

**Oct. 24 – 30, 2025**

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## SESSION STATUS

At 2:15 p.m. on Wednesday, October 29, 2025, the House stands adjourned until Monday, November 17, 2025, at 12:00 p.m., unless sooner recalled by the Speaker.

At 1:16 p.m. on Wednesday, October 29, 2025, the Senate recessed to the call of the President Pro Tempore.

## UPCOMING SESSION DAYS

### House

Nov. 17-19  
Dec. 8-10 (NV), 15-17

### Senate

Nov. 17-19  
Dec. 8-10

*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](mailto:sales@mypls.com).*

## Press Conferences

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

### **SENATE DEMOCRATS INTRODUCE HUNGER RELIEF AND GRANT PROGRAM**

By Zoe Buchmann, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | October 28, 2025

Sen. Art Haywood (D-Montgomery) was joined by fellow Senate Democrats and activists to announce the [Pennsylvania Food and Hunger Relief Program](#) at today's press conference in the Senate Minority Caucus Room.

Sen. Haywood, minority chairman, Senate Health and Human Services Committee, highlighted the urgent crisis as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) food benefits are set to be cut starting November 1, alongside new paperwork requirements for recipients aged 18 to 64, requiring 80 hours of work, school or volunteering. He emphasized the impact on vulnerable populations, including disabled individuals, veterans, seniors and families, citing examples from his district of people struggling to make ends meet and businesses reliant on SNAP customers. He announced that in response, the Senate Democratic Caucus is proposing the Pennsylvania Food and Hunger Relief Grant Program, which would allocate \$50 million from the state's rainy day fund to food banks, \$10 million for Meals on Wheels and \$2 million for administrative costs. He stated that this is intended as emergency relief, not a replacement for SNAP's \$300 million monthly support. He urged colleagues and the public to support the initiative, volunteer and help feed neighbors, stressing that hunger affects everyone regardless of race, gender or location.

Julie Bancroft, CEO, Feeding Pennsylvania, emphasized the growing hunger crisis in the state, noting a 44% increase in hunger over two years and that one in six children in Pennsylvania goes hungry. She highlighted that food banks are resilient and efficient, distributing over 237 million pounds of food annually, but they face a "perfect storm" due to lost federal funding, stalled state agricultural surplus funds, the federal shutdown and the impending loss of SNAP benefits for two million Pennsylvanians starting November 1. She stressed that food banks cannot meet this surge in need alone, and daily demand is already doubling, and resources are being rapidly depleted. She argued that withholding funding forces vulnerable individuals, like veterans, seniors, and working parents, to make impossible choices to access food. She called on policymakers to act with humanity and support food banks, thanking Sen. Haywood for the proposed emergency relief package.

Shila Ulrich, CEO, Central Pennsylvania Food Bank, spoke on behalf of all eight Feeding America food banks in Pennsylvania, highlighting the long-term hunger crisis exacerbated by the state budget impasse and federal funding uncertainties. She emphasized that programs like the State Food Purchase Program (SFPP) and the Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System (PASS) are critical for purchasing fresh, local food and distributing it to families statewide, but delays are leaving shelves empty and people without essential nutrition. She shared the impact of hunger, recounting families who turn to food pantries only after exhausting all other options, and noted a 44% increase in demand over two years. She stressed that rising costs and program delays are driving working families to food banks, with some locations seeing a 60% spike in demand in just one week. She called for swift, bipartisan action to stabilize hunger relief programs, warning that food banks cannot fill the gaps left by prolonged policy inaction, and urged leaders to ensure consistent funding to prevent families from facing empty refrigerators.

Sen. Judy Schwank (D-Berks), minority chairman, Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, emphasized that using hunger as a political tool is unacceptable, calling the situation a true crisis. She highlighted the strain on families and local food banks as nonprofits scramble to meet unprecedented demand. She stressed that SNAP not only feeds families but also supports local farmers and small agricultural businesses, providing fresh, healthy food while sustaining the local economy. She advocated for the Senate Democratic emergency relief package, which would use interest from the Rainy Day Fund to provide \$50 million to food banks without tapping the principal fund. She urged public participation, calling on people to donate and volunteer at food banks with usable food. She emphasized empathy, reminding the audience that many people they know likely rely on SNAP. She called for an end to the federal shutdown and restoration of SNAP benefits.

Sen. Lindsey Williams (D-Allegheny) expressed frustration and urgency over the SNAP crisis, noting that charitable food pantries cannot replace the infrastructure or scale of SNAP, and federal inaction is leaving Pennsylvanians at risk of hunger. She highlighted the spike in demand, citing a 25% increase in calls to United Ways/211 immediately after the federal SNAP freeze announcement, on top of a 60% year-over-year increase in requests for assistance. She condemned the federal and state budget delays, calling for a fully funded SNAP program and a state budget that invests in people, emphasizing that budgets are moral documents. She encouraged public support through donations and volunteering but stressed that systemic action is essential to prevent hunger in Pennsylvania.

Sen. Haywood announced that Gov. Josh Shapiro has joined a multi-state lawsuit demanding that the federal government release U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) reserve funds so SNAP benefits can resume. Sen. Haywood emphasized that USDA holds reserves for exactly this kind of emergency and that releasing them is a simple matter of allowing people to eat. He praised Gov. Shapiro's leadership for taking swift action.

Sen. Haywood displayed a statewide map showing SNAP reliance across all 67 Pennsylvania counties, highlighting that the crisis affects rural, suburban and urban communities alike. He stressed that misconceptions about who uses SNAP persist, and the map demonstrates that hunger spans every region and demographic.

