

April 4 – 10, 2025

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SESSION STATUS

At 1:24 p.m. on Wednesday, March 26, 2025, the House stands adjourned until Monday, April 7, 2025, at 12:00 p.m., unless sooner recalled by the Speaker.

At 12:51 p.m. on Wednesday, April 2, 2025, the Senate recessed until Monday, May 5, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. unless sooner recalled by the President Pro Tempore.

UPCOMING SESSION DAYS

House

April 7-9, 22-24
May 5-7, 12-14
June 2-4, 9-11, 16-18, 23-27, 30
Sept. 22-24 (NV), 29-30
Oct. 1, 6-8, 27-29
Nov. 17-19
Dec. 8-10 (NV), 15-17

Senate

May 5-7, 12-13
June 2-4, 9-11, 23-30

The Education Recap is a comprehensive weekly report on legislative and executive actions on education-related legislation in Pennsylvania state government, as compiled and edited by PLS. Additional information, including video, transcript and testimony, is available to [PLSGovTrac](https://www.plsgovtrac.com) users. For more information, contact sales@mypls.com.

Press Conferences

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

SPEAKER MCCLINTON, LEGISLATORS, ORGANIZATIONS GATHER TO END GUN VIOLENCE

By Daniel Sachetta, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | April 8, 2025

House Speaker Johanna McClinton (D-Philadelphia), elected officials and representatives from gun violence organizations held a press conference on the Capitol Steps today to speak about passing legislation to end gun violence in Pennsylvania.

Adam Garber, executive director, CeaseFirePA, emphasized the urgent need to end gun violence in Pennsylvania. He noted nearly 2,000 deaths in a year from shootings, suicides and unintentional shootings. He praised the collective efforts that led to a 38% reduction in gun deaths statewide over the last two years and stressed the importance of continuing these efforts through policies to further reduce gun violence. He highlighted progress in advancing life-saving gun policies, including bipartisan bills on extreme risk protection orders, universal background checks and a ghost gun ban. He emphasized the need for further action to prevent the conversion of handguns into machine guns. He detailed the importance of addressing firearm trafficking, thanking the CeaseFirePA team and volunteers for their efforts.

Speaker McClinton emphasized the need for freedom to live and raise children in safety, free from the fear of gun violence. She recounted her experience as a student when the Columbine shooting occurred while she was in high school. She shared stories of individuals affected by gun violence, calling for action to save lives and break the cycle of violence across both rural and urban communities.

Garber recalled the formation of a new Health Coalition that recognizes the harm caused by bullets and has proposed legislation to solve this crisis.

Rep. Arvind Venkat (D-Allegheny) shared his experiences as an emergency room (ER) doctor and state representative. He remembered losing a child to gun violence in the ER as one of only two times he cried during a shift in his tenure. He highlighted the preventable nature of gun violence and committed to leveraging his legislative role to address this public health crisis. He called for collective action to pressure legislators to enact meaningful changes.

Garber expressed his desire for a future without gun violence deaths, describing a coalition of faith leaders united under the belief that "Enough is Enough."

Audrey Scanlan, Bishop of Central Pennsylvania's Episcopal Diocese and a member of With One Voice, an interfaith coalition, emphasized the moral imperative to address the gun violence epidemic. She detailed that the crisis claims over 1,600 lives annually in Pennsylvania. She highlighted the coalition's diverse faith backgrounds. She stated that the legislators are elected to serve the common good. She emphasized the need for legislators to work with communities to support intervention and invest in programs that will help to end gun violence.

Sister Betty McVey, member, Nuns Against Gun Violence, stressed the critical state of crisis in

democracy and humanity due to gun violence. She highlighted the collective effort required to combat it, involving various groups including CeaseFirePA, elected officials and the medical community.

Kayla Waddington, youth board member, CeaseFirePA, shared her personal experiences with gun violence growing up in West Philly. She detailed her commitment to fighting the issue through advocacy. She highlighted the importance of policies like emergency risk protection orders, making ghost guns traceable and universal background checks. She emphasized the need to meet with local representatives to understand the constituent concerns.

Kalise Collins, student, Woodland Hills High School, spoke about the personal impact of losing her father to gun violence. She explained the difficulties of the normalization of systemic racism and gun violence in her community. She expressed her feelings through poetry, presenting a poem titled "The Monarch" to articulate her emotions and the loss of her father.

Garber acknowledged the efforts across the state of coalitions and officers in reducing gun deaths by 38%.

