classrooms, runs through our union halls and our small businesses, through our farmlands and our high rises, our college campuses and leads to a life of opportunity and a retirement with dignity.”

Gov. Shapiro recounted past investments in students and teachers, citing the largest single-year increase in basic education funding in Pennsylvania, the universal free breakfast program, \$100 million to put more mental health resources in schools and \$175 million for repairs in school buildings as examples of what has been done, but what needs to continue to be done. He stated that the court has ruled that the state needs a constitutional, comprehensive solution to guarantee every student the thorough and efficient education they are entitled to. "So, let us build on the work we have already done together," he said. He recounted the Basic Education Funding Commission's hearings and the report detailing a path forward to deliver a comprehensive solution to K-12 education in Pennsylvania. He reported that his budget invests \$1.1 billion in new funding this year for schools and makes sure no school gets less than it did last year. He continued that \$900 million of that will be invested to support school children under a new adequacy formula and that the budget increases special education funding by \$50 million and invests \$30 million in Pre-K programs to help recruit and retain teachers. He added that the budget includes funds for the universal free breakfast during the school year and for the summer food service program, building on last year's work. He indicated that the budget also includes funding for more student mental health programs and builds on the down payment made last year to fund school repairs. He cited the Scranton School District and the Panther Valley School District to underscore the importance of addressing the need to repair school buildings. He stated, "So my budget builds on this progress we have made, setting aside \$1.5 billion, including \$300 million this year alone, to make our schools healthy and safe."

Gov. Shapiro addressed the teacher shortage, highlighting the need to repair the pipeline for student teachers, which is why the budget proposes additional investments in student teachers and talent recruitment. He discussed conversations with teachers to stress that they have to address misinformation children are finding online and bringing into the classroom. He said, "Our children are being fed half-truths, prejudices and propaganda nearly every day on their phones and social media." He continued, "I do not care whether our kids take a position on the left or on the right... but I do care that they are able to discern fact from fiction." To address this, he indicated that he directed the Department of Education (PDE) to develop a toolkit for teachers and parents on digital literacy and critical thinking, as well as signed a bill into law that requires schools to teach financial literacy. He argued, "We also need to update antiquated state laws that cost our school districts too much money," and named the Charter School Law as an example. He explained that cyber schools get the same funding as brick and mortar schools, but that it varies across the districts. He called for bipartisan consensus to create a uniform rate that reflects what it costs to send a kid to a cyber charter school. He reported that if they set the rate at \$8,000 per student, it will level the playing field and will return \$262 million back to public schools.

Gov. Shapiro encouraged, "Let us not shy away from the many difficult conversations around education. Let us stay at it." He emphasized that they need to make sure students have the freedom to choose their own course and determine their steps in life, celebrating and respecting all trades. He stated that his executive order announced 92 percent of commonwealth jobs do not require a college degree, remarking, "Together we have made record investments in vo-tech, apprenticeship programs and on-the-job training." He named another executive order that created a first-in-the-nation initiative to train as many as 10,000 new workers in Pennsylvania over the next five years. He indicated that these investments are included in the budget again "because what we did last year is working." He reported that he is creating a new Career Connect program to connect employers with people and create thousands of internships over the next 10 years but reminded that all paths need to be respected and supported.

Gov. Shapiro revisited last year's address where he declared the higher education system to be broken, leading to both sides of the aisle standing up in support. But, he said, "What we are doing is not working," and continued that after 30 years of disinvestments, Pennsylvania now ranks 49th for state investment in higher education and 48th in higher education affordability. He cited decreasing enrollment rates and argued that they need to focus on building a world-class system of higher education that does not look to subtract resources, services and access. He presented his blueprint for higher education, supported by higher education leaders from all sectors and communities. He explained that first, they will build a new system for higher education that unites Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) schools and the 15 community colleges, preserving local leadership while ensuring that everyone is moving in the same direction. He proposed an investment of \$975 million in PASSHE universities and community colleges, a 15 percent increase from last year. Second, he stated, they need to fix the way the state funds the state-related universities, "for too long we have underfunded them and subjected them to political games." He proposed that the state fund these schools through PDE with a simple majority vote and "that we no longer write them blank checks." He continued that the approach should begin with an increase of five percent in their funding this year while creating a predictable, transparent, outcomes-based funding system that will apply to schools in the new system and the state-related schools. This system, he argued, will incentivize outcomes that benefit all Pennsylvanians, such as "increasing the number of first-generation college students enrolled, ensuring more students stay here after graduation and go into the fields we need... all while ensuring that there is transparency and increasing accountability for our tax dollars." The third aspect of the plan, he stated, is to invest another \$279 million next year directly into offsetting costs for students, as under his plan. He said, "No student or family making the median income or below will have to pay more than \$1,000 per semester for tuition and fees in this new system." He added that if the investments outlined in his plan were made, Pennsylvania would jump from 49th in the nation to 22nd in five years. He argued that if they can provide students with paths and educational excellence, the state can build an economy that is a leader in economic development, innovation and job creation.

Gov. Shapiro reiterated, "Pennsylvania is open for business," and stated that as a result of direct engagement, the state secures more than \$1.2 billion in private sector investment. He reported that EMD Electronics is putting \$300 million into Schuylkill County and is building the largest specialty gas facility in the world. He continued that Purlotile is investing \$190 million in Chester County to create their first U.S.-based manufacturing line for biotech and pharmaceutical products and Excelitas is relocating to Pittsburgh from Massachusetts. He stated that they have sped up government, cut down processing times, eliminated backlogs and removed red tape, issuing 249,000 of the same type of business license for companies across the state. He referred to his comprehensive economic development strategy, which focuses on five sectors where the state is poised to compete and win: agriculture, energy, life sciences, manufacturing, robotics and technology. He stressed that Pennsylvania needs to catch up and compete with the neighboring states of New York, Ohio and New Jersey, which is why the investment last year into the pilot program for site development through the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) is crucial and is why he proposed a new investment that will bond \$500 million to develop sites. He continued, "I know there are bills to pass and work to do to combat climate change, but one of the most impotent things we can do right now is invest in our clean energy economy and the jobs it supports." He argued that his economic development will do that and will help businesses succeed in Pennsylvania. He proposed investing \$25 million in the new Main Street Matters initiative, building off the keystone communities' program to support small businesses, downtowns and main streets across the state. At the same time, he said, they will launch the Pennsylvania Regional Competitiveness Challenge to incentivize regional planning, which is what mayors and county commissioners from both parties have been asking for.

Gov. Shapiro explained that last year, they decoupled state police funding and infrastructure funding, which made an additional \$125 million available for road and bridge repairs. This year, he announced his budget includes another \$125 million to do more to ensure roads are safe and well-maintained. He emphasized the importance of public transportation and proposed \$1.5 billion over the next five years for the transit system across Pennsylvania. He explained that he has been working with SEPTA for months to address the unique challenges and come up with a solution, addressing concerns about cleanliness and safety. He reported that SEPTA has presented plans to address those issues and that county officials have entertained a willingness to increase their financial support. He added that his administration also proposed investing \$161 million in SEPTA, bringing the total state funding to \$1 billion. He promised that if his proposal is adopted, SEPTA will not cut service or raise fares and that they will have a concrete plan for a cleaner, safer public transit system that creates economic opportunity in southeastern Pennsylvania.

Gov. Shapiro emphasized that he is focused on all communities in the state and promoting economic success in all of them. He recounted his trips through the rural communities and farmlands, citing "nearly 600,000 of our fellow Pennsylvanians work in agriculture and agriculture contributes \$132 billion to our state's economy— to ignore that is not just disrespectful to our farmers, it does not make sense economically." He stated that he wants to help more farmers upgrade their equipment and take advantage of the latest technology through the Agriculture Innovation funding. He reported that the budget is also an investment in animal health and disease prevention by funding a new state animal testing laboratory in western Pennsylvania, which closed the gap to help protect herds, flocks and farms.

Gov. Shapiro stated that the economic development plan "also gives everyone a shot at economic opportunity, no matter what you look like or where you come from." He stressed that they have to ensure that there is opportunity for everyone to participate in the economy and build generational wealth. He added that he signed an executive order to help those businesses work with the government and reported progress being made. But, he argued, to create these kinds of opportunities, "Pennsylvanians need to earn a decent wage," and called for the increase of the minimum wage to \$15 an hour. He argued, "It is anti-competitive, and it is hurting our workers," and that raising the minimum wage "is going to make us more competitive, and it is going to create economic opportunity." He noted that the House passed a bill to raise the minimum wage and that he is encouraged to see comments of leaders in the Senate that show their willingness to discuss this issue. He called to "get this done."

Gov. Shapiro stated that Pennsylvania is also falling behind in benefitting from the legalized recreational marijuana market, as implemented in Ohio, New York, New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland. He argued that the state is losing out on an industry that would bring in more than \$250 million in annual revenue, "and our failure to legalize and regulate this only fuels the black market and drains much-needed resources for law enforcement." He asked the General Assembly to come together and send a bill to his desk that legalizes marijuana but cautioned that the bill should ensure the industry is regulated and taxed responsibly, as well as creates jobs and expunges the record of individuals convicted for nonviolent possession of small amounts of marijuana.

Gov. Shapiro explained that while the state is taking steps to be more competitive, it also needs to be mindful to cut costs for the residents. He stated that expanding the childcare tax credit was a step forward last year to cut costs, as 210,000 families will get "hundreds more dollars back to help pay for childcare." In addition, he said, they also delivered the "largest targeted tax cut for our seniors in nearly two decades by expanding the Property Tax Rent Rebate." He argued that they can do more to help Pennsylvanians stay in their homes, citing an example of an elderly woman having to use her oven to heat her home, to underscore the fact that demand for the program is there and that it has created waitlists in most counties.

He proposed investing another \$50 million in Whole Home Repairs to help struggling homeowners and address the high demand. He continued that housing also needs to be more affordable and stated that his budget includes an increase in the cap for the Housing Trust Fund to \$100 million over the next four years.

Gov. Shapiro addressed the cost of healthcare, stating that people are getting hurt by the high cost of health insurance and that his budget invests \$50 million to allow people to keep working and purchase health insurance. He explained that this investment will also help lower premiums for an additional 400,000 Pennsylvanians “because if we do nothing, these folks will be priced out of health insurance and when we have folds who are uninsured, it only drives up the cost of health care for all of us.” He added that people are also facing difficulties with the high cost of prescription drugs and called to reform the Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBM) through further legislation. He argued that they also need to address medical debt and proposed investing \$4 million. He said, “We can start wiping our medical debt for Pennsylvanians and give them the chance to succeed financially.” He added that this issue disproportionately affects rural communities at the same time as they face a rural health care crisis. He reported that in the past 20 years, 33 rural hospitals have either reduced services or closed completely. He stated that he expects to come back in the next several months with a plan to address this crisis “because as we cut costs of health care, we also need to make sure it is available and accessible for everyone.” He recognized a mother, Cindy, from Lancaster County, whose son requires 24/7 support, something she has not been able to find because the state does not pay direct support professionals enough. Instead, he said, “Cindy, a 60-year-old single mother who has battled her own health challenges that have limited her ability to care for Matthew, is forced to provide care herself.” He continued, “You have all heard from people like Cindy, Matthew and Judy. They have walked these halls, They have rolled their wheelchairs into your offices year after year to ask you to step up and health and yet nothing has changed.” He explained that his budget invests \$216 million, which will allow the state to draw down another \$266 million in federal dollars, to provide more resources for home and community-based service providers.

Gov. Shapiro called for ensuring that the budget is a “statement of values, of principles, of our commitment to our fellow Pennsylvanians,” which is why it invests in Early Intervention and childcare because “our kids deserve the support they need to grow and develop before they enter school.” He continued that the budget raises Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits for low-income families and addresses the lack of feminine hygiene products at home and school. He said, “This budget makes feminine hygiene products available at no cost in our schools because girls deserve to have peace of mind so they can focus on learning.” He reported that the budget also increases support for health care providers that provide high-quality family planning tools and reproductive health care services “because women and girls deserve to make their own choices about their own bodies.” He stressed that they also need to “double down” on the work to prevent maternal mortality, especially among black mothers. “This budget does that, fulfilling a commitment I made to the Black Maternal Health Caucus and a priority for our commonwealth’s second lady, and a new mom, Blayre Holmes Davis,” he asserted.