Sen. Jay Costa (D-Allegheny), Senate minority leader, thanked Senator Haywood for leading the Senate Democratic Caucus's response to the SNAP crisis and emphasized the caucus's unified commitment to addressing the emergency. He reiterated the urgency of supporting food banks, Meals on Wheels and related organizations so they can help mitigate the anticipated surge in hunger across Pennsylvania in the coming days and weeks. Costa stressed that the crisis will not end on November 1 — its impacts will compound over the month and beyond unless a resolution is reached quickly. He expressed gratitude to his colleagues for making this issue a top priority for the caucus.

Sen. Carolyn Comitta (D-Chester) joined the press conference late but emphasized that the people need help right now. She pointed to the rebuilding of I-95 in 12 days to highlight how fast the state can act in a crisis. She urged her colleagues to act swiftly now as well.

### **How are you going to get this into law and money to the food banks?**

Sen. Haywood explained that based on his experience, the legislature can move extremely quickly when an issue is made a high priority. He said that by suspending certain procedural rules, both chambers could pass the emergency food-relief legislation within days. He expressed confidence that if lawmakers on both sides treat this as the urgent matter it is, the governor will sign it immediately. Regarding implementation, Sen. Haywood noted that the state can distribute funds rapidly through electronic transfers, though he deferred to the Department of Agriculture for precise timelines.

### **Where is the money coming from?**

Sen. Haywood answered that while they do not have an exact accounting timeline for when the \$62 million in proposed emergency funding would begin drawing down, the Rainy Day Fund has earned far more than \$62 million in interest. He stressed that the plan uses only the interest, not the principal, making it the least intrusive and most fiscally conservative option. He emphasized that the state has the money, that the Rainy Day Fund is healthy and that using the interest preserves 100% of the principal.

### **Is there something to be said about our own state budget being late? Is there any progress on that, and how will this initiative move forward?**

Sen. Haywood noted that this situation constitutes an emergency, primarily because the federal government has announced that it will no longer provide SNAP assistance after the 31st of this month. He explained that the state program has been created specifically to respond to that federal decision, and that the lawsuit challenges the federal government's refusal to use its available reserves to continue providing food assistance.

### **Has the Senate reacted to this proposal to use the interest?**

Sen. Haywood replied that they are sharing the proposal with everyone in the General Assembly and the Governor's Office now.

## Would they agree to put this on the floor?

Sen. Haywood stated that the legislation is being presented now and expressed hope that every caucus, along with the Governor's Office, will support it. He warned that failure to act would amount to adopting a "let them be hungry" stance, a position he said he could not imagine any of his colleagues defending in their home districts.

Sen. Haywood thanked everyone for attending the press conference, noting that his map shows that everyone from the Senate to the House has people in their districts who are impacted by this. He added that this is a solution for all of Pennsylvania.



## LAWMAKERS SUPPORT HB 1849

By Julia Walters, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | October 29, 2025

Lawmakers, sports groups representatives, students and parents convened in the Ryan Office Building Atrium today to advocate for [HB 1849](#).

Rep. Clint Owlett (R-Tioga), the bill's prime sponsor, addressed critiques regarding the motive for speaking on his bill while the state budget remains delayed. He emphasized it is "always the right time to stand up and defend our daughters." Rep. Owlett stated all girls have the right to "fair play" and safe locker rooms. Rep. Owlett mentioned that Democrats are unhappy with what President Donald Trump has "done with his leadership" regarding this issue and are "digging in their heels" to avoid it. Rep. Owlett criticized Gov. Josh Shapiro for "allowing" House Democrats to "avoid" pushing the bill forward. He called it an "absolute shame" that the bill has not been run by the House. "They can't wait until they can go right back to allowing men to take opportunities away from our daughters," he said. Rep. Owlett called on his colleagues to "demand" Gov. Shapiro and House Majority Leader Matt Bradford (D-Montgomery) to get [SB 9](#), [HB 158](#) or HB 1849 to Gov. Shapiro's desk. He noted that "80% of Pennsylvanians" support keeping men's and women's sports teams separated.

Rep. Justin Fritz (R-Susquehanna) commended Rep. Owlett for his bill and mentioned it promotes "fairness, commonsense and dignity" in women's sports. "In my understanding, the defense of women's sports is simply the right thing to do," he said.

Frank Murphy, chair, Athletes for America Coalition, America First Policy Institute (AFPI), said it was time to "get off the bench" and "get in the game." He noted that fathers have a "responsibility" to protect their daughters. He expressed disappointment at fathers for "letting their purpose go to the graveyard." Murphy stated that being silent on the issue of fairness in women's sports is "cheating" future generations. He stressed the importance of men letting go of "fear" and "speculation" and mentioned the significance of advocating for "the right side." Murphy criticized the concept of daughters having sports experiences "taken away" from them because "someone doesn't know their identity." Murphy reiterated that men and fathers have a responsibility to "lead the way" to protect their daughters. "If you don't have a daughter, look at a beautiful girl that's out there playing sports, giving her very best every day," he said.