Larry Harris, street supervisor, South Pittsburgh Coalition for Peace, shared his experiences working to prevent gun violence and reported a 50% reduction in violence at Carrick High School since their intervention. He noted his personal connection to the issue, losing family members and friends to gun violence. He explained how the organization is out morning, noon and night making sure that people are safe and the laws are in place to protect anyone from losing their life to gun violence.

Chantay Love, co-founder and president, EMIR Healing Center, emphasized the collective effort in combating gun violence. She shared the story of a student victim to illustrate the urgency of their mission. She called for \$100 million in funding to support their efforts, stressing the importance of community activities, education and legislative support in the fight against gun violence.

Krista Brands, CEO, Pennsylvania Division of the American Trauma Society, highlighted the importance of injury prevention and reducing firearm violence. She urged caregivers to securely store firearms and know where their children play, including asking about guns in homes their children visit. She shared personal anecdotes to underline the dangers of unsecured firearms. She called for physician engagement in discussing gun storage. She advocated for legislative support for community violence intervention programs with a proposed budget of \$100 million and invited others to join their efforts in reducing firearm violence.

Mohammed Krubally, violence recovery coordinator, Penn Trauma Violence Recovery Program, described his role in assisting gun violence victims. He emphasized treating gun violence as a public health issue. He discussed the disproportionate impact of gun violence on communities of color and the importance of addressing its root causes, such as poverty and racial inequity. He highlighted evidence-based solutions for reducing gun violence, including community and hospital-based programs. He advocated for reducing firearm access to youth and at-risk individuals by not treating the issue as solely a criminal problem.

Garber advocated for \$100 million in violence intervention funds in the current year's budget. He emphasized the importance of passing bipartisan gun safety laws. He stressed that the real work to ensure community and children's safety begins at home by informing friends and family. He urged legislators to prioritize the safety of all Pennsylvanians by ending gun violence.



COLLEGE STUDENTS CELEBRATE AICUP DAY ON THE HILL

By Dominic Kenny, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | April 9, 2025

Students from schools encompassing the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania (AICUP) were joined by former Secretary of Labor & Industry Thomas Foley to celebrate their success and advocate for higher education funding at a press conference in the Main Capitol Rotunda today.

Thomas Foley, president, AICUP, said students from AICUP universities represent half of all students who will receive a college degree in Pennsylvania this year. He noted that AICUP students have the highest graduation rates of any of the four sectors of higher education in Pennsylvania, along with the lowest default rates and best job placement rates. He mentioned that 28 AICUP schools were named among the 500 best colleges in America by the *Wall Street Journal*. He said AICUP students represent \$29 billion in annual contributions to Pennsylvania's GDP. He stressed that AICUP schools were not out to make a profit but still pay taxes and uplift their communities. He said many AICUP students were the first generation to go to college in their families and that 47% of them receive Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) grants. He said PHEAA has made it possible for generations of families to cross the socioeconomic divide in its 62 years of existence.

Olivia Fabiano, a senior at Elizabethtown College, praised the opportunities given to her by financial aid and independent, non-profit education. She credited PHEAA's Ready to Succeed Scholarship (RTSS) program for helping her to afford her education. She said independent education is about teaching students to think critically, not just academics. She said financial aid programs help students achieve their goals without being held back by financial barriers. "Education should never be a privilege reserved for a few," she said.

Foley praised Fabiano for having two jobs, which he said was a common story for many AIPUC students. He said the RTSS program helps students who wouldn't normally qualify for financial aid afford school. He discussed the recently adopted Grow PA program, which focuses on in-demand occupations.

Dustin McMillan, a junior at Seton Hill University, said he enjoyed the small class sizes and strong sense of community offered at his school. He said state funding is essential in making education accessible to students like him. He urged policymakers and stakeholders to continue investing in programs like PHEAA and RTSS to ensure that students can succeed, regardless of their financial background.

DeShawn Sheffield, a sophomore at Lafayette College, said growing up in a low-income community made being a college student feel like an impossible dream. He said financial aid programs have allowed him to pursue his passions without the overwhelming financial burden that holds so many students back. "These programs do not just fund education," he said. "They fund opportunity, ambition and success." He said AICUP's Day on the Hill celebration was about ensuring every student can reach their full potential. He urged legislators to continue their investment in Pennsylvania students.

Foley said PHEAA has thrived so long because it is a collaborative effort between members of government. He said Pennsylvania's potential would not be realized without a vibrant PHEAA program. He noted that up to 70% of jobs in the future may require a post-secondary education. He said AICUP school offers students the capacity to adapt to a changing world.



Committee News

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

Legislative Budget & Finance Committee

04/08/2025, 9:00 a.m., Room 8E-B, East Wing

Kyle Purchase, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to release a report entitled Workforce Development Programs (SR 169 of 2023).