Gov. Shapiro reported that the budget invests more in Triple As to deliver more services, gives caregivers more tools to support an aging loved one and establishes an Alzheimer’s Disease Division at the Department of Aging to support families dealing with that disease. These investments, he explained are part of the Master Plan on Aging, as nearly one in four Pennsylvanians is a senior. He stated that the budget is a “statement of our values,” and emphasized the importance of addressing mental health needs. He cited a \$100 million investment in student mental health and the \$20 million for county mental health support, explaining that this budget matches those investments and increases the support for county-level mental health services, investing to keep the 988 hotlines in operation and supporting walk-in mental health crisis centers.

Gov. Shapiro stressed, “We need to finally do right by survivors of sexual abuse and give them the chance to confront their abusers in court after decades of injustice.” He added that Pennsylvania should be an open place for all, noting that the state was the leader in LGBTQ rights in 1974, but has fallen behind since. He called out the Senate, encouraging them to honor “our legacy of tolerance” and pass the Fairness Act to get it to his desk. He added that they should also work together to implement commonsense reforms that make the system fairer and more just for everyone, expanding on the Clean Slate and probation reform.

Gov. Shapiro indicated that before he was governor, Pennsylvania was only one of two states that did not provide any state funding for public defenders, last year “we came together to lose that shameful distinction and delivered \$7.5 million for poor defendants.” He stated that his budget invests another \$10 million in public defenders. He continued that criminal defenders are not the only ones in need of legal help, therefore, he stated, the budget includes an increase of 50 percent in state funding for the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network to assist Pennsylvanians facing eviction. He argued that the Eviction Diversion Program in Philadelphia should be used and expanded too statewide.

Gov. Shapiro addressed the impact of gun violence, recognizing Meredith Elizalde, whose son, Nicolas, was shot after a football game. He stated that she has been a powerful advocate and testified before the House Judiciary Committee for laws that might have saved her son’s life. He stated, “With gun violence at unacceptable levels in our communities, it is long past time for us to take real action.”

He alluded to Lt. Gov. Davis's work and announced that they will fund a statewide Office of Gun Violence and invest another \$100 million to address gun violence in Pennsylvania. He added that they will also increase nonprofit security grants for places like mosques, churches and synagogues and will give local law enforcement agencies and district attorneys' offices more resources to investigate and prosecute gun-related crimes. He stressed that they cannot stop there, pointing to passing the first significant gun reform legislation in 20 years. He challenged, "Why the hell are we okay with loopholes on background checks that allow criminals to get their hands on guns? Just close the loopholes." He continued, "You all like to talk a big game about law and order, so let us strengthen our laws and bring about more order." He noted that the House passed a package of bills to do that in a bipartisan manner and called on the Senate to do the same. He added that they need to support law enforcement and support those who take service and invest in them.

Gov. Shapiro discussed last year's investment in first responders and stated that this year's budget expands on that work by doubling the investment in the State Fire Commissioner's Fire and EMS Grant Program. He recounted his visits with ambulance services across the state to underscore the importance of providing them with the assistance and support they need to do their important job. He added that his budget will ensure that all first responders are well-staffed, well-funded and well-equipped.

Gov. Shapiro said that he laid out a comprehensive and aggressive budget focused on building safer communities, becoming more competitive and investing in students and their success. He acknowledged, "I know that is a bold vision, and some will reflexively be opposed, saying 'we cannot afford that,' but I would like to argue we cannot afford not to invest right now." He reiterated that the state has a \$14 billion surplus and is facing real challenges in education and with the workforce "that will hold us back in the future if we do not take action now." He continued, "No one here should be okay with an unconstitutional education system for our kids or the status quo on higher education, where we rank 49th in the nation in state investment." He added, "We need to step up for those who are most vulnerable in our system and show them that we give a damn. We need to get more stuff done together for Pennsylvanians." He emphasized that his budget is balanced, does not raise taxes and, "even if we funded every single one of these initiatives I talked about today and contained in my budget, we would still have an \$11 billion surplus at the end of June 2025." He encouraged them to take inspiration from the murals in the Rotunda, reminding them of the history, of an era when the state "fueled the industrial revolution, lifting people out of poverty, powering the middle class and creating the American labor movement." He added that he wants children to be hopeful of their future.

"When I walk these halls and see these depictions of our past, I cannot help but feel optimistic about our future," Gov. Shapiro remarked. "A future we will build together, staying true to the words and creed of Penn as we work to do what is truly wise and just."



SENATE REPUBLICANS DELIVER REMARKS ON GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS

By Derek Danneker, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | February 6, 2024

Senate Republicans held a press conference in the majority caucus room following Gov. Josh Shapiro's budget address today.

Senate President Pro Tempore Kim Ward (R-Westmoreland) noted the General Assembly heard from a "very liberal-minded" governor, who covered spending in many realms without accountability. She detailed Gov. Shapiro did not explain how the state would pay for those initiatives. She said the governor did not address issues that are affecting families, such as increased costs for food, gas and utilities. Sen. Ward said the governor could solve some of those issues by stopping his appeal to join Pennsylvania with the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). She added the governor did not address "the strangling regulations" that are causing the state to lose businesses. She noted the state recently lost a steel plant because of permitting. Sen. Ward said the budget was one of "unicorns and rainbows without any real explanation of how we're going to implement it."

Senate Majority Leader Joe Pittman (R-Indiana) said much of what the governor put forward "doesn't comport" with the vision of Senate Republicans. "What he has put forward here is absolutely fiscally irresponsible and unsustainable," he said. Sen. Pittman added that if the governor intends to eliminate the rainy day fund, it should be returned to the taxpayers in the form of a tax cut. He said the caucus will work to come to a consensus with the governor, but they will not compromise on their principles. Sen. Pittman remarked that the best way to improve the state is through creating family-sustaining jobs at the "maximum wage," which will allow people to fix their homes and send their children to good schools. He stated the caucus is focused on empowering parents to make decisions for their children and keeping a low tax burden.

Sen. Pittman noted that Gov. Shapiro said he is tired of being beaten by Ohio, but Ohio is ahead because their Republican leadership has established “pro-growth” policies. “That’s what we’re all about, and that’s what we’ll continue to do,” he said.

Sen. Scott Martin (R-Lancaster), majority chairman, Senate Appropriation Committee, said his “jaw dropped” when Gov. Shapiro took credit for the financial responsibility that Republicans have worked towards and detailed how he plans to deplete the rainy day fund. “That’s hypocrisy in my mind, you can’t have your cake and eat it too,” he said. Sen. Martin said the governor’s plan would accelerate a “black hole” of debt. He commented that stabilizing the commonwealth’s finances puts the state in a better position to have more and different types of opportunities. He explained that if the Senate were to pass the governor’s proposal, which calls for \$48.3 billion expenditure, it would leave the state with a \$3 billion “budget hole” in the next fiscal year and \$10 billion in the next three years. “There’s not enough money in its rainy day fund to keep up with the level of spending that he wants to take us,” he said. Sen. Martin said the governor’s office is attempting to mask its spending proposal with revenue projections. He explained that the threats of RGGI cause investors to look to other states and those individuals who lose their jobs do not want to “be trained to squeegee solar panels.” Rather, Sen. Martin said those individuals will move to where the jobs are located. “The numbers that we have seen and that we’ve been pulling apart since last night will add up to a real fiscal problem for this commonwealth and it will leave us with no money in the years to come,” he said.

The press conference opened to questions from the media.

What do you think of Gov. Shapiro’s plan for education?

Sen. Martin explained his administration voted in favor of the Basic Education Funding Commission (BEFC) plan, which would slowly increase education funding by \$100 million each year. “That tells me there’s a recognition of the financial challenges of this budget,” he said. Sen. Martin questioned the accountability for failing school districts and suggested that children should go somewhere that will put them on a career path.

How will the governor pay for his plan?

Sen. Martin explained the governor is combining the state’s rainy day fund, which is at about \$6.2 billion, and the remaining fund balance. He pointed out that some federal supplemental support ended on Dec. 31, 2023. He added that other “huge ticket items,” such as transfers from the motor license fund to move state police funding, the Corporate Net Income (CNI) tax and others will need to be examined. “That \$3 billion hole that I referenced to you... which is much more accurate than the numbers that the governor is using, that’s completed, it’s gone,” he said.

What do you think about the governor’s plan to regulate games of skill?

Sen. Pittman said that “there is some belief” it’s time to regulate games of skill, noting a recent Commonwealth Court decision. He questioned how the governor will propose to legalize adult-use marijuana. He reiterated that his caucus is focused on “maximum wage” jobs rather than increasing the minimum wage. Sen. Pittman said his caucus has some interest in compromising on the minimum wage. He questioned if the governor has a sincere interest in raising the minimum wage, or if he is playing political games.

Could you clarify how you believe Senate Republicans could compromise on the minimum wage?

Sen. Pittman said he thinks his caucus can reach a deal on minimum wage and noted that the caucus has other initiatives such as permitting reform, tax reform and a reduction in CNI tax. He noted that the Independent Fiscal Office (IFO) has reported that 60 percent of any minimum wage increase automatically goes into the costs for goods and services. He added that non-profit organizations such as the YMCA, which utilize college students for part-time work at minimum wage, would need to increase the cost of their services.

How does the Republican Caucus feel about legalizing adult-use marijuana?

Sen. Pittman said the caucus has a wide range of opinions, but he feels that it is something the federal government needs to address. He added the caucus needs to come to an understanding about how much of a priority the issue is for the governor.

How do you feel about the governor’s plan to redevelop state institutions of higher education?

Sen. Pittman said he believes there is an honest conversation to be had regarding the delivery of higher education. He explained that declining enrolments indicate the state is “buying an airplane with empty seats and we need to fill those seats.” He suggested the commonwealth look at attracting students from other states. “I’m not sure how merging two entities with declining enrollments makes them more sustainable and efficient,” he said.

Sen. Martin noted that local community colleges have concerns over creating a bigger system that could potentially shift resources away from them. He explained that many states are “poaching our kids” with state merit scholarships. Sen. Martin explained the legislature has previously been focused on keeping in-state tuition low, but Pennsylvania must now work to attract more students. “I can’t say we all agree with different components of his plans, but we do need to change things — the status quo isn’t working,” he said.

Sen. Ward noted there is a 35 percent deficit in bedside nurses and there has been a bill to reduce tuition for those students.

Are Senate Republicans willing to increase funding for basic education?

Sen. Pitman suggested the state should move away from “the numbers.” He stated the Commonwealth Court ruling explained that providing education opportunities to students isn’t just about more money. He lauded BEFC for their work and stated the plan is a “thoughtful proposal about how we can move education in this commonwealth forward.” Sen. Pittman said the state should consider its return on investment for the taxpayers.

Do you believe the budget will be completed on time?

Sen. Pittman replied, “We’ll focus on making sure that we have the right produce at the right time.”



DEMOCRATIC LEGISLATORS OFFER RESPONSE TO GOVERNOR’S BUDGET ADDRESS

By Maggie Foight, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | February 6, 2024

Pennsylvania House and Senate Democratic legislative leadership held a press conference today in response to Gov. Josh Shapiro’s 2024-2025 budget address.

House Speaker Joanna McClinton (D-Philadelphia) thanked the Democratic legislative staff for collaborating with the Department of General Services (DGS) to prepare for the first gubernatorial budget address held in the Capitol Rotunda.

She celebrated the legislature’s accomplishments over the past year, including the expansion of senior property tax rent rebates and the “highest record ever” in public school investment. She admitted there is more work to be done to raise the state’s minimum wage and incite economic growth. She similarly anticipated work to increase access to higher education at cheaper rates.