Lilliana Williams, former captain, Hempfield High School Girls' Track and Field, emphasized her intention to ensure women have fairness in sports. She described her senior year experience in Spring 2021 as being the captain of Hempfield High School's Girls' Track and Field team. Williams explained she and her teammates were "in shock" when they saw "a member of the Boys' Cross Country team" had joined them. She noted her disappointment with not being spoken to about the student prior to their joining the team. Williams stated the student was "bigger, stronger and faster" than the other girls on the team. She mentioned she and her teammates were "upset" by the situation. Williams expressed disappointment at her concerns being "dismissed" by her coaches and the principal before taking the issue to the Hempfield School Board. "I was told that nothing could be done and that my coach wasn't even allowed to discuss the issue with me," she added. Williams praised the school board for changing their policy for the next school year to prohibit men from competing on women's sports teams. Williams mentioned this "is not just a political issue" but rather a "moral," a "spiritual" and a "human" issue." She condemned the "erasure" of women's sports and "radical transgender activism" that "punishes people of faith." She mentioned the importance of "real women" having "real rights" and the significance of "scientific truth." Williams added, "As a Christian, I'm glad to speak truth."

Rep. Joe Hamm (R-Lycoming) mentioned his two daughters and his desire to protect them. He said it is "never the wrong time to stand up for our daughters."

Paula Scanlan, senior fellow, American Principles Project (APP), described her experience as a former Division I swimmer for the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn). She said it was a “nightmare” due to a student from the men’s swimming team who “woke up one day and decided he wanted to join our women’s team.” Scanlan recalled comforting teammates who “had tears in their eyes” when the transgender student “beat them out” in key races. “Every single time he competed on behalf of our university... a girl was asked to stay home,” she said. Scanlan and her team members brought their concerns to the UPenn athletic department and said the girls were told “they were the problem.” She explained that partnering with various lawmakers around the country has been helpful in getting legislation regarding women’s sports passed in several states. She criticized Gov. Shapiro for referring to women’s sports advocates as “radical extremists.”

Scanlan opposed the concept of wanting women’s sports only for women as extremist. She said, “If even one girl feels uncomfortable by male athletes, we have failed.” She continued, “For that, I will never apologize.”

Rep. Joseph D’Orsie (R-York) mentioned his belief that there has not been another issue “in recent memory” with as much bipartisan support as HB 1849. He reiterated that “roughly eight out of 10 Pennsylvanians” agree that men’s and women’s sports teams should be kept separate. Rep. D’Orsie praised SB 9 for its “broad bipartisan support” and criticized the House Democrats for “stifling” the bill. He criticized Gov. Shapiro for calling their stance “extreme.” Rep. D’Orsie expressed disappointment in seeing Title IX “deteriorate” due to a “biological male outpacing” a female student. He called on fathers, brothers and uncles to stand up for fairness in women’s sports.

Rep. Eric Davanzo (R-Westmoreland) addressed concerns regarding why members of the House Republicans were focusing on HB 1849 amid budget delays. “I’m damn proud to stand with my extreme legislators,” he said. Rep. Davanzo rejected the idea that fairness in women’s sports is about hate or exclusion. “Everybody remembers five years ago, trust the science,” he said. “They threw the science out the window three years ago.” Rep. Davanzo emphasized that fathers have a responsibility to “raise our sons to be men.” He added he “will not apologize” for defending girls’ and women’s sports. “Keep biological males the hell out of female sports,” Rep. Davanzo remarked.



## **LAWMAKERS, ADVOCATES DEMAND “TAX BILLIONAIRES, FUND PENNSYLVANIA”**

By Julia Walters, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | October 29, 2025

Legislators, advocates and state organizations gathered in the Main Capitol Rotunda today to speak out against billionaires and tax loopholes for wealthy corporations.

Advocate, Pennsylvania for Accountability from Yass, Billionaires and Corporations (PAYBAC), introduced their “Tax billionaires, fund PA” campaign. She stated Pennsylvania is able to advance budget cuts while investing in necessary services if billionaires and large corporations “pay their fair share in taxes.”

Sen. Nikil Saval (D-Philadelphia) said that in order to fund mass transit, education, health care and housing, billionaires should be taxed at a higher rate. He said he is “proud” to stand with advocates and fellow legislators to speak on the tax system in Pennsylvania. Sen. Saval emphasized the state budget’s lateness by 120 days. He added the commonwealth’s situation has been “exacerbated” by the federal government shutdown. Sen. Saval noted that while the challenges are “deeply felt,” it is not a new problem. He criticized “decades of underinvestment” in Pennsylvania’s transit networks, no minimum wage updates in the last 16 years and the unconstitutionality of the state’s education system. “Legislators are left negotiating cuts to one vital public service in order to save, at a bare minimum, another,” Sen. Saval said. He mentioned that Pennsylvania’s rising costs for groceries and other utilities are rising “faster than almost all other states.” Sen. Saval stressed that the nation is at a “critical moment” and billionaires and wealthy corporations “must” be taxed for Pennsylvania’s future. “Budget delays will pale in comparison to the catastrophe that lies ahead,” Sen. Saval explained. He supported every billionaire and corporation paying what they owe in taxes. Sen. Saval announced an upcoming “three-part legislative package” to amend Pennsylvania’s tax structure that will result in more distributions of wealth. “Fund PA by taxing the rich,” he emphasized.