[SR 169](#) - (PN 1272) Directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of the various workforce development programs administered by commonwealth agencies. (Prior Printer Number(s): 1153). The report was unanimously **released** to the public.

Anne Witkonis, project manager, Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LBFC), presented the findings of a study on Pennsylvania's workforce development programs mandated by SR 169 of 2023. She said the study evaluated programs across several state departments, focusing on training and skills development. She explained that it found that Title 1 programming met 84% of its goals but fell short in employment and earnings figures nationally. She continued that Title 3 met 73% of its goals, and Title 4's analysis was limited due to data availability. Witkonis said the report highlighted the complexity of determining cost efficiency due to overlapping program eligibility and offered recommendations for improvement in apprenticeship programs, career and technical education (CTE) and workforce development initiatives by the Department of Human Services (DHS), Department of Labor and Industry (L&I) and the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED).

Rep. Jack Rader (R-Monroe) suggested that improving outcomes in certain areas might not require more funding but rather more information and further study. Witkonis agreed that more data collection is necessary for better evaluation of workforce development programs and mentioned that the performance indicators for Titles 1, 3 and 4 are negotiated annually with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL).

Rep. Steve Samuelson (D-Northampton) inquired if there is a tool similar to the one suggested for DHS to evaluate earnings before and after programs within the existing federal requirements. Witkonis explained that federal requirements assess median income in the second quarter after employment, and starting in October, DHS must report these indicators for its Temporary Assistance for

Needy Families (TANF) recipients' earned programs. Rep. Samuelson noted that apprenticeships under the L&I doubled over a five-year period, from approximately 58 to 115, and asked for any indication of why there has been such success with more apprenticeships. Witkonis explained that pre-apprenticeships are "relatively new" and growing due to the availability of grants for apprenticeships. She mentioned that various departments, including DCED and L&I, offer apprenticeship programs and are working to coordinate these opportunities.

Rep. Samuelson pointed out the state agencies studied work with their federal counterparts and said, "a lot of this is federally funded." Witkonis acknowledged the importance of funding. Rep. Samuelson asked about the stability of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding after Congress did not reauthorize it, expressing concern over potential "threats" from Washington, D.C. Witkonis admitted her lack of knowledge on the question but said LBFC could investigate further for Rep. Samuelson. Rep. Samuelson emphasized the significance of funding for workforce training and development programs.

Sen. Christine Tartaglione (D-Philadelphia) mentioned the Senate Labor and Industry Committee passed legislation requiring the department to share workforce development data with local boards and asked if this data sharing would improve workforce development initiatives' effectiveness. Witkonis responded that her team did not examine the specific aspect of WIOA funding threats and described the goal negotiation process between L&I and DOL, indicating her unfamiliarity with the bill in question.



House Appropriations Committee

04/09/25, 11:30 a.m., Room 140, Main Capitol

By Derek Danneker, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider several bills.

[HB 156](#) - (PN 1302) Amends the Human Services Code, in departmental powers and duties as to licensing, providing for carbon monoxide alarm standards in child care centers and family child care homes. Adds language related to the location and approved installation of the carbon monoxide alarm within 18 months of the effective date. Directs the Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide written notice of the requirements to each child care center or family child care home within 12 months of the effective date. Asserts that DHS may take enforcement action against violations. Defines "approved carbon monoxide alarm," "child care center," "installed" and "operational." Effective in 90 days. (Prior PN: 1047, 116). The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 472](#) - (PN 1023) Amends Title 75 (Vehicles), in general provisions, further providing for definitions to define "minor experiencing homelessness;" in licensing of drivers, further providing for learners' permits, for application for driver's license or learner's permit, for application for driver's license or learner's permit by minor and for issuance and content of driver's license; and, in fees, further providing for driver's license and learner's permit. Adds a paragraph under authorization to test for driver's license and junior's license to assert that if the individual is a minor experiencing homelessness, the individual may present the required certification form signed by a teacher, social worker or children and youth caseworker of the minor experiencing homelessness. Provides who is not subject to liability based on submission of certification, including a teacher, social worker or children and youth caseworker of a minor experiencing homelessness. Permits a minor experiencing homelessness to use a temporary address, including the address of a school, foster home or shelter, for any application for a driver's license or learner's permit. Requires the signature of a teacher, social worker or children and youth caseworker of a minor experiencing homelessness to be accepted. Does not require a minor experiencing homelessness to pay a fee to obtain an initial driver's license or an initial identification card. Effective in 19 months. (Prior PN: 455). The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 640](#) - (PN 650) Amends the Administrative Code, in powers and duties of the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP), further providing for powers and duties. Requires DDAP to collaborate and coordinate the services, programs and other efforts provided for among the appropriate departments, agencies and other state personnel per the state plan. Requires annual reporting to be submitted to the chairperson and minority chairperson of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee and chairperson and minority chairperson of the House Human Services Committee within 90 days of the effective date and by Jan. 31 of each year thereafter. Revises the required contents of the report. Effective immediately. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 308](#) - (PN 1303) The Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health Act provides for workplace health and safety standards for public employees; provides for powers and duties of the Secretary of Labor and Industry; establishes the Pennsylvania Occupational Safety and Health Review Board to have and exercise the powers and duties provided by the provisions of this act which shall consist of five persons appointed by the governor from among persons who, by reason of training, education or experience, are qualified to carry out the functions of the review board under this act to serve terms of four years until their