Speaker McClinton emphasized the legislature is “just getting started” on conversations with leadership, members, stakeholders and departments regarding this year’s budget costs and program descriptions. “No longer will we wait to invest in the future of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, because the future starts right now, today,” she concluded.

House Majority Leader Matt Bradford (D-Montgomery) appreciated Gov. Shapiro for his willingness to identify problems and offer solutions in his budget address. He respected the governor for challenging the legislature to offer its own solutions. He considered Gov. Shapiro’s solutions to be appealing to both Democrats and Republicans, especially for economic growth, higher education and basic education.

He assessed Rep. Jordan Harris’ (D-Philadelphia) responsibilities as chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. He recognized the realities of the commonwealth’s divided government, claiming the House Democratic majority to be a “humble 102.” He identified the need for compromise but affirmed the commonwealth’s prime positioning to invest in the issues Gov. Shapiro touched upon with funding from “record surpluses.” He anticipated bicameral cooperation to “invest in Pennsylvanians.”

Rep. Jordan Harris (D-Philadelphia), majority chairman, House Appropriations Committee, claimed the governor’s proposed budget builds upon the tripled development of the Child and Dependent Tax Care Credit. He emphasized families’ growing refund checks are due to Democrats’ support.

He considered the Commonwealth Court’s mandate upon the legislature to fully fund the public educational system. He argued the governor’s proposed \$1.1 billion for public education addresses inequity. He noted early childhood center employees who struggle to provide for their families. He recognized pre-kindergarten and kindergarten as foundations for academic success.

Rep. Harris asserted the cost of avoiding commonwealth investments is “too great” to be avoided. He claimed the state “can’t afford” to ignore poor public school infrastructure or force Pennsylvanians to take out “tens of thousands of dollars” for state university education. “We can’t afford another year of disinvestment,” he said, appreciating the governor’s significant and targeted investments. He anticipated the budget hearings to be held by the House Appropriations Committee in the coming weeks but reaffirmed the governor’s proposed budget as a framework to benefit Pennsylvanians.

Senate Minority Leader Jay Costa (D-Allegheny) thanked the Democratic House members for welcoming the Democratic Senators to their majority caucus room. He appreciated the House's passage of over 200 bills. "Our job is to get it done," he admitted.

He suggested the commonwealth's annual budget reflects the commonwealth's values. He considered how the governor's budget addresses "wrongs" that have been embedded in the public educational system. He celebrated proposed investments in economic development via the development of new business sites and minimum wage increases. He committed to remaining in session in June until a minimum wage increase is passed by the House, claiming the current \$7.25 standard is an "embarrassment."

Sen. Vincent Hughes (D-Philadelphia), minority chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee, claimed the Democratic party as the "party of hope and opportunity." He addressed Republican concerns the budget is unfinanceable, noting there will be \$11 billion left in surplus following the expenses laid out in the governor's budget. He argued, "We have the money. The question is, do we have the guts to do something with it to invest in the people of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania?" He claimed Republicans offer the same budget address rebuke every year in condemnations of tax increases. He appreciated the governor's boldness in budget attention for higher education, job creation, economic development, housing security, violence prevention, women's health care, community revitalization and bipartisan issues. He urged the legislature to respond in a timely manner to the issues that commonwealth residents care about. He suggested the budget could be passed early if commonwealth residents are prioritized.

He concluded with emphasis upon the Commonwealth Court system to equitably fund public education. He claimed the decision was delivered in 800 pages by a Republican-appointed President Judge of the Commonwealth Court. "Everyone agreed on the concepts and the ideas," he said of the Basic Education Funding Commission (BEFC). He argued the state already has the resources to make every public school in the commonwealth a better school.

Sen. Hughes and Leader Bradford welcomed questions from the media.

The Commonwealth Court decision called for sustained investment in education. The governor's budget proposal included investments that may run out in the future. How do you propose to prepare for such a future?

Leader Bradford explained the legislature budgets one year at a time. He admitted the educational funding targets will differ from year to year but claimed the governor's proposed investments will be a "huge downpayment" to remedy historical funding gaps. He noted neither party in the Commonwealth Court appealed the case. He asserted the need for this year's budget to include bold and equitable investments to lift up the poorest schools whose tax bases have been overtaxed. "These kids, these communities, these taxpayers need this help, this \$1 billion investment immediately," he concluded, arguing the proposed budget first targets schools that are most in need. He claimed a major investment this year is the "right thing to do."

How does the House intend to legalize recreational marijuana, legalize skill games and regulate taxes upon both?

Leader Bradford emphasized the House's "humble" Democratic majority, arguing House Democrats can construct bipartisan and bicameral coalitions. "It isn't always easy, but we can get there," he affirmed. He suggested the state has been on the wrong side of history regarding marijuana legalization and criminalization. He added there is a bipartisan bill in development to address skill games. He committed the House majority to collaborating with the Senate to produce a law that regulates both issues and provides the commonwealth with the revenue to deal with other long-term challenges.

What would you say to those who oppose boldly funding higher education and boldly addressing student loan debt because such efforts may attract young people to move to Pennsylvania for the wrong reasons?

Rep. Harris claimed Pennsylvanians must come first in higher education funding and student loan debt discussions. He emphasized the false hopes fed to young Pennsylvanians and argued the state did not provide them with the appropriate tools to accomplish their dreams. "It is unconscionable that students are having to take out house-size loans to pay for education here in this commonwealth," he criticized. He emphasized the need for young people to come into the state and stay to develop its economy. He agreed to hold conversations regarding those who come to the state and stay for the wrong reasons but affirmed the need to address student loan debt and the stigma plaguing vocational education in the commonwealth.

How will you work across the aisle to accomplish your legislative priorities? How will you address Republican priorities, such as private school vouchers?

Rep. Harris said no conversation regarding educational reform may start until the Commonwealth Court ruling is fully addressed by the legislature. He recognized his caucus leadership's willingness to discuss matters related to educational funding after the court-mandated funding requirements are met. He reiterated the willingness of his "humble majority" to build consensus to benefit all Pennsylvanians but affirmed its refusal to compromise on its principles. He claimed the House Democrats need partners willing to hold significant conversations about what consensus looks like. He hoped for the 2023-2024 budget's passage by June 30 to properly invest in the commonwealth's future and its residents' futures.



HOUSE REPUBLICANS RESPOND TO GOVERNOR SHAPIRO'S BUDGET ADDRESS

By Daniel Sachetta, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | February 6, 2024

House Republicans gathered in the Ryan Office Building Atrium to give their comments on Gov. Josh Shapiro's budget proposal address.

House Minority Leader Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster) spoke about the principles of the House Republican Caucus which has led to the current fiscal status of the commonwealth which "we heard the governor brag about." He stated the importance of making sure the budget respects the taxpayers and leads to a better Pennsylvania. He described Gov. Shapiro's proposal as a "phishing scam" as it looks good on the outside but is ultimately going to hurt the state. He summarized all of the points made in the governor's budget proposal which could "make Pennsylvania competitive again," but cautioned everyone to look past the ideas and focus on the money. He emphasized that the budget proposal will lead to tax increases, including new taxes "created out of thin air" on marijuana legalization and games of skill. He explained the proposal will lead to "overspending and irresponsible decision making" of the surplus and overpromises on too many issues. He stated this budget will lead to future financial ruin which means taking more from residents in a state that is already expensive and unaffordable to live in. He detailed that House Republicans will stick to their principles at the budget table which have benefitted them for many years and allowed them to preserve and expand the surplus and rainy-day fund while keeping the growth of the state government in check. He emphasized the commonwealth's problems can be managed by "new thinking not more spending, balanced by new and future tax increases."

House Minority Appropriations Chairman Seth Grove (R-York) said Gov. Shapiro's proposal was similar to a "child's Christmas list as if the governor went through the far-left progressive playbook and circled as many things as he could." He asserted there is "no sense of reality or adult decision making" which makes the budget unaffordable, irresponsible and misleading. He stated that former governor Tom Wolf "had the fortitude to put forth revenues to actually fund his spending proposal," unlike Gov. Shapiro. He disagreed with Gov. Shapiro that the budgets were a "down payment" as that would require a reduction in subsequent payments which this budget proposal does not. He explained that this budget increases spending of state dollars by 8.4 percent from last year, adding up to an increase of \$3.73 billion. He asserted this budget is unaffordable as it is the highest amount ever spent in the commonwealth's history at \$48.34 billion. He detailed the budget would set Pennsylvania "on the path to bankruptcy" for the governor to advance his political agenda. He talked about the irresponsible way to budget by cutting surpluses in half under the proposed plan which would use \$3.45 billion to pay for recurring expenses. He emphasizes the misleading nature of Gov. Shapiro's address which would make Pennsylvanians think the commonwealth is "bounding in riches" when it is not. He explained the general fund, the general fund surplus and the rainy-day fund should not be used like a "checking account to pay all your bills" as two-thirds of those accounts are one-time dollars. He stated the "gimmicks used to create the appearance of a balanced budget" are completely unrealistic because state funding would not only increase by 2 percent annually over the next four budget cycles. He detailed the reason for providing \$8.94 billion each fiscal year to basic education funding is to "create the facade of a balanced budget over the next four years" which will not happen. He said, "State government is getting bigger under Governor Shapiro" through the creation or expansion of new government programs like \$34 million to update state government websites, \$5 million for a new gun safety office and \$10 million for improvements in the state permitting process. He added safeguarding is getting bigger under Gov. Shapiro. He emphasized House Republicans are "ready and willing to work on a responsible budget" and are open to collaborative approaches to government and budgeting." He asserted if the Governor is open to working with them, he believes a bipartisan budget can be completed by June 30. He stated if the governor sticks to his "unaffordable, irresponsible and misleading budget," he believes there, unfortunately, will be another budget impasse.

House Minority Whip Timothy O'Neal (R-Washington) called Gov. Shapiro's proposal a "pie in the sky budget address, with no specifics on how he plans to accomplish it." He said it sounded like a "future presidential campaign, rather than a realistic legislative proposal." He explained the proposal is a tax-and-spend agenda, bringing California politics to Pennsylvania. He emphasized that tax increases will be coming to Pennsylvania as the independent fiscal office predicted looming deficits as soon as this year. He detailed that the Democrats' only solution to issues facing the commonwealth is releasing a partisan education funding report, an unaffordable budget proposal and "throwing more of your tax dollars into the void." He asserted the proposal would have Democrats spending the state surplus, draining the rainy-day fund and increasing taxes on families across Pennsylvania. He said, "The governor does not want to talk about how we get there, he just wants credit for saying where we should go." He stated the House Democrats could pose a problem in getting a budget to pass on time, referencing the issues that happened last year. He added that the House Republicans will come to the table when Gov. Shapiro and House Democrats are "willing to negotiate in good faith." He emphasized that any budget proposal leading to future tax increases for residents in Pennsylvania is not good enough for House Republicans.

House Minority Policy Committee Chairman Joshua Kail (R-Beaver) recalled some ideas that Gov. Shapiro supported on the campaign trail which he now does not, such as support for school choice, expediting the corporate net income (CNI) tax rate, and that it was not time for the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). He explained in today's proposal he spoke about cutting school choice for parents, adding two new taxes, and proposing an energy tax. He stated the reason the commonwealth is losing jobs to Ohio is because manufacturers must pay 30 percent more in energy costs because of RGGI. He called the governor's proposed permitting reform "nonsense that will not change anything." He detailed a possible reform that could expedite the process which would give stakeholders and investors ups and downs within 30 days, so they do not have to move out of the state. He said that Gov. Shapiro "ran as a Republican and took our initiatives, and now he is governing like a California Democrat." He stated if the governor wants to keep his promises the House Republicans are ready to work and get stuff done for Pennsylvania, but "we are not interested in pushing California in Pennsylvania."