Rep. Elizabeth Fiedler (D-Philadelphia) commented on the rising prices in Pennsylvania and mentioned it is “only going to get worse.” She noted the severity of the federal government shutdown, compounded by no state budget in Pennsylvania, resulting in cuts for many essential services. Rep. Fiedler announced her legislation, [HB 1678](#), to tax corporations for digital ads online. She criticized wealthy corporations for “profiting from our use of the internet” and not being subject to taxation. “The people pay their taxes, and yet there’s all these huge companies that are showing us these ads when we’re just trying to use the internet, and our

state's not getting that money," Rep. Fiedler emphasized. She stated the commonwealth could use that revenue for key investments such as education or transit. Rep. Fiedler mentioned that Pennsylvania's tax structure was created "a century" ago, before the internet was conceivable. She described her digital tax legislation and mentioned her bill could generate "millions of dollars" in revenue. Rep. Fiedler spoke on a similar piece of legislation in Maryland that created \$170 million in a "few" years. She opposed the "reckless" cuts occurring at the federal level and stated Pennsylvania must "get creative" with finding new revenue streams.

Sen. Katie Muth (D-Montgomery) commended the press event's theme of taxing billionaires. She criticized wealthy corporations for "avoiding paying their fair share" of taxes. Sen. Muth warned the country is "drifting" toward an oligarchy-style of government with the wealthy few "controlling" the people. She expressed her belief that the tax system is "rigged" and opposed Pennsylvania not requiring combined reporting as a state tax regulation. Sen. Muth condemned wealthy corporations for "using Pennsylvania's infrastructure and workforce" while moving profits out of the commonwealth and paying nothing in taxes. "Forty percent of corporations in Pennsylvania pay zero dollars in corporate tax," she emphasized. "Someone has to make up the difference." Sen. Muth explained how the tax burden is then shifted onto the people of Pennsylvania. She opposed billionaires and corporations for using Pennsylvania to conduct business while negatively impacting the environment and prioritizing profits over people. Sen. Muth called it "unfair" and "immoral." She praised Rep. Fiedler's upcoming legislation to tax digital ads and mentioned another solution is to "close the Delaware loophole," which allows corporations to avoid corporate income tax in states where they conduct business. Sen. Muth stated these solutions will help "level the playing field" for everyday workers. She mentioned that the power of the people is "always greater" than the wealthy elite. "The system should serve the people," Sen. Muth said. "Not the powerful few."

Rep. Rick Krajewski (D-Philadelphia) noted the net worths of key wealthy figures. He said Elon Musk's net worth is \$484 billion, Jeff Bezos' net worth is \$236 billion and Pennsylvania's richest man, Jeffrey Yass, is worth \$65.7 billion. Rep. Krajewski mentioned their combined net worths are greater than the gross domestic products (GDPs) of several countries, including Ireland, Denmark, Argentina and Spain. "We were sold a lie about funding public goods," he said. Rep. Krajewski stated the public is told to "engage in austerity" while corporations "spend billions without blinking" on "pet projects." He said Pennsylvania's tax system has resulted in the underfunding of key essential services. Rep. Krajewski shifted focus to tax policies that emerged in the 1980s under former president Ronald Reagan's leadership. "There are many ideas from the 80s that we have realized were a mistake," he said, mentioning the war on drugs, cuts to social programs and "80s hair metal bands." He opposed the idea of the "richest men in civilization to hoard their extreme wealth." Rep. Krajewski advocated for legislation to increase taxation on the wealthy. He added that this will not "stifle" economics in Pennsylvania but make it more equitable for everyone. Rep. Krajewski criticized billionaires for "hijacking" the state's economy and expressed disappointment at seeing economic system failures "in real time."

Steve Catanese, president Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 668, stated he represents 20,000 service employees across Pennsylvania. "We are at the epicenter of government dysfunction," he said, mentioning the lack of a state budget and federal government shutdown. He condemned the concept that billionaires pay less than the working class in taxes. Catanese addressed the recent decision by President Donald Trump to "slash" the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and his opinion that "welfare is a Democratic issue." Catanese emphasized that all people, regardless of political stance, need access to food support. "I'm looking forward to taxing the Democratic billionaires just as much as I am the Republican billionaires," he added. "This is a start, not an end."

Shakya Thomas, home care worker, SEIU Healthcare Pennsylvania (HCPA), described working with and caring for people "all her life." She emphasized, "When we come together, we can elicit real change." Thomas mentioned she gets little respect for the work she does, even though she is "literally keeping people alive." She expressed support for Gov. Josh Shapiro's budget proposal that includes a \$1 to \$2 raise in wages and paid time off (PTO) for direct home care workers. "They're sitting on the money," Thomas said. "We need to be asking why." She criticized billionaires for "hoarding" their wealth while the working class faces severe financial challenges, such as paying for groceries and not receiving food assistance. "Get uncomfortable and set extra plates at your dinner table because we're coming knocking," Thomas said.

Rep. Chris Rabb (D-Philadelphia) expressed concern for his constituents "facing choices they shouldn't have to face." He praised advocates and his colleagues for "fighting the fight." Rep. Rabb echoed the sentiment that the tax system in Pennsylvania is "rigged" toward the wealthy corporations and individual billionaires. "Let's be honest, you don't really earn a billion dollars, do you?" he questioned. "No, you take it." Rep. Rabb criticized the wealthy for taking money from working-class people and communities "that help Pennsylvania run." He demanded fair revenue solutions. Rep. Rabb advocated for closing corporate loopholes so that corporations can be taxed equally. "We can fully fund PA if billionaires pay their share," Rep. Rabb stressed. He urged the legislature to "do what's right" for the people of Pennsylvania.

Rick Heinze, member, Center for Coalfield Justice, recalled how the 1950s post-war era was a "booming" time for the United States economy. He mentioned the infrastructure advances, such as the creation of the interstate highway system. He explained how the tax structure of the 1950s used to incorporate a "marginal tax of 91%" for those making over \$200,000. "The reason we could do it then and we can't do it now is because then we taxed the rich," Heinze stated.