successors are appointed; provides for workplace inspections; and imposes penalties. Provides a legislative declaration and definitions. Applies an occupational safety or health standard promulgated under the provisions of this act to all public employers and public employees and grants the secretary the authority to enforce the standards that exist as of the effective date and are consistent with the provisions and purpose of the act. Preserves statutory and common law rights. Applies an occupational safety or health standard promulgated under this act only to employees not covered by a federal occupational safety or health standard promulgated under 29 U.S.C. § 655 (relating to standards) or amendments thereto. Establishes employer duties, including providing a hazard-free workplace and complying with this act. Outlines regulations, standards and variances. Allows the review board the power to hear and rule on appeals from compliance orders, notifications and penalties issued under the provisions of this act. Provides for an appeal from the review board. Grants inspection and investigation powers to the secretary. Outlines the inspection and investigation of violations. Provides for employer recordkeeping and records relating to death and injury. Specifies the issuance and posting of compliance orders. Details enforcement procedures, providing for notice of order and penalty, notice of failure to correct violation and action by the review board. Outlines injunction proceedings, including temporary restraining orders, action by inspector and failure of the secretary to seek relief. Establishes penalties for an employer who willfully or repeatedly violates the requirements, a compliance order for serious violations and a compliance order for lesser violations. Provides for an employer's failure to correct a violation and for a violation that caused the death of an employee. Specifies that a person may not give an advance notice of an inspection without authority from the secretary. Provides penalties for false statements, violating posting requirements, refusing entry for investigation or inspection and causing bodily harm to the secretary. Gives the review board the authority to assess all administrative penalties. Outlines the determination of serious violations, the disposition of administrative penalties and the unauthorized disclosure of confidential information. Provides for discrimination against employees. Provides for research and demonstration projects conducted by the secretary. Provides for education programs conducted by the secretary directly or by grants or contracts. Requires the Pennsylvania Secretary of Labor and Industry to make reports to the U.S. Secretary of Labor. Maintains confidentiality of information. Asserts that nothing in this act may prohibit the secretary from pursuing federal or state funding for the purposes of this act. Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 261). The bill was **reported as committed** with Republicans voting in the negative, excluding Rep. Kristin Marcell (R-Bucks).

[HB 411](#) - (PN 985) Amends Titles 24 (Education) and 71 (State Government), in membership, contributions and benefits, providing for supplemental annuity commencing 2025; and, in benefits, providing for supplemental annuity commencing 2025. Provides that an eligible benefit recipient shall be entitled to receive an additional monthly supplemental annuity from the system commencing with the first monthly annuity payment after July 1, 2025, and lists the additional supplemental annuity payable as a percentage of the amount of the monthly annuity payment. Adds that the payments will be made automatically. Provides for the conditions and benefits to beneficiaries or survivors. Provides that the additional liability for the increase in benefits shall be funded in equal annual installments over a period of 10 years beginning July 1, 2026. Outlines eligibility requirements, revising class requirements, and adds that a supplemental annuity provided shall not be payable to an annuitant receiving a withdrawal annuity prior to the first day of July coincident with or following the annuitant's attainment of superannuation age. Provides for supplemental annuity benefits commencing 2025 and the amount of additional supplemental annuity. Provides provisions for payments, conditions and benefits to beneficiaries. Requires the additional liability for the increase in benefits provided to be funded as provided in section 5508(e)(2) (relating to actuarial cost method). Outlines who is an eligible benefit recipient, revising class requirements. Effective immediately. (Prior PN: 383). The bill was **reported as committed** with Republicans voting in the negative, excluding Rep. Marcell.