Rep. Cutler opened the floor to the media for questions.

You have spoken about the proposed budget being too much with current savings and surpluses in state government. Do you have a spending number in mind that you would call reasonable for the 2024-25 fiscal year?

Rep. Cutler stated the goals to make sure it is respectful to taxpayers, will leave the state in a better spot, and have the value as close to inflation as possible. He spoke about the difficulties with inflation being out of control under the Biden administration. He referenced Gov. Shapiro's "zero-based budgeting" in Montgomery County, which he would like to see brought to the state level. He said today's proposal was more of an additions list. He explained that starting with zero-based budgeting would allow time to recognize what plans need more investment and which need to be modified or cut entirely if they do not work. He stated when looking at the budget, the number goes up and down but "generally people all agree with what the problems are." He specifically referenced not being as competitive as Ohio and listed policies and situations of why Pennsylvania may not be in the same space as them when it comes to competition. He emphasized the need to talk more about those issues.

Where is the caucus at with increases in education funding?

Rep. Cutler said it was important to look at what the court case says. He stated the Democrats' solution is just more money while the judge specifically said, "The revenues are not only financial, because every child should have an opportunity." He urged that more money should not just be pushed into a bad formula like Gov. Shapiro adding an additional \$200 million to the new formula. He explained the need to look at "what works to teach students today." He talked about the House Republicans at the forefront of reform, passing a bill for school choice which was vetoed by both former governor Wolf and Gov. Shapiro. He stated that Gov. Shapiro and Democrats are taking a holistic approach and not just spending money but spending money equitably.

Is there anything outside of the voucher programs that House Republicans are looking for in education funding?

Rep. Cutler stated the caucus has repeatedly asked what is being obtained from the investments in education because test scores are still not getting better. He detailed some blame for the decrease in test scores on the COVID-19 pandemic which he said is connected to the "bad government decisions" to shutdown and keep students out of schools during the pandemic. He noted that test scores were going down even before the pandemic began. He explained that students and children today learn differently than how others learned in the past, and the education system has not been changed in decades. He spoke about the differences in student's mindsets and the change in attention spans. He stated there is a need for accountability, new outcomes and transparency, which could be reached through tutoring. He talked about the possibility of targeted investments and an understanding that things that may work in one county's school may not work in another county. He referenced the issues of distance from homes to schools which is why some families may choose to send their children to cyber school, to not have a long bus ride. He emphasized the need to see every student learn differently and outcomes need to start being discussed. He highlighted the proposal for higher education as something that could also work for K-12 education.

You are saying a lot about the budget overspending. How does the caucus feel about the revenue streams Gov. Shapiro has proposed, such as marijuana legalization and the skill game tax?

Rep. Cutler stated that recreational marijuana will have the same legal problems that occurred with medical marijuana when it was legalized. He referenced the issues with firearm ownership as the forms include a question about marijuana and illicit drug use. He said until the legalization is addressed on a federal level, he believes it is "disingenuous" to tell Pennsylvania citizens it is legal here but not everywhere else.

Rep. Grove spoke about the revenue streams of half a billion dollars over the next two fiscal years of which half will come from medical or recreational marijuana and the other half from skill games. He explained this does not cover any of the spending proposed by the governor and showed a graph of how this budget proposal will affect taxes. He stated there will be a \$10 billion deficit from 2027 to 2029 which will need to be filled by an income tax increase. He highlighted there would be a 46.3 percent increase in income tax in the future because of this budget proposal. He explained the graph does not cover the Department of Human Services, costs of the courts or any other component of the budget or new initiatives. He emphasized there will come a time for massive tax increases in Pennsylvania.

He spoke about Gov. Shapiro needing to find a way to stretch the dollars at some point if he is looking at reelection in 2026 and the presidential election in 2028. He said he is not confident that the governor can find a way if he locks his budget in. He emphasized the budget proposal as a “Christmas list” once again as there is “an impossibility for it all to be financed.”

Rep. Cutler stated the importance of Gov. Shapiro stating his budget proposal would take the surplus from a total of \$14 billion to \$11 billion. He said a \$3 billion loss “is not sustainable.”

Is there a figure for a minimum wage number the caucus thinks might be a viable option compromise?

Rep. Cutler stated the Republicans offered an amendment that proposed a value of \$10 or \$10.50, but it did not pass. He spoke about the need to focus on increasing the poverty tax exemption. He said it was a part of the proposal offered by Republicans. He talked about his children who have worked service jobs, but never for minimum wage because “the market has moved beyond that.” He emphasized that instead of “checking a political box” it is time to help poor people and change the property tax exemption.



Committee News

Comprehensive coverage of the House & Senate public hearings and voting meetings

Legislative Audit Advisory Commission

02/06/24, 8:30 a.m., Room G-50 Irvis Office Building

By Zoe Buchmann, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The commission met to approve the annual independent audit of the legislature.

The independent audit of the legislature was **approved**.



House Tourism, Economic, and Recreational Development Committee

02/06/24, 9:30 a.m., Room 523, Irvis Office Building

By Daniel Sachetta, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider six bills.

HB 1030 – (PN 1265) The act presents legislative findings and designates Hershey's Kisses as the official state candy of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Effective immediately. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Rep. Thomas Mehafie (R-Dauphin), the bill's primary sponsor, stated his remarks would be “short and sweet.” He recalled the beginning of this legislation which started four years ago with Bucks County students wanting to designate Hershey Kisses as the state candy. He said those students are now juniors in high school and are realizing how slowly things can move in the political process. He referenced the voting practice the students participated in when deciding on the candy for this designation. He stated the Hershey kiss is “iconic” as it is dropped in Hershey to start the new year and even used as streetlights. He talked about the role of the Milton Hershey School, taking care of disadvantaged children in Hershey and around the world, of which The Hershey Company is a majority owner. He urged for an affirmative vote as the symbols of the state are very important. He noted this legislation moving forward would be a positive and beneficial thing for the children of the commonwealth.

Rep. Carol Hill-Evans (D-York) stated she would be voting yes on the legislation. She said jokingly since she represents York County, the state candy could and should have been the York Peppermint Patty, but she is happy to support this bill.

Rep. Tim Brennan (D-Bucks) stated he would be voting in favor of the legislation. He spoke about talking to Cub Scouts and other youth groups about this proposal which has started tons of discussion on the topic as well as learning about the legislative process. He detailed that local elementary schools were participating in the voting process for the state candy and decided on the Hershey Kiss. He expressed his excitement to vote for this bill. He said, "It has been fun working with kids to talk about the legislative process with this wonderful example."

Minority Chairman Donna Oberlander (R-Clarion) expressed her appreciation for the previous comments made and for all other chocolate and candy makers across the commonwealth as "they make are communities very sweet." She stated there is no argument that anywhere in the world, the Hershey Kiss is associated with Pennsylvania. She added that she will be voting yes and encouraged all members to do the same.

[HR 259](#) – (PN 2273) Resolution designating April 28, 2023, as "Knoebels Amusement Resort Day" in Pennsylvania. The bill was unanimously **reported as amended**.

[A03092](#) by Oberlander, changes the designated date of "Knoebels Amusement Resort Day" from April 28, 2023, to April 28, 2024. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Chairman Oberlander stated the importance of this resolution for the community surrounding Knoebels. She said the date is very special to the park's history and the owners, so it would be a great opportunity to recognize the amusement park that provides entertainment to people from in and outside of the commonwealth.

Rep. Tim Twardzik (R-Schuylkill) stated on behalf of Rep. Robert Leadbeter (R-Columbia) "who is probably stuck in the line for the Phoenix coaster", that he backs the resolution. He emphasized the park is wonderful for all ages. He detailed the park is free, always crowded, fun hosts for company picnics and "they serve a delicious pierogi."

[HR 281](#) – (PN 2401) Resolution designating March 25, 2024, as "Greek Independence Day" in Pennsylvania. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Rep. Steven Malagari (D-Montgomery), the bill's primary sponsor, thanked the committee as a proud Greek American for bringing the resolution up for a vote. He stated that celebrating Greek Independence Day also means to celebrate democracy. He recalled his trip to Greece in 2021 for the 200th anniversary of Greek Independence Day which he celebrated in Syntagma Square in Athens where the Greek soldiers protect the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the parliament building. He talked about the Ottoman control of Greece which lasted for hundreds of years until 1821 when they fought and won their independence. He highlighted that even some Americans fought aside Greece during this time. He referenced the beginning ideas of democracy, first thought of in Greece by Plato and Aristotle which could now be celebrated with their independence. He explained the independence for Greece has allowed for the prosperity of the country, the eastern Mediterranean and Greek Americans. He emphasized Greece is now a "very integral part of the security of the region and the security of Europe." He asked for a vote in support of "Greek Independence Day" in Pennsylvania.

Chairman Oberlander stated her appreciation for Rep. Malagari's comments and said she would be voting yes on the resolution.

[HR 295](#) – (PN 2540) Resolution recognizing February 11, 2024, as the "International Day of Women and Girls in Science" in Pennsylvania. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 303](#) – (PN 2548) Resolution recognizing March 2024 as "National Women's History Month" in Pennsylvania. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Rep. Hill-Evans, the bill's primary sponsor, thanked the chairs for bringing this resolution forward. She said she is honored to be the sponsor of this resolution.

[HR 305](#) – (PN 2550) Resolution recognizing March 17, 2024, as "St. Patrick's Day" and designating October 7, 2024, as "The 100th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Ireland and the United States of America Day" in Pennsylvania. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Chairman Mary Jo Daley (D-Montgomery), the bill's primary sponsor, urged the members of the committee to vote yes on the resolution. She recalled her visit to Ireland last year as a part of the Irish Caucus of the General Assembly along with 2 other Pennsylvania legislators and 200 legislators across the United States. She stated this trip was to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement.

She said, "It was such a momentous kind of experience to be there for that celebration." She explained that even though St. Patrick's Day is celebrated every year, it is also important to celebrate the 100th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the United States and Ireland because it is "a really extraordinary thing."



House Health Committee

02/06/24, 10:30 a.m., Room 515, Irvis Office Building

By Derek Danneker, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider several bills and resolutions.

[HB 1853](#) - (PN 2325) Amends the Health Care Facilities Act, further providing for administration, to indicate the Department of Health shall annually convene a meeting of long-term care nursing facilities to receive input regarding the department's conduct of surveys, with the goal of promoting cooperation and communication between long-term care nursing facilities and the department. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as committed** with Representatives Stephanie Borowicz (R-Clinton), Marla Brown (R-Lawrence), Dawn Keefer (R-York) and David Zimmerman (R-Lancaster) abstaining from the vote.

Rep. Melissa Shusterman (D-Chester), prime sponsor of the bill, said her legislation aims to improve communication and collaboration between nursing homes and regional surveyors from the Department of Health (DOH). She added the annual meetings will ensure a uniform understanding and interpretation of state and federal regulations. She noted the implementation of new staffing requirements confused many nursing home facilities which interpreted the regulation differently from the department. She thanked the committee for their work, adding that the bill is several years in the making.

Rep. Keefer suggested that the department streamline and clarify their regulations. She questioned if the nursing facilities need to be statutorily required to meet with the department. Rep. Shusterman said Rep. Keefer accurately described the concerns of the nursing home facilities. She commented that many nursing home facilities are looking forward to the opportunity to meet with the department to clarify regulations. She explained the mandatory "face-to-face" meeting will give nursing facilities the opportunity to have a discussion with the department.

Minority Chairman Kathy Rapp (R-Warren) said she shares some of the same concerns as Rep. Keefer. She suggested that the committee may be singling out one sector of healthcare, to the detriment of others. "I believe there needs to be a discussion on whether the legislation matches the intent," she said. Chairman Rapp said she believes the state should have some distance from their regulated community and questioned if the information they gather from the facilities will be used against them. She asked that her members vote in whatever manner they deem appropriate.