Sen. Lindsey Williams (D-Allegheny) opposed the idea that the billionaires “call the shots” in Pennsylvania while necessary services remain underfunded. She mentioned they “don’t care” about Pennsylvania’s infrastructure or its working class. “They do care about tax breaks for themselves and their tech bro billionaire friends,” she continued. Sen. Williams expressed frustration about Senate Republicans delaying voting on a bill “to reauthorize funding for our 911 emergency system and to support dispatchers” due to an amendment proposed by Sen. Muth to increase the surcharge by 25 cents. “Our county has requested a mere quarter more, and the majority pulled the entire bill rather than vote on that amendment,” she said. Sen. Williams mentioned Senate Republicans “have absolutely no qualms about repeatedly passing school privatization bills that give automatically escalating tax credits to the wealthiest Pennsylvanians.” She criticized the billionaires and corporations for making money off of Pennsylvanians and urged the legislature to “close the loopholes” and “raise the revenue” the commonwealth needs for essential services.

Paulette Whitfield, board vice-chair, One Pennsylvania, condemned the idea that billionaires get richer while Pennsylvanians suffer. She expressed her desire to speak up on behalf of seniors and the working people of the commonwealth. Whitfield criticized SNAP benefits being cut off for thousands of Pennsylvania residents. “The money is there,” she said. “It’s there in the billionaire’s pockets that they’re hiding and hoarding.” Whitfield stressed standing for the working class rather than the billionaires.



## **PASBO, PASA CALL FOR END TO BUDGET IMPASSE**

By Dominic Kenny, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | October 30, 2025

School administrators from across the commonwealth gathered in the Main Capitol Rotunda today to call for an end to the state budget impasse.

Hannah Barrick, executive director, Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials (PASBO), said many school districts are beginning the 2026-2027 budget process without knowing what funds they are going to get in the current fiscal year from the commonwealth. She noted school districts are currently missing \$5 billion in state and federal funding, roughly 10% of the commonwealth’s total budget. She stressed that the budget impasse has delayed essential purchases and maintenance.

Sherri Smith, executive director, Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA), said school leaders have had to make tough decisions to keep schools open. She stated the budget impact has been even more dire for school districts that heavily rely on state funding, including those with declining assessed values and low tax bases. She said schools are at a juncture where they will begin limiting extracurricular programs and other non-essential services.

Dr. Andrew Doster, superintendent, Morrisville School District, said he was surprised to find out that legislators in Harrisburg would be the biggest obstacle in providing his students with a quality education. He highlighted that the difficult financial situation caused by the budget impasse is forcing his school district to make difficult decisions regarding academic programming and opportunities for students. He said small school districts like Morrisville are currently being hit the hardest but warned that wealthier school districts will soon feel the financial squeeze. He stressed that the school district will not be able to operate much longer under the current financial situation.

Wayne Gehris, chief financial officer (CFO), Reading School District, said today was his third trip to the Capitol during the 122-day-long budget impasse. He stated Reading School District, one of the most underfunded school districts in the commonwealth, was hoping to shed that reputation with the implementation of the new funding formula. He said the Reading School District was forced to take out a \$90 million loan to fund school operations, which could incur interest expenses of \$330,000 a month. “Pennsylvania politicians are failing our kids,” he remarked.

Dr. Matthew Friedman, superintendent, Quakertown Community School District, said his school district is currently missing 25% of its total budget due to the budget impasse. He criticized the commonwealth for not reimbursing schools for interest costs but insisted that Quakertown Community School District will remain steadfast in its commitment to its students.

David McAndrew, superintendent, Panther Valley School District, noted that Panther Valley was a plaintiff in the case that determined that Pennsylvania’s education system was unconstitutionally funded. “Every day without a budget is a day filled with anxiety, uncertainty and disruption,” he said. “Our school district relies on the state for 63% of our total budget.” He said the Panther Valley community can not shoulder the burden caused by the budget impasse.

Dr. Marcia Stokes, CFO, Harrisburg Area School District, said school students and staff have continued to conduct their responsibilities during the budget impasse, arguing that the General Assembly should uphold their end of the bargain. She added that her school district is currently owed just under \$50 million in state funds. She asserted that historically overtaxed and underfunded school districts, such as Harrisburg, are hit hardest by the budget impasse. "This budget delay has already resulted in a permanent loss of revenue to a district that has struggled financially and academically," she said. "Our students deserve support and immediate action on getting a budget passed."

Dr. Mark Hoffman, executive director, Bucks County Intermediate Unit, said services such as preschool, early intervention and career training are at risk due to the budget impasse. He continued that intermediate units remain committed to partnership, transparency and the delivery of essential services. "We ask respectfully for an end of the budget impasse," he said.

Derrek Fink, business administrator, Milton Area School District, said Pennsylvania's legislators have an obligation to reform the education funding system in a timely and equitable manner to meet constitutional standards. "It is difficult to feel hopeful that all public schools in Pennsylvania will see their fundamental right to a quality education met," he stated. He noted that his school district's fund balance will soon be nonexistent due to budgetary constraints. He warned about potential staff cuts and tax hikes due to a lack of state funding. He criticized Pennsylvania's "underfunded mandates, broken cyber charter funding and skyrocketing costs for special education." He asserted that many facilities cannot complete essential maintenance on building infrastructure and HVAC systems. "Our elected officials have compromised public education by failing to meet the financial needs of our schools," he said.