[HB 764](#) - (PN 788) Amends Title 3 (Agriculture), providing for the Fresh Food Financing Initiative; establishing the Fresh Food Financing Initiative Restricted Account; and imposing duties on the Department of Agriculture (PDA). Provides definitions. Mandates that the program be administered by PDA. Directs the department to develop and establish program guidelines and eligibility criteria. Directs that the program will promote local agricultural products by placing priority on projects producing, aggregating, sourcing or selling Pennsylvania agricultural commodities. Provides that grants for capital projects must be matched by private money in an amount equal to the state grant. Asserts that no more than 10% of the funding may be reserved for administrative and operational costs. Provides criteria for eligible applicants. Provides for eligible uses. Directs the department to devise, award and administer grants to eligible applicants. Directs the department to establish standards and requirements. Provides for limitation on grants. Permits the department to promulgate rules and regulations. Provides that the account is established in the General Fund. Provides for supplements to the account from outside sources. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as committed**, on a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

[HB 819](#) - (PN 987) Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, further providing for continuing professional development; providing for access to rigorous courses of study for all students; adding Article XVII-E to establish the Access to Rigorous Courses of Study for All Students Grant Program in the Department of Education (PDE); and imposing duties on PDE. Includes providing opportunities for educators to serve as rigorous course of study coaches to support teachers in delivering high-quality rigorous courses of study as a continuing professional education option. Defines "rigorous course of study" to have the same meaning as in section 1702-E. Provides additional definitions under the added article. Requires each school entity receiving a grant under section 1704-E(b) to provide secondary students with expanded opportunities to enroll in rigorous courses of study as well as exam fee assistance, as appropriate, beginning with the 2025-2026 school year. Asserts the rigorous courses of study supplement, not supplant courses offered by the school entity or the secondary school students. Provides departmental duties.

Establishes the purpose of the program. Provides educator training grants to school entities, adding that a school entity that offers less than eight rigorous courses of study shall be deemed an eligible school entity that may apply for an educator training grant under the programs. Stipulates that a school entity that receives an educator training grant under the program shall offer rigorous courses of study in core academic areas in addition to any other academic areas. Requires rigorous course of study exam fee assistance from the department, mandating PDE to reimburse school entities 100% of the exam fee for each student at or below 185% of the federal poverty threshold who completes an exam and directing each school entity to certify to PDE the amount of reimbursement due on an annual basis. Mandates the department to establish guidelines and procedures necessary for the implementation of this article. Requires reporting and program funding. Provides rights of school employees. Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 926). The bill was **reported as committed**, on a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.



House Labor & Industry Committee

04/08/2025, 10:00 a.m., Room 515, Irvis Office Building

By Dominic Kenny, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider one bill and one resolution.

[HR 97](#) – (PN 827) Resolution recognizing the week of May 4 through 10, 2025, as "Career and Technology Week" and recognizing May 7, 2025, as "National Skilled Trades Day" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was **reported as committed**, with Reps. Scott Barger (R-Blair) and Wendy Fink (R-York) voting in the negative.

[HB 721](#) – (PN 742) Amends the Construction Workplace Misclassification Act, further providing for definitions, for improper classification of employees and for criminal penalties; providing for private right of action; further providing for administrative penalties, for retaliation for action prohibited, for availability of information, for use of penalty funds and for funding; and imposing penalties. Adds definitions. Under enforcement, replaces language to include that if the secretary finds that an employer has failed to properly classify an individual as an employee for the purposes of the act, the secretary shall impose administrative penalties and may refer the matter to the Attorney General for criminal investigation. Strikes "intentionally" from the language and adds supplying labor for construction knowing the employer will misclassify the supplied employees under acting in concert with other parties. Outlines the grading scale, to include a misdemeanor of the first degree if no prior offense exists and a felony of the third degree if the employer has one or more offenses. Adds further definitions. Establishes private right of action within three years from the date that the employee knew of the violation, retaliation or discrimination. Provides for relief, including reinstatements, restitution equal to three times the wages, reasonable attorney fees and other legal and equitable relief. Adds financial audits or tax audits to administrative penalties. Provides for intentional violations, allowing the secretary to debar, for a period of at least three years, the contractor, subcontractor or person from bidding on or participating in a public work project. Prohibits retaliation actions against employees. Requires the availability of the act posted in a conspicuous place. Strikes language in section 12 (use of penalty funds and recovered fees and costs), adding any sum collected as a penalty, recovered attorney fee or cost associated with any investigation under the act shall be deposited into a restricted revenue account created in the General Fund. Allows the Attorney general or district attorney's office to recover attorney fees and costs associated with the investigation of construction worker misclassification, along with any resulting enforcement action, from employers who violate the provisions. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as amended**, along a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

[A00298](#), by Grove, repeals Act 72 of 2010. The amendment **failed**, on a party-line vote, with Democrats voting in the negative.