Rep. Tarik Khan (D-Philadelphia) said he was concerned there might be some "undue lobbying" that could occur, which would make the process less secure. He said he hopes to address those issues in the future.

Rep. Borowicz noted that a DOH regulation from 2020 mandated that nursing home facilities take in all new admissions with COVID-19, which led to the death of many patients. "The last thing I want to do as a government agency is mandate the department to meet with nursing homes once a year when they did that during the COVID shutdown," she said.

[HB 1956](#) - (PN 2487) Amends the Patient Test Result Information Act, further providing for definitions, for test results and for duties of Department of Health (DOH). Defines chronic condition. Provides further criteria for diagnostic imaging service. Requires the entity performing the diagnostic imaging service to provide written notice with a statement at the time of service to the patient or their designee. Provides exceptions for the written notice including routine obstetrical ultrasounds to monitor fetus development, diagnostic imaging services performed on a patient who is treated on an inpatient basis in an emergency department or observation unit in a hospital, diagnostic radiographs, diagnostic imaging services performed on a patient with a chronic condition if the patient has been diagnosed already and when test results are provided to a patient or designee at the time of the test. Establishes disclosure of test results will not be given until 72 hours after the results are finalized unless the healthcare practitioner directs the release before the end of that time period. Provides the results may be released early if they are pathology or radiology reports that have reasonable likelihood of showing a malignancy and tests that could reveal genetic markers.

Provides the duties of DOH include conducting compliance reviews of healthcare facilities licensed by the department as part of an inspection performed when investigating complaints, establishing a complaint procedure made available on the internet and coordinating with state licensing boards for complaints received by the department relating to the performance of diagnostic imaging services by entities not under the department's jurisdiction and how they will be referred for review. Provides DOH can exempt other tests. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as amended**.

[A03408](#) by Twardzik, provides an exception to the notice requirements if the test results are provided to the patient at the time of the test and states that the bill does not override any state law that requires face-to-face consultations. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

[A03429](#) by Kosierowski, removes "immediately" from notice to patients, simplifies department requirements and changes the timeframe for release of results after one business day. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Rep. Barry Jozwiak (R-Berks), co-sponsor of the bill, said he has been working on the bill for the past two sessions. He explained that patients may be left in the dark if they receive a report without a doctor's consultation. He added the bill resolves regulatory conflicts with the federal government. Rep. Jozwiak said he supports the amendments.

Rep. Bridget Kosierowski (D-Lackawanna), co-sponsor of the bill, said the legislation would allow a physician to read a result and communicate with their patient before that patient is able to review the report and draw their own conclusions. She described her history as a nurse, noting that despite her 30 years of experience, she cannot draw reliably draw correct conclusions from reports. She stated that "long-term, life-changing results" should be handled with care. She urged support for her bill.

Chairman Dan Frankel (D-Allegheny) thanked the representatives for their work in collaborating significant support from physicians.

[HB 1931](#) - (PN 2463) The Long-Term Care Medical Director Registry and Communication Act provides for a long-term care medical director registry; and imposes duties on the Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Human Services (DHS). Provides definitions for department, disaster emergency, facility and medical director. Establishes a medical director registry. Provides the department and the DHS will collect information for inclusion in the registry as a component of the inspection. Provides contact information and proof of completion of a certified medical director course, if applicable will be collected for the medical director. Provides the registry will be available to the department, the DHS and a facility. Provides for utilization during disaster emergencies relating to public health or other public health emergencies and when there is no disaster declaration relating to public health emergencies. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as amended** with Representatives Borowicz and Keefe voting in the negative.

[A03415](#) by Benham, allows the Department of Aging (Aging) to access the registry. The amendment was **adopted** with Rep. Borowicz voting in the negative.

Rep. Kristin Marcell (R-Bucks), prime sponsor of the bill, said her bill would improve the state's response to healthcare crises and gather critical medical information to help those who are charged with caring for patients. She explained that by establishing a registry, the state can streamline communication and deliver better care for residents in nursing homes, personal care homes and assisted living facilities.

Chairman Rapp's comments could not be recorded due to technical difficulties.

Rep. Keefe questioned the purpose of the bill when the department already maintains a registry. She questioned why it must be a medical director who has the duty to disseminate information. A Democratic staff member said the point of the legislation is to determine which facilities have medical directors and determine a point of contact for the department. Rep. Keefe reiterated her concerns and said she does not believe the bill is necessary.

Chairman Rapp said she will vote in favor of the bill but understands the concerns of some of her Republican members.

[HR 292](#) – (PN 2537) Resolution recognizing the week of May 12 through 18, 2024 as "National Hospital Week" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 251](#) - (PN 2217) Resolution recognizing the month of May 2024 as "ALSP Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 250](#) - (PN 2216) Resolution designating the month of March 2024 as "Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 296](#) – (PN 2542) Resolution recognizing February 2, 2024, as “Rheumatoid Awareness Day” in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 297](#) – (PN 2542) Resolution recognizing the week of March 10 through 16, 2024, as "Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 299](#) – (PN 2544) Resolution recognizing the month of April 2024 as "Limb Loss Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.



[House Appropriations Committee](#)

02/06/24, 3:40 p.m., Room 140, Main Capitol

By Zoe Buchmann and Maggie Foight, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee held an informational meeting to respond to Gov. Josh Shapiro’s 2024-2025 budget address.

Chairman Jordan Harris (D-Philadelphia) explained that this meeting is an opportunity for the chairs of the committee to provide comments on the budget proposal put forth by Gov. Shapiro, traditionally done on the House Floor.

Minority Chairman Seth Grove (R-York) thanked Chairman Harris for the opportunity and appreciated the chance to sit next to him during the address, stating that he enjoyed the bipartisan support moments during the speech.

Chairman Grove described Gov. Shapiro’s budget as a “child’s Christmas list to Santa Clause. It is as if the governor went through the far-left progressive playbook, circling as many items as he could,” adding that the budget is irresponsible and misleading. He challenged the idea of the first budget being a down payment, as described by Gov. Shapiro, but instead is a significant increase in spending, “the highest budget ever set,” and stated that it is unaffordable. He argued that the budget is spent without regard for the future by creating more programs. He explained that the rainy-day fund and the surplus are not accounts that should be used to cover existing or new programs but should only be used if necessary. He stated that if the budget proposal was adopted as it is written, it would reduce the surplus by more than 50 percent, emphasizing that it would be used to cover reoccurring costs, not one-time investments. He argued that the proposal mimics the appearance of a balanced budget, but that the growth projective is unrealistic and barely covers the collective bargaining agreements Gov. Shapiro signed last year.

Chairman Grove pointed out that the education funding does not cover future payments beyond the years included in the budget. He speculated that in four years, the surplus will have decreased significantly and that Gov. Shapiro will spend “more time in South Carolina mid-February than in Pennsylvania,” which would leave someone else to figure out how to solve the “financial hole the Governor dug” with his proposed spending. He continued that the budget seems to follow the theme that there is nothing a state government program cannot solve by creating more government-funded programs. Addressing the gun violence and permit issues, Chairman Grove argued that it would be better to ensure prosecutors actually charge individuals in gun violence cases instead of creating an office for prevention and reducing the number of permits. He stated that he does not understand why spending \$33 million for websites is necessary or good.

Chairman Grove criticized the lack of accountability attached to the extra \$1 billion for the Basic Education Funding Commission’s (BEFC) plan and “refusing to look at school choice.” He added that there are so many variables in the education blueprint, proposed by Gov. Shapiro, which make the minimum investments unrealistic. He expressed his gratitude that this was only a proposal and not the actual budget, as they can work in the next months to create a budget that works for the state. He added that he hopes Gov. Shapiro “comes to his senses,” and works in a bipartisan manner to create a budget on time. He said, “But this requires the presidential hopeful to put Pennsylvania finances over his agenda.” He affirmed that the Republican representatives are ready to work on the budget, but that they have core principles they will stick to, just as Gov. Shapiro. He argued that if Gov. Shapiro is ready to work with them to create a fiscally responsible budget, they will achieve that, but if he decides to remain with his current proposal, they might find themselves at another budget impasse.

Chairman Jordan Harris (D-Philadelphia) recounted last year's programs and successes, underscoring what the House has been able to achieve with a Democratic majority. He supported Gov. Shapiro's budget proposals, as they provide concrete solutions to the challenges currently faced by Pennsylvania, and highlighted key aspects, such as investments in education, business, social programs and rural issues.

He addressed the education funding proposal, arguing that the governor's budget proposal "goes further" than BEFC's plan. He thanked several House Democratic Caucus members for their efforts in the various hearings and investigations of the BEFC. He supported early intervention and special education funding in addition to school facility improvements. "No child should be forced to go to a school building that can make them sick," he asserted.

Chairman Harris celebrated the governor's proposed budget for providing no-cost menstrual products to students and maintaining investments in free breakfasts for schoolchildren, school safety and mental health funding. He recognized the proposed budget's support of pre-kindergarten teachers via talent recruitment, increased wages, student-teacher stipends and teacher professional development. He appreciated the budget's promotion of affordable post-secondary and vocational education.

He recognized the proposed budget's advocacy for marijuana legalization and restorative justice. "Pennsylvanians should not be doing time because Pennsylvania is behind on the times," he stated. He approved of the governor's proposals to fund pads for shovel-ready projects to make Pennsylvania more appealing to businesses. He appreciated the budget's support of local innovation and research.

Chairman Harris considered how the state will host the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup and the Major League Baseball (MLB) All-Star Game in 2026. He suggested there is an opportunity now to transform Pennsylvania into a tourist destination to draw in additional revenue.

He supported the proposed budget's funding for workforce investments, criminal justice reforms, the 988 suicide crisis hotline, the Whole Home Repairs program, homelessness supports, mass transit and more. "This budget, this proposal, quite honestly has taken a lot of what this caucus has been talking about for years and puts it into play," he surmised. He repeated that the state cannot afford to avoid fully funding necessary programs. He asked legislators willing to "invest in Pennsylvania" and offer real solutions to relevant issues to meet House Democrats at the side of the governor. "We know that consensus is going to need to be built and we're willing to build it," he concluded, offering the House majority's priorities and principles as the priorities and principles of Pennsylvanian residents.



New Legislation

HB2016 - A Joint Resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, repealing provisions relating to uniformity of taxation.

Sponsor

Rep. Elizabeth Fiedler (D)

Intro Date

02/06/2024

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Introduced

HB2017 - An Act amending the act of November 29, 2006 (P.L.1471, No.165), known as the Sexual Assault Testing and Evidence Collection Act, further providing for definitions and for sexual assault evidence collection program.

Sponsor

Rep. Brian Munroe (D)

Intro Date

02/06/2024

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Introduced

HB2018 - An Act amending Title 23 (Domestic Relations) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in child custody, further providing for factors to consider when awarding custody.

Sponsor

Rep. Liz Hanbidge (D)

Intro Date

02/06/2024

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Introduced

HB2019 - An Act amending the act of May 1, 1933 (P.L.103, No.69), known as The Second Class Township Code, in auditors and accountants, further providing for appointment of accountant and providing for appointment of independent auditor and abolishment of office of elected auditor.

Sponsor

Rep. Keith J. Greiner (R)

Intro Date

02/06/2024

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Introduced

HB2020 - An Act amending the act of April 14, 1972 (P.L.233, No.64), known as The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act, further providing for drug overdose response immunity.

Sponsor

Rep. Frank Burns (D)

Intro Date

02/06/2024

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Introduced

HR316 - A Resolution designating September 18, 2024, as "State Grange Day" in Pennsylvania and celebrating the Pennsylvania State Grange on its 151st anniversary.

Sponsor

Rep. Scott Conklin (D)

Intro Date

02/06/2024

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Introduced

HR317 - A Resolution supporting an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to establish that election spending may be regulated to ensure that every resident may exercise the rights to free speech, political participation and meaningful representation, and to protect republican self-government and federalism.

Sponsor

Rep. Benjamin Waxman (D)

Intro Date

02/06/2024

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Introduced

Legislative Actions

HB335 - An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in inchoate crimes, further providing for prohibited offensive weapons.