Dylan Wyatt, director of advocacy, PASBO, stated that Pennsylvania schools are currently missing 30% of their basic education funding. "Programs will be cut, new opportunities for our students will be lost," he said. "Every hour that passes without a budget is \$1.7 million lost for our schools." He added that much of the lost revenue caused by the budget impasse will be paid for by communities. "The best time to act was June 30," he said. "The second best time is now."



## Committee News

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

### **Joint House Judiciary and House Children & Youth Committees**

*10/28/2025, 9:30 a.m., Room 523, Irvis Office Building*

By Dominic Kenny, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee held a public hearing on three bills related to juvenile justice awareness.

Bob Tomassini, executive director, Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC), provided an overview of Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system, highlighting its evolution and achievements. He noted a decline in written allegations and a \$155 million decrease in spending since 2009. He said JCJC is concerned about raising the minimum age of jurisdiction from 10 to 13 and a possible diversion mandate. He said the commission is also concerned about counting time served in detention toward placement duration but supports the elimination of most fines and fees. He said the commission supports using diversion when appropriate, on a case-by-case basis. He argued that a lack of services is a more pressing issue than detention, noting that many providers have not recovered from the pandemic.

The first panel was dedicated to juvenile diversion and House Bill 144.

[HB 144](#) – (PN 2445) Amends Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure), in juvenile matters, further providing for informal adjustment; and making an editorial change. Updates the reference to section 6323 (relating to informal adjustment and diversion). Adds local government agencies and other diversion programs to the list of recipients the agency may return the referral to. Provides that social agencies and the probation officer or other officer in the court shall offer the child an opportunity to complete an informal adjustment or other diversion program and outlines the qualifications. Adds that no detention, authorized or admission of guilt, requires an admission of guilt as a prerequisite to any informal adjustment or diversion program. Adds that no monetary obligations other than restitution are authorized. Removes fees and costs from the terms and conditions. Establishes requirements for notification and input to the involved parties. Adds a definition for "diversion program." Makes editorial and technical changes. Effective in 60 days.

Donald Corry, chief juvenile probation officer, Chester County, discussed the evolution and importance of diversion, highlighting its role in community safety, accountability and competency development. He noted that over 80% of first-time low-risk youth were successfully diverted in 2024, with a high success rate in preventing reoffending. He said many repeat offenders have deep-rooted issues that require more intensive interventions. He argued that the juvenile justice system, while flawed, works. He said recidivism rates have decreased when diversion rates increase.

Hanae Victoria Mason, Emerging Leader Fellow, Youth Art & Self-empowerment Project (YASP), said her research has found that the restorative justice diversion model is “overwhelmingly” more effective in producing positive outcomes than traditional criminal proceedings or incarceration. She continued that the process gives participants a variety of possible outcomes, including personal growth and career development. She said it also gives families peace of mind knowing their child will remain in the community.

Brian Lovins, president, Justice System Partner (JSP), discussed the effectiveness of youth diversion programs, presenting research that shows these programs reduce future arrests and improve outcomes for young people. He cited examples from Ohio, Texas and Kentucky, noting decreases in felony adjudications and recidivism while saving costs. He advocated for the expansion of diversion programs to leverage savings for funding local initiatives and emphasized the importance of community-led programs and individualized services.

The second panel was dedicated to juvenile fines, fees and House Bill 1385.

[HB 1385](#) – (PN 1890) Amends Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure), in juvenile matters, further providing for definitions and for disposition of delinquent child. Redefines “child” to include career and technical education. Further redefines and details “delinquent act.” Asserts the term “delinquent act” does not include a summary offense or the failure of a child to comply with a lawful sentence imposed for a summary offense. Makes repeals. Defines “delinquent child” and “material loss.” Establishes general rules for the disposition of a delinquent child. Provides probation limitation for a misdemeanor and a felony. Limits restitution payments to not exceed \$10 and the Crime Victims Services and Compensation Fund not to exceed \$25. Asserts that no restitution may be forgiven without providing a victim with timely notice of a hearing on the forgiveness of restitution and without the court issuing findings on the record. Prohibits a child from being removed from the child’s home, outlining exceptions. Further prohibits a court from removing a child from the home and lists reasons. Stipulates that a child removed from the child’s home may not be placed out of state unless medically needed services recommended by assessment are not available in the commonwealth. Limits the extension of placement. Provides applicability for the required statement of reasons for a disposition. Requires addressing the child’s educational stability. Prohibits a child employed by the placement from being paid less than the minimum wage. Effective in 60 days.

Nadia Mozaffar, senior attorney, Juvenile Law Center, discussed the harmful effects of juvenile fees and fines, based on findings from a new report by the Juvenile Law Center. She argued that these financial penalties harm youth, offer limited financial gain, fail to hold youth accountable in a meaningful way and undermine community safety by increasing recidivism. She urged Pennsylvania to eliminate most juvenile system fees and fines.

Allison Ware, assistant professor and associate director of clinical programs, Duquesne University, shared her experiences with the negative impacts of court costs, fines and fees on young people and their families in Allegheny County. She highlighted the stress and financial burdens these obligations cause, sharing stories of young clients who remained on probation due to their inability to pay. She emphasized the unfairness of the system and voiced her support for HB 1385.

The third panel was dedicated to total secure detention time and House Bill 1936.