[A00318](#), by Dawkins, specifies provisions related to the act's enforcement and penalties for violations. The amendment was **adopted**, along a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

Rep. Kyle Donahue (D-Lackawanna), the bill's prime sponsor, said the Joint Task Force on Misclassification of Employees established by Act 85 of 2020 found that nearly 11,000 misclassified employees were denied worker's compensation despite suffering from injury or illness. He said the bill strengthens existing law by implementing several of the unanimous recommendations made by the task force. He noted that the bill increases penalties on contractors who misclassify employees, empowers the Attorney General to investigate and prosecute worker misclassification and provides misclassified employees with an avenue to pursue justice. He stressed that the bill will prevent the continued exploitation of workers through misclassification.

Minority Chairman Seth Grove (R-York) said the Department of Labor and Industry (L&I) and the Attorney General's Office (AGO) utilize Act 72 of 2010, known as the Construction Workplace Misclassification Act, "to go after small businesses" by adding costs and burdens. He referenced recent tax increases in Maryland, saying Pennsylvania should "reap the benefits of poor decisions"

made by other states. He argued Pennsylvania is “criminalizing businesses,” causing them to seek opportunities elsewhere. He said the legislation coming out of the committee is growing government and failing to grow the economy. He noted that many recommendations made by the task force were not included in the bill. He urged the committee to put a halt to misclassification without penalizing businesses. “This [bill] criminalizes that individual who’s just trying to the achieve the American dream,” he said. “I think it’s the wrong direction.”

Rep. Jim Haddock (D-Luzerne) reminded the committee that Act 72 of 2010 passed through a split legislature. “I find it rich that somebody mentions today, of all times, taxes in another state, when we all know tariffs is just another word for tax,” he said. “Look at what’s going on in the federal government and how much we’re taxing our people here in the United States and across the world.”

Chairman Grove defended the recent Trump administration tariffs, calling America’s trade deficit with China “horrendous.” He argued the tariffs would bring manufacturing jobs back to the United States, including Pennsylvania. He said many jobs were outsourced to China because of the trade deficit. He defended recent dips in the stock market, arguing that “no one loses money if you don’t actually take capital gains out of the stock market.”

Chairman Jason Dawkins (D-Philadelphia) stressed that the misclassification of workers led to wage theft. He argued, “I’ve heard this from the minority side for years when it comes to deporting undocumented individuals, ‘lock them up, throw away the key,’ but when they work for one of the companies that profits in this in this country, that benefits the certain subsection of a sector is ‘wait we should not prosecute, we should not go that far.’” He reminded the committee that the first penalty is a third-degree misdemeanor that serves as a warning and that Florida has a similar law. He expressed concern over what would happen to individuals who do not own stocks or are reliant on supplies that are imported from other countries. He said Chairman Grove’s amendment would be a step backwards, repealing a “vital law” that protections construction workers from exploitation.

Chairman Grove criticized Chairman Dawkin’s amendment, which would remove language clarifying whether the violation was intentional or not. He argued that L&I could go after businesses for unintentionally violating the law. He said the amendment will prevent businesses from coming to Pennsylvania. He showed a willingness to find a “middle ground” on the issue.

Rep. Barbara Gleim (R-Cumberland) criticized the bill for having broad provisions for what constitutes a successor entity. She argued the definition provided in the bill contradicts commonwealth law. Chairman Dawkins encouraged Rep. Gleim to offer an amendment to address the issue.

Rep. Dan Miller (D-Allegheny) argued that the issue of worker misclassification could have been addressed much sooner and that the task force was not necessary. He said he has heard numerous complaints from workers regarding the issue for years. He said that the bill was not a perfect solution but argued that it was necessary.

Rep. Barger, referencing his time as an independent contractor, said he opposed the bill. He said the freedom of being an independent contractor gave him the opportunity to take on more jobs and make more money for his family. He criticized the definition of independent contractor in the bill, which states that independent must be free from direction or control over performance of work under the contract. He said he could not recall a time in his career when he was free of direction or control. He said the bill would make it “too risky” to hire independent contractors for many employers.

Chairman Grove criticized the bill for ignoring certain recommendations made by the task force. He said the bill could cause workers like Rep. Barger to be thrown in jail by the AGO. He argued that Pennsylvania already has too many workforce issues and that the commonwealth should “get people to work.” He expressed doubt that the bill would pass the Senate.