Sponsor

Rep. Ben V. Sanchez (D)

Summary

(PN 298) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses), in inchoate crimes, prohibiting accelerated trigger activators. Portions are effective immediately and the remainder is effective upon publications.

Bill Text

03/13/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

03/13/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

03/13/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Laid on the table

HB336 - An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in firearms and other dangerous articles, prohibiting certain assault weapons.

Sponsor

Rep. Ben V. Sanchez (D)

Summary

(PN 299) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses), in firearms and other dangerous articles, defining an offence prohibiting certain assault weapons. Effective in 60 days.

Bill Text

03/13/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

03/13/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

03/13/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Laid on the table

HB777 - An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in firearms and other dangerous articles, further providing for definitions and providing for the offense of sale of firearm or firearm parts without serial numbers and for privately made firearms.

Sponsor

Rep. Morgan Cephas (D)

Summary

(PN 726) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) to provide for the offense of the sale of a firearm or firearm parts without serial numbers as a felony of the second degree. Inserts definitions for use in the act. Details expectations for owners of privately made firearms to follow. Outlines refusal. Effective in 60 days.

Bill Text

03/30/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

03/30/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

03/30/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Laid on the table

HB1030 - An Act designating Hershey's Kisses as the official State candy of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.**Sponsor**

Rep. Thomas L. Mehaffie (R)

Summary

(PN 1265) The act presents legislative findings and designates Hershey's Kisses as the official state candy of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Effective immediately.

Bill Text

05/19/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

05/19/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Tourism & Economic and Recreational Development - House Tourism & Economic and Recreational Development

HB1157 - An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in firearms and other dangerous articles, further providing for Pennsylvania State Police.**Sponsor**

Rep. Gregory Scott (D)

Summary

(PN 1225) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses), in firearms and other dangerous articles, further providing for Pennsylvania State Police (PSP). Adds language providing that the notification shall be transmitted by the judge to PSP between 72 and 96 hours after the adjudication, commitment or treatment and removes language providing "within seven days of." Effective in 60 days.

Bill Text

05/18/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

05/18/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

05/18/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Laid on the table

HB1190 - An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in general provisions, further providing for definitions; in inchoate crimes, further providing for prohibited offensive weapons; in assault, further providing for discharge of a firearm into an occupied structure; in theft and related offenses, further providing for definitions; in riot, disorderly conduct and related offenses, further providing for prohibiting of paramilitary training; in firearms and other dangerous articles, further providing for definitions, for persons not to possess, use, manufacture, control, sell or transfer firearms, for firearms not to be carried without a license, for prohibited conduct during emergency, providing for 3-D printed firearms and further providing for sale or transfer of firearms, for firearm sales surcharge, for registration of firearms and for licensing of dealers.

Sponsor

Rep. Melissa L. Shusterman (D)

Summary

(PN 1252) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses), providing for 3-D printed firearm and 3-D printer, to establish that a person may not use a 3-D printer to create a firearm or any piece or part of a firearm unless the person possesses a license to manufacture firearms. A person who possesses a license to manufacture firearms and uses a 3-D printer to create a firearm or any piece or part of a firearm may not create it without including a manufacturer's number. Specifies those who violate 3-D printed firearm provisions shall be guilty of a felony of the third degree and those who violate 3-D printer provisions shall be guilty of a felony of the second degree. Effective in 60 days.

Bill Text

05/18/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

05/18/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Laid on the table

HB1245 - An Act amending the act of April 14, 1972 (P.L.233, No.64), known as The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act, further providing for definitions and for prohibited acts and penalties.

Sponsor

Rep. Sara Innamorato (D)

Summary

(PN 1345) Amends the Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act, further providing for definitions to insert definitions for health care provider and syringe services program and to amend the definition of drug paraphernalia to specify the types of hypodermic needles that may be utilized and the professionals that shall be immune from civil or criminal liability for certain activities. Further providing for prohibited acts and penalties to indicate no person shall be prosecuted for a residual amount of a controlled substance contained in a used syringe, needle or other object excluded from the definition of drug paraphernalia. Effective in 60 days.

Bill Text

05/24/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

05/24/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/14/2024, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Judiciary), Room 140, Main Capitol 02/14/2024 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol

HB1519 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in pupils and attendance, further providing for excuses from attending school.

Sponsor

Rep. Napoleon J. Nelson (D)

Summary

(PN 1734) Amends the Public School Code, in pupils and attendance, further providing for excuses from attending school. Establishes that a school district shall excuse a student from school attendance for mental health days, allotting three school days each school year. Defines "mental health day" as a day to allow a student to attain care, rest or treatment to address attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder, learning and developmental disabilities, autism, substance-use disorder, self-harm or any other conditions or behaviors as recognized by a physician or mental health professional. Effective in 60 days.

Bill Text

06/26/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

06/26/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Laid on the table

HB1553 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in duties and powers of boards of school directors, providing for suicide prevention hotline telephone number on student identification card; and, in school safety and security, further providing for school safety and security coordinator.

Sponsor

Rep. David M. Delloso (D)

Summary

(PN 1803) Amends Public School Code, in duties and powers of boards of school directors, providing for suicide prevention hotline telephone number on student identification card to provide the board of school directors of a school district that administers student ID cards to each student in grades 6-12 shall include on each card a national, state or local suicide prevention hotline telephone number. Further provides for school safety and security coordinator to specify the coordinator shall work with the board of school directors or equivalent personnel of a school entity to display the hotline number, accessible 24 hours per day and seven days a week by a student or other individual in-person or online. Effective in 60 days.

Bill Text

06/29/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

06/29/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Laid on the table

HB1564 - An Act amending the act of July 9, 1987 (P.L.220, No.39), known as the Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors Act, further providing for definitions, for license required, for State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors, for powers and functions of board, for qualifications for license, for procedures for licensing, for reciprocity and for reinstatement of license; providing for restrictions on use of title "Licensed Associate Marriage and Family Therapist"; and further providing for penalties, for license renewal and records and fees and for unlawful practice.

Sponsor

Rep. Melissa Cerrato (D)

Summary

(PN 2436) Amends the Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors Act. Inserts definitions. Further provides for qualifications and requirements for license to indicate applicants shall be qualified for a license to hold oneself out as a licensed associate marriage and family therapist if the applicant meets certain requirements, and outlines expiration and limitations of the license. Provides for restrictions on use of title "Licensed Associate Marriage and Family Therapist" to specify that only individuals who have received licenses as licensed associate marriage and family therapists under the act may style themselves as such and use the letters "L.A.M.F.T." and it shall be unlawful for an individual to style themselves as such or use any words or symbols relating to the type of therapist. Further provides for license required, for powers and functions of board, for procedures, for licensing, for reciprocity, for reinstatement of license, for penalties and for unlawful practice to reflect new definitions. Provides for effect of licensure. Effective immediately. (Prior Printer Number(s): 1838) (PN 1838) Amends the Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors Act to provide definitions for licensed associate marriage and family therapist and practice of associate marriage and family therapy. Further provides for qualifications for license to indicate applicants shall be qualified for a license to hold oneself out as a licensed associate marriage and family therapist if the applicant meets certain requirements, and outlines expiration and limitations of the license. Provides for restrictions on use of title "Licensed Associate Marriage and Family Therapist" to specify that only individuals who have received licenses as licensed associate marriage and family therapists under the act may style themselves as such and use the letters "L.A.M.F.T." and it shall be unlawful for an individual to style themselves as such or use any words or symbols relating to the type of therapist. Further provides for license required, for powers and functions of board, for procedures, for licensing, for reciprocity, for reinstatement of license, for penalties and for unlawful practice to reflect new definitions. Effective in 60 days.

Bill Text

07/11/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

07/11/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

07/11/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

07/11/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/07/2024 - Off the Floor Voting Meeting (Senate Appropriations), Rules Committee Conference Room 02/07/2024 - Off the Floor Voting Meeting, Rules Committee Conference Room

HB1665 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, providing for comprehensive school counseling services.

Sponsor

Rep. Mandy Steele (D)

Summary

(PN 1969) Amends the Public School Code, providing for comprehensive school counseling services. Specifies definitions. Details a comprehensive school counseling plan, providing for the authorization and purpose, general requirements, components of the plan and contents of the plan. Provides for school counselor use of time, including a general requirement, direct and indirect services and administrative activities. Asserts that each school entity shall be responsible for posting its plan on its publicly accessible website or the publicly accessible website of the school entity's school district under the category of state-required information. Directs the Department of Education (PDE) to monitor each school entity to ensure implementation and compliance with this article beginning with the 2024-2025 school year. Further provides for departmental duties. Effective immediately.

Bill Text

09/12/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

09/12/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Laid on the table

HB1678 - An Act amending Titles 61 (Prisons and Parole) and 63 (Professions and Occupations (State Licensed)) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in general administration, providing for earned vocational training and education credit; in recidivism risk reduction incentive, further providing for recidivism risk reduction incentive minimum; in Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, further providing for parole power and for short sentence parole; and, in powers and duties, further providing for consideration of criminal convictions.

Sponsor

Rep. Napoleon J. Nelson (D)

Summary

(PN 1986) Amends Title 61 (Prisons & Parole), in general administration, to allow and encourage inmate participation and completion for earned income vocational training and education programs. Inmates sentenced after the effective date shall earn credits towards sentence reduction upon meeting certain requirements. Amends Title 63 (Possessions & Occupations (State Licensed)) to address inmates involved in recidivism risk reduction incentive minimums. Updates language throughout to reflect changes. Effective in 60 days. (Prior Printer's Number: 1980) (PN 1980) Amends Title 61 (Prisons & Parole), in general administration, to allow and encourage inmate participation and completion for earned income vocational training and education programs. Inmates sentenced after the effective date shall earn credits towards sentence reduction upon meeting certain requirements. Amends Title 63 (Possessions & Occupations) to address inmates involved in recidivism risk reduction incentive minimums. Updates language throughout to reflect changes. Effective in 60 days.

Bill Text

09/13/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

09/13/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

09/13/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/14/2024, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Judiciary), Room 140, Main Capitol 02/14/2024 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol

HB1806 - An Act amending the act of June 13, 1967 (P.L.31, No.21), known as the Human Services Code, in public assistance, further providing for false statements, investigations and penalty; and imposing penalties.

Sponsor

Rep. La'Tasha D. Mayes (D)

Summary

(PN 2238) Amends the Human Services Code, in public assistance, further providing for false statements, investigations and penalty to specify violations for the act's provisions that result in stolen assistance or food stamps. Effective in 60 days.

Bill Text

10/31/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

10/31/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/14/2024, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Judiciary), Room 140, Main Capitol 02/14/2024 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol

HB1853 - An Act amending the act of July 19, 1979 (P.L.130, No.48), known as the Health Care Facilities Act, in licensing of health care facilities, further providing for administration.

Sponsor

Rep. Melissa L. Shusterman (D)

Summary

(PN 2325) Amends the Health Care Facilities Act, further providing for administration, to indicate the Department of Health shall annually convene a meeting of long-term care nursing facilities to receive input regarding the department's conduct of surveys, with the goal of promoting cooperation and communication between long-term care nursing facilities and the department. Effective in 60 days.

Bill Text

11/14/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

11/14/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Health - House Health

HB1931 - An Act providing for a long-term care medical director registry; and imposing duties on the Department of Health and the Department of Human Services.

Sponsor

Rep. Kristin Marcell (R)

Summary

(PN 2463) The Long-Term Care Medical Director Registry and Communication Act provides for a long-term care medical director registry; and imposes duties on the Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Human Services (DHS). Provides definitions for department, disaster emergency, facility and medical director. Establishes a medical director registry. Provides the department and the DHS will collect information for inclusion in the registry as a component of the inspection. Provides contact information and proof of completion of a certified medical director course, if applicable will be collected for the medical director. Provides the registry will be available to the department, the DHS and a facility. Provides for utilization during disaster emergencies relating to public health or other public health emergencies and when there is no disaster declaration relating to public health emergencies. Effective in 60 days.