[HB 1936](#) – (PN 2435) Amends Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure), in juvenile matters, further providing for release or holding of hearing, for disposition of delinquent child and for limitation on and change in place of commitment and disposition review hearing. Provides a procedure for scheduling a hearing. Asserts that a child can spend additional time in shelter care after the period specified in subsection (a) if the court finds the child has no reasonable assurance of public safety in their release conditions or community-based alternatives, or if the harm to the child by taking them out of their home, school and community substantially outweighs the harm of keeping them in secure detention. Outlines summons information. Requires the court to consider the child’s cumulative time spent in secure detention when determining the duration of detention and the best interests of the child. Defines “cumulative secure detention time.” Stipulates that a child committed to an institution or other facility will transition to the institution or facility no more than seven business days after the court’s order. Provides details on the release pending transfer. Outlines court considerations for a disposition review hearing. Effective in 60 days.

Sara Jacobson, executive director, Public Defender Association of Pennsylvania (PDAP), voiced her support for HB 144 and HB 1385. She discussed the long wait times for juvenile placement and the problem of determinate sentences in Philadelphia. She argued for reducing the number of youth sent to placement and expressed concern that HB 1936 might align juvenile sentencing more closely with adult sentencing practices. She emphasized the importance of focusing on treatment over incarceration.

Christina Zogar, Youth Sentencing and Reentry Project (YSRP), shared her experience with the juvenile justice system, highlighting the negative impact of her incarceration despite her rehabilitation efforts. Zogar was arrested at the age of 16 and was denied early release despite completing all of her required programs. She said her time awaiting trial did not count toward her sentence and discussed the many problems facing juvenile facilities in Pennsylvania, including understaffing and a lack of services.

Rep. John Schlegel (R-Lebanon) asked for specific examples of juveniles being required to repair the damages they caused. Mason said her organization requires young people to take part in a restorative community conference, meeting face-to-face with the person they harmed. She said many members of the program participate in food distribution programs and other forms of community service.

Rep. Rick Krajewski (D-Philadelphia), the prime sponsor of HB 144, inquired about the diversion program in Chester County. Corry said Chester County has social workers in schools and youths are referred to their school social worker rather than the juvenile probation office. He stressed that diversion sometimes needs to go beyond just keeping juveniles out of the justice system, requiring intervention and accountability. Rep. Krajewski also inquired about examples of restoration requirements in the diversion program. Corry said Chester County has a victim impact curriculum, allowing the victim of juvenile crimes to attend hearings and keep abreast of the proceedings of the case. He said the program stresses the ripple effect crimes have on others. He listed some examples, including the reconstruction of a park bench.

Rep. Jamie Flick (R-Lycoming) noted the role absentee parents play in creating juvenile behavior and asked if there were prevention measures in place to ensure young people break the cycle of absenteeism. Tomassini stressed the importance of early identification and collaboration with state agencies. He said JCJC supports family group decision-making and other programs that engage families by letting them be involved in the process.

Rep. Malcom Kenyetta (D-Philadelphia) commended Zogar on the bravery shown by telling her story before the committee.

Rep. Andre Carroll (D-Philadelphia), a co-sponsor of HB 1936, thanked Zogar for sharing her story and asked her to elaborate on her experience in custody. He asked about its impact on her mental health and social engagement, and what could have been done differently. Zogar explained that insufficient staffing led to juveniles behind held in their cells for long periods of time, meaning they could not go to the dining hall or see mental health professionals.

Rep. Anthony Bellmon (D-Philadelphia), the prime sponsor of HB 1936, asked if Zogar knew why she was waiting so long before being put into placement. Zogar said she knew that she was the courts were deciding what the outcome of her case would be. Rep. Bellmon asked what she did while she was waiting to be put into placement. Zogar said there were not many activities to take part in outside of educational programs and mental health groups.

House Children and Youth Minority Chairman Kate Klunk (R-York) asked if there was a moment Zogar knew she was going to turn her life around. Zogar could not recall if there was an exact moment.

Rep. Krajewski asked about what separates a “high-risk” case and a “low-risk” case. Tomassini said cases are separated by the likelihood a juvenile will reoffend. He said counties use different risk assessment formulas to make that determination. He said family relationships and substance abuse problems are also considered. Jacobson said there are problems associated with risk assessment tools, worrying they may target those of certain races or income statuses. Rep. Krajewski acknowledged the differing needs of juveniles across the commonwealth and the potential in the local diversion programs.



## House State Government Committee

10/28/2025, 9:30 a.m., Room 515, Irvis Office Building

By Kyle Purchase, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider several bills.

[HB 374](#) - (PN 330) Amends the Pennsylvania Election Code, in primary and election expenses, further providing for reporting by candidate and political committees and other persons and for late contributions and independent expenditures. Directs certain organizations who make independent expenditures of any amount relating to elections to file a form prepared by the Secretary of the Commonwealth and an informative report. Directs certain organizations who make contributions after the final pre-election report to report contributions. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **passed over**.

[HB 468](#) - (PN 451) The Emancipation Day Act designates the first Monday in February each year as Emancipation Day in this commonwealth. Provides legislative findings. Provides that nothing in this act shall be construed as requiring an employer to treat the first Monday in February as a legal or official holiday or to provide paid leave to an employee on the first Monday in February solely by virtue of the date being designated under this act. Effective immediately. The bill was **reported as committed**, with Republicans voting in the negative except Reps. Tim Bonner (R-Mercer), Stephanie Scialabba (R-Butler) and Jeremy Shaffer (R-Allegheny).

Rep. Chris Rabb (D-Philadelphia), the bill's prime sponsor, provided historical background to explain the purpose of his bill and mentioned that it previously passed out of committee two years ago. "This just isn't about looking backwards, it's about grounding our future in honest reckoning with our past," he said. He asked the committee for their support.