Chairman Dawkins reminded the committee that the minority party has the ability to write legislation. He criticized Republicans for not providing a solution to worker misclassification. “Why are we sitting here pretending that wage theft is not a crime,” he asked. “Why should we sit here and pretend if you’re stealing from your worker, you shouldn’t be prosecuted? It’s ridiculous.” He emphasized that the bill only prosecutes repeat offenders.



Bullet.in.Points

PDE: PROPOSED GRANT APPLICATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION UNDER PART B OF THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT FOR FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2025; CORRECTION

The Department of Education issued a correction in the notice that appeared at 55 Pa.B. 2280 (March 22, 2025), which incorrectly stated, "through their 21st birthday" instead of "until their 22nd birthday." The second paragraph of that notice is corrected as follows and the remainder of the notice is accurate as published. The second paragraph is corrected as follows:

"The Department is also seeking public comment on revisions to its State Plan and Model LEA policies and procedures, specifically its age of eligibility for the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE). To comply with Federal and State law, the Department seeks to extend FAPE to students with disabilities until their 22nd birthday, rather than ending services at the conclusion of the school term in which they turn 21 years of age. This revision aligns with 34 CFR 300.102(a)(2) (relating to limitation—exception to FAPE for certain ages) and 22 Pa. Code § 14.102(a)(2)(x) (relating to purposes), as the Commonwealth provides public education to students within this age range."

Additional information is available in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

Cosponsor Memos

HCO1135 - Private Academic Schools Act (Prior HB 557, 2023-2024)

Sponsor

Rep. David H. Zimmerman (R)

Summary

Amends the Private Academic Schools Act of 1988 to permit the licensure of online schools.

Intro Date

01/17/2025

Last Action

04/10/2025 H - Introduced HB1197

HCO1630 - Student and Teacher Support Act – “Chaplin Bill” (prior HB 2183, 2023-2024)

Sponsor

Rep. David H. Zimmerman (R)

Summary

Allows public school entities to employ, or approve as a volunteer, a certified school chaplain.

Intro Date

02/20/2025

Last Action

04/10/2025 H - Introduced HB1206

HCO1948 - Honoring Members of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Sponsor

Rep. Lindsay Powell (D)

Summary

Resolution recognizing and honoring the members of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. on Delta Day.

Intro Date

03/27/2025

Last Action

04/08/2025 H - Introduced HR183

HCO1965 - Resolution Urging The Pennsylvania State University and its President to Use Transparency in Campus Closure Decisions

Sponsor

Rep. Jill N. Cooper (R)

Summary

Resolution calls for ensuring all stakeholders have access to the data and criteria being used to evaluate campus viability; providing meaningful opportunities for affected communities to participate in the decision-making process; demonstrating how educational access will be maintained for communities losing a physical campus; developing transition plans that minimize harm to students, employees, and local economies.

Intro Date

03/28/2025

Last Action

04/04/2025 H - Introduced HR179

SCO454 - Displaying the Preamble of the Constitution of Pennsylvania in Schools

Sponsor

Sen. Cris Dush (R)

Summary

Requires the posting of the preamble to the Pennsylvania Constitution at the entrance of every state-funded school building and state-funded institution of higher education.

Intro Date

12/31/2024

Last Action

04/09/2025 S - Introduced SB250

SCO464 - Interscholastic Sports for Phys. Ed Requirement

Sponsor

Sen. Cris Dush (R)

Summary

Enables school board directors to permit students to satisfy the physical education requirements by their participation in an interscholastic sport.

Intro Date

01/02/2025

Last Action

04/09/2025 S - Introduced SB589

SCO470 - Displaying the Preamble of the Constitution of the United States in Schools

Sponsor

Sen. Cris Dush (R)

Summary

Requires the posting of the preamble to the United States Constitution in the entrance of every educational facility that accepts commonwealth tax dollars.

Intro Date

01/02/2025

Last Action

04/09/2025 S - Introduced SB598

SCO500 - Expanding Opportunities for Pennsylvania Students for Advanced Coursework Access

Sponsor

Sen. Daniel Laughlin (R)

Summary

Aims to help lower the cost of and to ensure all Pennsylvania students have greater opportunities to advanced courses in core academic subjects and encourages more school districts to offer tuition and time saving college level course work. Establishes an Advanced Coursework Teacher Training Program, which will provide training for teachers in eligible schools to offer AP courses in core academic areas.

Intro Date

01/06/2025

Last Action

04/04/2025 S - Introduced SB547

SCO839 - Historical Display of the "Creation of Law in Our Schools" Act

Sponsor

Sen. Doug Mastriano (R)

Summary

Requires schools to prominently display the Ten Commandments.