Bill Text

12/20/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

12/20/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended - House Health - House Health

HB1956 - An Act amending the act of October 24, 2018 (P.L.719, No.112), known as the Patient Test Result Information Act, further providing for definitions, for test results and for duties of Department of Health.

Sponsor

Rep. Bridget M. Kosierowski (D)

Summary

(PN 2487) Amends the Patient Test Result Information Act, further providing for definitions, for test results and for duties of Department of Health (DOH). Defines chronic condition. Provides further criteria for diagnostic imaging service. Requires the entity performing the diagnostic imaging service to provide written notice with a statement at the time of service to the patient or their designee. Provides exceptions for the written notice including routine obstetrical ultrasounds to monitor fetus development, diagnostic imaging services performed on a patient who is treated on an inpatient basis in an emergency department or observation unit in a hospital, diagnostic radiographs, diagnostic imaging services performed on a patient with a chronic condition if the patient has been diagnosed already and when test results are provided to a patient or designee at the time of the test. Establishes disclosure of test results will not be given until 72 hours after the results are finalized unless the healthcare practitioner directs the release before the end of that time period. Provides the results may be released early if they are pathology or radiology reports that have reasonable likelihood of showing a malignancy and tests that could reveal genetic markers. Provides the duties of DOH include conducting compliance reviews of healthcare facilities licensed by the department as part of an inspection performed when investigating complaints, establishing a complaint procedure made available on the internet and coordinating with state licensing boards for complaints received by the department relating to the performance of diagnostic

imaging services by entities not under the department's jurisdiction and how they will be referred for review. Provides DOH can exempt other tests. Effective in 60 days.

Bill Text

01/08/2024 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

01/08/2024

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended - House Health - House Health

HR211 - A Resolution directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study on the nutritional value of food, along with the nutrition-related health of incarcerated individuals, in State correctional institutions in this Commonwealth and to issue a report of its findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives.

Sponsor

Rep. Stephen Kinsey (D)

Summary

(PN 2001) Resolution directing the JSGC to conduct a study on the nutritional value of food, along with the nutrition-related health of incarcerated individuals, in State correctional institutions in this Commonwealth.

Bill Text

09/19/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

09/19/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/14/2024, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Judiciary), Room 140, Main Capitol 02/14/2024 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol

HR250 - A Resolution designating the month of March 2024 as "Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

Sponsor

Rep. Patrick Gallagher (D)

Summary

(PN 2216) Resolution designating the month of March 2024 as "Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

Bill Text

10/27/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

10/27/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Health - House Health

HR251 - A Resolution recognizing the month of May 2024 as "ALSP Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.**Sponsor**

Rep. Timothy Brennan (D)

Summary

(PN 2217) Resolution recognizing the month of May 2024 as "ALSP Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

Bill Text

10/27/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

10/27/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Health - House Health

HR259 - A Resolution designating April 28, 2023, as "Knoebels Amusement Resort Day" in Pennsylvania.**Sponsor**

Rep. Rob Leadbeter (R)

Summary

(PN 2273) Resolution designating April 28, 2023, as "Knoebels Amusement Resort Day" in Pennsylvania.

Bill Text

11/03/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

11/03/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended - House Tourism & Economic and Recreational Development - House Tourism & Economic and Recreational Development

HR279 - A Resolution extending in whole the disaster emergency declared on June 12, 2023, and extended in whole by the General Assembly until November 1, 2023, by Senate Resolution No. 136, and further extended in whole by the General Assembly for an additional 120 calendar days from November 1, 2023, by House Resolution No. 197, in response to the collapse of the northbound bridge and severe compromise of the southbound bridge on Interstate 95 in the City of Philadelphia, Philadelphia County.

Sponsor

Rep. Anthony A. Bellmon (D)

Summary

(PN 2393) Resolution extending in whole the disaster emergency declared on June 12, 2023, and extended in whole by the General Assembly until November 1, 2023, by SR 136, and further extended in whole by the General Assembly for an additional 120 calendar days from November 1, 2023, by HR 197, in response to the collapse of the northbound bridge and severe compromise of the southbound bridge on Interstate 95 in the City of Philadelphia, Philadelphia County.

Bill Text

12/08/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

12/08/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

12/08/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Signed in House

HR281 - A Resolution designating March 25, 2024, as "Greek Independence Day" in Pennsylvania.

Sponsor

Rep. Steven R. Malagari (D)

Summary

(PN 2401) Resolution designating March 25, 2024, as "Greek Independence Day" in Pennsylvania.

Bill Text

12/08/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

12/08/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Tourism & Economic and Recreational Development - House Tourism & Economic and Recreational Development

HR292 - A Resolution recognizing the week of May 12 through 18, 2024, as "National Hospital Week" in Pennsylvania.

Sponsor

Rep. Kathy L. Rapp (R)

Summary

(PN 2537) Resolution recognizing the week of May 12 through 18, 2024 as "National Hospital Week" in Pennsylvania.

Intro Date

01/22/2024

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Health - House Health

HR295 - A Resolution recognizing February 11, 2024, as the "International Day of Women and Girls in Science" in Pennsylvania.

Sponsor

Rep. Emily Kinkead (D)

Summary

(PN 2540) Resolution recognizing February 11, 2024, as the "International Day of Women and Girls in Science" in Pennsylvania.

Bill Text

01/31/2024 - Text

Intro Date

01/25/2024

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Tourism & Economic and Recreational Development - House Tourism & Economic and Recreational Development

HR296 - A Resolution designating February 2, 2024, as "Rheumatoid Awareness Day" in Pennsylvania.

Sponsor

Rep. Robert F. Matzie (D)

Summary

(PN 2542) Resolution recognizing February 2, 2024, as "Rheumatoid Awareness Day" in Pennsylvania.

Intro Date

01/25/2024

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Health - House Health

HR297 - A Resolution recognizing the week of March 10 through 16, 2024, as "Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week" in Pennsylvania.

Sponsor

Rep. Robert F. Matzie (D)

Summary

(PN 2542) Resolution recognizing the week of March 10 through 16, 2024, as "Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week" in Pennsylvania.

Intro Date

01/25/2024

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Health - House Health

HR299 - A Resolution recognizing the month of April 2024 as "Limb Loss Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

Sponsor

Rep. Robert F. Matzie (D)

Summary

(PN 2544) Resolution recognizing the month of April 2024 as "Limb Loss Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

Intro Date

01/25/2024

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Health - House Health

HR303 - A Resolution recognizing the month of March 2024 as "Women's History Month" in Pennsylvania.

Sponsor

Rep. Carol Hill-Evans (D)

Summary

(PN 2548) Resolution recognizing the month of March 2024 as "Women's History Month" in Pennsylvania.

Intro Date

01/26/2024

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Tourism & Economic and Recreational Development - House Tourism & Economic and Recreational Development

HR305 - A Resolution recognizing March 17, 2024, as "St. Patrick's Day" and designating October 7, 2024, as "The 100th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Ireland and the United States of America Day" in Pennsylvania.

Sponsor

Rep. Mary Jo Daley (D)

Summary

(PN 2550) Resolution recognizing March 17, 2024, as "St. Patrick's Day" and designating October 7, 2024, as "The 100th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Ireland and the United States of America Day" in Pennsylvania.

Intro Date

01/29/2024

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Tourism & Economic and Recreational Development - House Tourism & Economic and Recreational Development

SB55 - An Act amending Titles 23 (Domestic Relations) and 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in child custody, further providing for definitions, for award of custody, for factors to consider when awarding custody, for consideration of criminal conviction, for guardian ad litem for child, for counsel for child and for award of counsel fees, costs and expenses; and, in Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts, providing for child abuse and domestic abuse education and training program for judges and court personnel.

Sponsor

Sen. Steven J. Santarsiero (D)

Summary

(PN 1169) Amends Title 23 (Domestic Relations), in child custody, to further provide for several definitions, for award of custody, for factors to consider when awarding custody, for consideration of criminal conviction, for education and training for guardian ad litem for child, for abuse for counsel for child and for award of counsel fees, costs and expenses to state that this section may not apply if that party engaged the judicial process in good faith to protect the child from harm. Provides for safety conditions and for supervised physical custody. Details the factors to consider when awarding custody including past or current protection from abuse or sexual violence. Establishes the exception that a factor under subsection (a) shall not be adversely weighed against a party if the circumstances related to the factor were in response to abuse or necessary to protect the child or the abused party from harm and the party alleging abuse does not pose a risk to the safety of the child at the time of custody hearing. Asserts that temporary housing instability as a result of abuse shall not be considered against the party alleging abuse. Specifies that no single factor under subsection (a) shall by itself be determinative in the awarding of custody and that the court shall examine the totality of the circumstances, giving weighted consideration to the factors that affect the safety of the child when issuing a custody order that is in the best interest of the child. Further providing for offenses when considering criminal conviction. Amends Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) to provide that the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts may develop and implement an ongoing education and training program for judges and relevant court personnel and specifies what aspects of the maltreatment of children the program shall include. Provides for best practices and federal grant funding. Updates language throughout to reflect changes. Effective immediately. (Prior Printer Number(s): 1161) (PN 1161) Amends Title 23 (Domestic Relations), in child custody, to further provide for several definitions, for award of custody, for factors to consider when awarding custody, for consideration of criminal conviction, for education and training for guardian ad litem for child, for abuse for counsel for child and for award of counsel fees, costs and expenses to state that this section may not apply if that party engaged the judicial process in

good faith to protect the child from harm. Provides for safety conditions and for supervised physical custody. Details factors to consider when awarding custody including past or current protection from abuse or sexual violence. Establishes the exception that a factor under subsection (a) shall not be adversely weighed against a party if the circumstances related to the factor were in response to abuse or necessary to protect the child or the abused party from harm and the party alleging abuse does not pose a risk to the safety of the child at the time of custody hearing. Asserts that temporary housing instability as a result of abuse shall not be considered against the party alleging abuse. Specifies that no single factor under subsection (a) shall by itself be determinative in the awarding of custody and that the court shall examine the totality of the circumstances, giving weighted consideration to the factors that affect the safety of the child when issuing a custody order that is in the best interest of the child. Further providing for offenses when considering criminal conviction. Amends Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) to provide that the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts may develop and implement an ongoing education and training program for judges and relevant court personnel and specifies what aspects of the maltreatment of children the program shall include. Provides for best practices and federal grant funding. Effective in 120 days.

Bill Text

10/11/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

10/11/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

10/11/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/14/2024, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Judiciary), Room 140, Main Capitol 02/14/2024 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol

SB745 - An Act amending Title 62 (Procurement) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in contracts for public works, providing for contracts for information technology commodities and services.

Sponsor

Sen. Kristin Phillips-Hill (R)

Summary

(PN 1231) Amends Title 62 (Procurement), in contracts for public works, providing for contracts for information technology commodities and services. Requires that a contract for the procurement of endpoint devices requires that those devices, services and solutions be capable of being configured, secured and maintained in a manner that meets the National Institute of Standards and Technology guidelines or industry best practices for computer security. Adds a definition for "endpoint device." Effective in 60 days. (Prior Printer Number(s): 889) (PN 889) Amends Title 62 (Procurement), in contracts for public works, providing for contracts for information technology commodities and services. Adds that a contract for the procurement of end point devices requires that those devices, services and solutions to meet the National Institute of Standards and Technology guidelines and best practices for computer security. Adds a definition for "end point device." Effective in 60 days.

Bill Text

06/14/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

06/14/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

06/14/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

06/14/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 S - Third consideration and final passage

SB792 - An Act amending Title 35 (Health and Safety) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in emergency management services, providing for counterterrorism planning, preparedness and response; in Emergency Management Assistance Compact, providing for construction; and making repeals.