Intro Date

03/06/2025

Last Action

04/09/2025 S - Introduced SB544

Basic Ed Bill Actions

HCO1135 - Private Academic Schools Act (Prior HB 557, 2023-2024)

Sponsor

Rep. David H. Zimmerman (R)

Summary

Amends the Private Academic Schools Act of 1988 to permit the licensure of online schools.

Intro Date

01/17/2025

Last Action

04/10/2025 H - Introduced HB1197

HCO1630 - Student and Teacher Support Act – “Chaplin Bill” (prior HB 2183, 2023-2024)

Sponsor

Rep. David H. Zimmerman (R)

Summary

Allows public school entities to employ, or approve as a volunteer, a certified school chaplain.

Intro Date

02/20/2025

Last Action

04/10/2025 H - Introduced HB1206

HCO1948 - Honoring Members of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Sponsor

Rep. Lindsay Powell (D)

Summary

Resolution recognizing and honoring the members of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. on Delta Day.

Intro Date

03/27/2025

Last Action

04/08/2025 H - Introduced HR183

HCO1965 - Resolution Urging The Pennsylvania State University and its President to Use Transparency in Campus Closure Decisions

Sponsor

Rep. Jill N. Cooper (R)

Summary

Resolution calls for ensuring all stakeholders have access to the data and criteria being used to evaluate campus viability; providing meaningful opportunities for affected communities to participate in the decision-making process; demonstrating how educational access will be maintained for communities losing a physical campus; developing transition plans that minimize harm to students, employees, and local economies.

Intro Date

03/28/2025

Last Action

04/04/2025 H - Introduced HR179

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Sponsor

Sen. Cris Dush (R)

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Intro Date

01/02/2025

Last Action

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Sponsor

Sen. Daniel Laughlin (R)

Summary

Aims to help lower the cost of and to ensure all Pennsylvania students have greater opportunities to advanced courses in core academic subjects and encourages more school districts to offer tuition and time saving college level course work. Establishes an Advanced Coursework Teacher Training Program, which will provide training for teachers in eligible schools to offer AP courses in core academic areas.

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Sponsor

Sen. Doug Mastriano (R)

Summary

Requires schools to prominently display the Ten Commandments.

Intro Date

03/06/2025

Last Action

04/09/2025 S - Introduced SB544

Higher Ed Bill Actions

SB547 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in certification of teachers, further providing for continuing professional development; providing for access to advanced courses for all students; establishing the Access to Advanced Courses for All Students Grant Program; and imposing duties on the Department of Education.

Sponsor

Sen. Daniel Laughlin (R)

Intro Date

04/04/2025

Actions

04/04/2025 S - Introduced

04/04/2025 S - Referred to - Senate Education

Upcoming Events

MONDAY – 04/14/2025

1:30 PM, [House Democratic Policy Committee](#)

Public Hearing, Penn State New Kensington Digital Foundry 855 Fifth Ave. New Kensington

Public hearing on The Impact of Life Sciences.

TUESDAY – 04/15/2025

10:30 AM, Homeschool Capitol Day Press Conference

Press Conference

1:00 PM, [Senate Republican Policy](#)

Public Hearing, Trolleyworks Business Park, 3316 5th Ave, Altoona

Public hearing on the Do No Harm Act.

FRIDAY – 04/25/2025

10:30 AM, 12th Annual Student Competition Award Ceremony

Press Conference

Auditor General DeFoor will partner with Harrisburg University of Science and Technology and Members 1st Federal Credit Union to announce and honor the finalists of the 12th Annual Student Financial Literacy Competition.

In the News

[04/07/2025 - Culver Applauds Bipartisan Senate Passage of Key Funding Bill During Career and Tech Ed Day at the Capitol](#)

[04/07/2025 - Senators Boscola and Pennycuik Introduce Senate Bill 422 to Boost Math Proficiency with Supplemental Program for Pennsylvania Students](#)

[04/08/2025 - Senate Majority Policy Committee to Review Do No Harm Act](#)

[04/08/2025 - Pennsylvania Teachers, Students, Education Advocates Call for Need to Address Educator Workforce Crisis, Invest in Teachers](#)

[04/09/2025 - Sen. Kearney and Rep. O'Mara Host Annual Apprenticeship & Trades Fair for Local Middle & High School Students](#)

Education Recap is a comprehensive weekly report on legislative and executive actions on education related legislation 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, Derek, Hattie, Sam, Grace, Aaron, Christian, Katie, Zoe, Daniel, Kyle, Nicholas, Dominic, Julia and Noah.

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