Sponsor

Sen. Devlin J. Robinson (R)

Summary

(PN 919) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety), in emergency management services, providing for counterterrorism planning, preparedness and response; in Emergency Management Assistance Compact, providing for construction; and making repeals. Directs the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) to coordinate and consult with other state agencies, departments and offices to establish, develop and maintain a counterterrorism planning, preparedness and response program to promote and protect the health, safety and welfare of emergency responders, public officials and the general public from actual or potential disasters in the commonwealth, further providing for the agency's responsibilities. Directs PEMA to establish regional counterterrorism task forces, further providing for response plans, and urban search and rescue task forces. Allows PEMA to make grants to regional counterterrorism task forces, specialized regional counterterrorism response teams, specialized statewide response teams and urban search and rescue task forces. Effective in 60 days.

Bill Text

06/19/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

06/19/2023 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

06/19/2023

Last Action

2024-02-06 H - Meeting Scheduled - 02/07/2024 - Off the Floor Voting Meeting (Senate Appropriations), Rules Committee Conference Room 02/07/2024 - Off the Floor Voting Meeting, Rules Committee Conference Room

SB1054 - An Act amending the act of November 3, 2022 (P.L.2158, No.158), known as the Overdose Mapping Act, further providing for definitions and for establishment and design; and providing for entry requirements for EMS providers.

Sponsor

Sen. Doug Mastriano (R)

Summary

(PN 1348) Amends the Overdose Mapping Act, further providing for the definitions of EMS provider and information technology platform and for establishment and design to assert that the Department of Health (DOH) shall coordinate with the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) to ensure that real-time overdose reporting entered by an EMS provider into an information technology platform, other than the overdose information network, is promptly transferred to the overdose information network; and adding a section to provide for entry requirements for EMS providers. Specifies reporting by EMS providers, information reported and other reporting requirements. Effective in six months.

Bill Text

01/30/2024 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

01/30/2024

Last Action

2024-02-06 S - Re-referred to - Senate Appropriations - Senate Appropriations

SB1058 - An Act providing for the abrogation of regulations relating to the CO2 Budget Trading Program.

Sponsor

Sen. Gene Yaw (R)

Summary

(PN 1355) The Abrogation of CO2 Budget Trading Program Regulations Act abrogates the provisions of 25 Pa. Code Ch. 145 Subch. E (relating to CO2 Budgeting Trading Program). Effective immediately.

Bill Text

02/02/2024 - Text [HTML](#) [PDF](#)

Intro Date

02/02/2024

Last Action

2024-02-06 S - Second consideration

Upcoming Meetings

WEDNESDAY- 02/07/2024

9:30 AM, House Human Services

Informational Meeting, Room 515, Irvis Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Informational meeting on Centers of Excellence for Opioid Use Disorder.

10:00 AM, House Republican Policy

Public Hearing, Harrisburg University of Science and Technology UPMC Health Sciences Tower 222 Chestnut St. Harrisburg

Public hearing on “navigating the future of AI.”

10:00 AM, Senate Transportation

Voting Meeting, Room 461, Main Capitol

To consider: [SB 915](#), [SB 1047](#) and [HB 73](#)

10:15 AM, Senate Education

Voting Meeting, Room 8E-A, East Wing

To consider: [SB 801](#)

***** 10:45 AM, Senate Law & Justice (New)**

Committee Meeting, Room 8E-A, East Wing

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Nomination of Darrell L. Clarke to the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board

2:00 PM, Joint Senate Communications & Technology and State Government

Public Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Joint public hearing on the recent Office of Administration server data loss.

***** Off the Floor, Senate Appropriations (New)**

Voting Meeting, Rules Committee Conference Room

To consider: [SB 792](#) and [HB 1564](#)

***** Off the Floor, Senate Rules & Executive Nominations (New)**

Voting Meeting, Rules Committee Conference Room

To consider certain executive nominations

THURSDAY- 02/08/2024

9:00 AM, Senate Game & Fisheries

Public Hearing, Room 8E-B, East Wing

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Public hearing on the annual report from Pennsylvania Game Commission and the Fish and Boat Commission

11:15 AM, Joint Senate Communications & Technology and Community, Economic & Recreational Development

Informational Meeting, Infinera Corp., 7360 Windsor Dr., Allentown

Joint informational meeting - roundtable on Pennsylvania semiconductor production and workforce pipeline

WEDNESDAY- 02/14/2024

10:00 AM, House Consumer Protection, Technology and Utilities

Public Hearing, Room G-50, Irvis Office Building

Public hearing on [HB 1842](#) – Community Solar Act.

10:00 AM, House Judiciary

Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol

To consider: [HB 1245](#), [HB 1678](#), [HB 1806](#), [HR 211](#) and [SB 55](#)

THURSDAY- 02/15/2024

10:00 AM, Independent Regulatory Review Commission

Public Hearing, 14th Floor, Conference Room, 333 Market St.

Agenda to be announced.

1:00 PM, House & Senate Democratic Policy Committees

Public Hearing, Wilkensburg Municipal Building, 605 Ross Ave., Pittsburgh

Senators Costa, Muth, Saval, and Schwank, along with Representatives Smith-Wade-El and Salisbury, will be holding a joint policy committee hearing on the need to adopt a statewide eviction record-sealing policy

FRIDAY- 02/16/2024

9:30 AM, House State Government

Public Hearing, Pennsylvania State Archives, 1681 N. Sixth St., Harrisburg

Informational meeting on Tour of the new PA State Archives building, and some of the historic items contained therein

TUESDAY – 02/20/2024

9:30 AM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Independent Fiscal Office (IFO) – Budget Hearing

10:00 AM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) – Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Department of Revenue (DOR) – Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Department of Corrections (DOC)/Pennsylvania Parole Board – Budget Hearing

WEDNESDAY – 02/21/2024

9:30 AM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) - Budget Hearing

10:00 AM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) – Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) – Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) – Budget Hearing

THURSDAY – 02/22/2024

9:30 AM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Department of Labor and Industry (L&I) – Budget Hearing

10:00 AM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Department of Aging (Aging) – Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Department of Agriculture (PDA) - Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) – Budget Hearing

FRIDAY – 02/23/2024

10:00 AM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Department of Corrections (DOC), Probation & Parole Board – Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Pennsylvania Housing Finance Authority (PHFA) – Budget Hearing

MONDAY – 02/26/2024

10:00 AM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Department of Insurance (PID) – Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) – Budget Hearing

TUESDAY – 02/27/2024

9:30 AM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC)/Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) – Budget Hearing

10:00 AM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Department of State (DOS) – Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Department of Health (DOH) and Department of Drug & Alcohol Programs (DDAP) – Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Department of Agriculture (PDA) – Budget Hearing

WEDNESDAY – 02/28/2024

9:30 AM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Department of Education (PDE) – Budget Hearing

10:00 AM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Community Colleges – Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR) – Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Department of Education (PDE), continued. – Budget Hearing

THURSDAY – 02/29/2024

9:30 AM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) – Budget Hearing

10:00 AM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Judiciary - Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

State-Related Universities - Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board (PLCB) – Budget Hearing

MONDAY – 03/04/2024

10:00 AM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Department of Transportation (PennDOT) – Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) - Budget Hearing

TUESDAY – 03/05/2024

9:30 AM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Department of Human Services (DHS) – Budget Hearing

10:00 AM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Department of Education (PDE) – Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Department of Education (PDE) – Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Department of Human Services (DHS), continued – Budget Hearing

WEDNESDAY – 03/06/2024

9:30 AM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Department of State (DOS) - Budget Hearing

10:00 AM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Department of Human Services (DHS) - Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol

Department of Human Services (DHS) – Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Department of Transportation (PennDOT) - Budget Hearing

THURSDAY – 03/07/2024

9:30 AM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Department of Health (DOH) – Budget Hearing

10:00 AM, House Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Room 140, Main Capitol
Governor's Budget Office – Budget Hearing

1:00 PM, Senate Appropriations

Budget Hearing, Hearing Room 1, North Office Building

[LIVE STREAMED](#)

Governor's Budget Office/Department of Revenue (DOR) – Budget Hearing

MONDAY – 03/18/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations

Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

TUESDAY – 03/19/2024

9:00 AM, House Game and Fisheries

Public Hearing, Room 523, Irvis Office Building

Informational meeting on The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's Annual Report any other business that may come before the committee.

Off the Floor, House Appropriations

Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

WEDNESDAY – 03/20/2024

9:00 AM, House Game and Fisheries

Public Hearing, Room 523, Irvis Office Building

Informational meeting on The Pennsylvania Game Commission's Annual Report and any other business that may come before the committee.

Off the Floor, House Appropriations

Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

THURSDAY – 03/21/2024

10:00 AM, Independent Regulatory Review Commission

Public Hearing, 14th Floor, Conference Room, 333 Market St.

Agenda to be announced.

MONDAY – 03/25/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations

Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

TUESDAY – 03/26/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations

Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

WEDNESDAY – 03/27/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations

Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

MONDAY – 04/08/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations

Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

TUESDAY – 04/09/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

WEDNESDAY – 04/10/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

MONDAY – 04/15/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

TUESDAY – 04/16/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

WEDNESDAY – 04/17/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

THURSDAY – 04/18/2024

10:00 AM, Independent Regulatory Review Commission
Public Hearing, 14th Floor, Conference Room, 333 Market St.
Agenda to be announced.

MONDAY – 04/29/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

TUESDAY – 04/30/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

WEDNESDAY – 05/01/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

MONDAY – 05/06/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

TUESDAY – 05/07/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

WEDNESDAY – 05/08/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

THURSDAY – 05/16/2024

10:00 AM, Independent Regulatory Review Commission
Public Hearing, 14th Floor, Conference Room, 333 Market St.
Agenda to be announced.

MONDAY – 05/20/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

TUESDAY – 05/21/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

WEDNESDAY – 05/22/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

MONDAY – 06/03/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

TUESDAY – 06/04/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

WEDNESDAY – 06/05/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

MONDAY – 06/10/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

TUESDAY – 06/11/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

WEDNESDAY – 06/12/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

MONDAY – 06/17/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

TUESDAY – 06/18/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

THURSDAY – 06/20/2024

10:00 AM, Independent Regulatory Review Commission
Public Hearing, 14th Floor, Conference Room, 333 Market St.
Agenda to be announced.

MONDAY – 06/24/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

WEDNESDAY – 06/26/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

THURSDAY – 06/27/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

FRIDAY – 06/28/2024

Off the Floor, House Appropriations
Voting Meeting, Room 140, Main Capitol
Agenda to be announced.

THURSDAY – 07/18/2024

10:00 AM, Independent Regulatory Review Commission
Public Hearing, 14th Floor, Conference Room, 333 Market St.
Agenda to be announced.

THURSDAY – 08/15/2024

10:00 AM, Independent Regulatory Review Commission
Public Hearing, 14th Floor, Conference Room, 333 Market St.
Agenda to be announced.

THURSDAY – 09/19/2024

10:00 AM, Independent Regulatory Review Commission
Public Hearing, 14th Floor, Conference Room, 333 Market St.
Agenda to be announced.

THURSDAY – 10/24/2024

10:00 AM, Independent Regulatory Review Commission
Public Hearing, 14th Floor, Conference Room, 333 Market St.
Agenda to be announced.

THURSDAY – 11/21/2024

10:00 AM, Independent Regulatory Review Commission
Public Hearing, 14th Floor, Conference Room, 333 Market St.
Agenda to be announced.

THURSDAY – 12/05/2024

10:00 AM, Independent Regulatory Review Commission
Public Hearing, 14th Floor, Conference Room, 333 Market St.
Agenda to be announced.

Capitol Recap is a comprehensive daily report on legislative and executive actions in the Pennsylvania Capitol and is compiled and edited by PLS.

For subscription information, questions or more information contact PLS at mypls@mypls.com or 717-236-6984. Thank you, Deborah, Cheryl, Amyra, Derek, Hattie, Sam, Grace, Aaron, Christian, Justin, Katie, Zoe, Maggie, and Daniel.

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