Minority Chairman Brad Roae (R-Crawford) said he was not against the concept of the bill, but voiced concerns with more official state holidays becoming paid holidays. Chairman Roae acknowledged the language of the bill says the holiday would not be paid, but he believed it would be "harder for people to get access to permits and vehicle registrations and everything else that's already behind schedule."

Rep. Melissa Shusterman (D-Chester) suggested people look at history with a "broad, inclusive lens," noting she studied history. She dismissed the logistical concerns regarding the number of paid holidays and cited her husband's company as an example that is flexible with which days employees can take off and be paid for.

[HB 1113](#) - (PN 1235) The Office of New Pennsylvanians Act establishes the Office of New Pennsylvanians and provides for its powers and duties; establishes the Office of New Pennsylvanians Restricted Account; and establishes the Advisory Committee to Office of New Pennsylvanians and provides for its powers, duties and membership. Establishes General Assembly findings and declarations. Provides definitions. Requires the department to provide administrative services and staff, including counsel and legal staff, to the office and to the advisory committee. Requires the department to be reimbursed by the office. Establishes duties of the office. Stipulates the Office of New Pennsylvanians Restricted Account is established as a restricted account in the General Fund and money appropriated by the General Assembly for the office shall be deposited into the restricted account for use by the office to carry out its powers and duties under section 302. Provides membership of advisory committee, voting and terms of service. Stipulates members of the advisory committee shall receive no compensation for their services and members who are not employees of state government shall be reimbursed at established commonwealth rates for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties on the advisory committee. Establishes powers and duties of the advisory committee. Permits the advisory committee to conduct a study and issue reports. Requires the advisory committee to hold public hearings. Stipulates that nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the advisory committee from establishing ad hoc work groups or local committees to assist in research and other duties necessary to carry out the mission of the office. Provides applicability to other statutes. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as committed**, along a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

Rep. Ismail Smith-Wade-EI (D-Lancaster), the bill's prime sponsor, said his bill will bring Pennsylvania "closer in line with its historical values" and to "make Pennsylvania a better place to live and do business for all of us." He referenced the founding of Pennsylvania under William Penn and announced that the Pennsylvania Chamber of Commerce and Industry supports the bill.

Chairman Roae voiced opposition to the bill by citing a "\$5 billion deficit" in the proposed budget and believed the bill gives "preferential treatment."

Rep. Ben Waxman (D-Philadelphia) told his family's story of his ancestors fleeing Ukraine from persecution and emphasized the importance of community and immigration. "We seem to be moving towards a society that is less welcoming and does not accept people from other parts of the world," he said. He dismissed concerns about a budget deficit and referenced Rainy Day Fund resources. Chairman Carol Hill-Evans (D-York) asked Rep. Waxman to limit his comments to the bill. Rep. Waxman apologized and said, "We have the resources available to fund this bill."

[HB 1304](#) - (PN 1498) Amends Titles 24 (Education) and 71 (State Government), in administration and miscellaneous provisions, further providing for stress test of system; and, in administration, funds, accounts and general provisions, further providing for stress test of system. Directs the State Employees' Retirement System of Pennsylvania (SERS) to conduct an annual stress test of the system and submit the results of the stress test to the Governor, the General Assembly and the Independent Fiscal Office (IFO) no later than April 1 of each year. Directs the IFO to produce a report no later than June 1 of each year. Directs the Public School Employees' Retirement System (PSERS) to conduct an annual stress test of the system and submit the results of the stress test to the Governor, the General Assembly and the IFO no later than October 1 of each year. Directs the IFO to produce a report no later than December 1 of each year. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Chairman Roae believed the bill was a good idea.

[HB 1417](#) - (PN 1639) The Community Diaper and Incontinence Products Act establishes the Community Diaper and Incontinence Products Grant Program and the Community Diaper and Incontinence Products Grant Program Fund; directs the Department of Aging to establish a program to improve access to incontinence supplies; and imposes powers and duties on the Department of Human Services. Provides legislative intent. Provides definitions. Directs the Department of Human Services to administer the program. Provides eligibility requirements for the program. Directs the department to review and approve or disapprove an application within 60 days of receiving the application. Directs the department to transmit notice of the availability of the grant program to the Legislative Reference Bureau for publication in the next available issue of the Pennsylvania Bulletin by August 8 for each fiscal year beginning after June 30, 2025. Provides guidelines for the awarding of grants. Establishes the Community Diaper and Incontinence Products Grant Program Fund in the State Treasury. Provides for the allocation of funds. Permits the department to solicit and accept alternative funding. Directs the department to submit an annual report to the General Assembly on expenditures from the fund and the progress of the public outreach. Directs the department to conduct statewide outreach to inform diaper banks, diaper pantries, diaper programs and other appropriate community organizations about the program. Directs the department to evaluate the effectiveness of provided funds in improving access to clean diapers and incontinence products and make changes as necessary. Directs the department to promulgate necessary regulations. Directs the Department of Aging to establish a program that provides incontinence supplies to individuals 65 years of age or older. Effective in 90 days. The bill was **reported as amended**, along a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

[A01984](#), by Hill-Evans, makes changes to improve and streamline the administration of the grant at the request of the executive branch agencies and provides for minor technical changes. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Chairman Roae said the bill is a "well-intended idea," but voiced concern about being able to pay for it.

Chairman Hill-Evans explained that the bill does not spend money but would have appropriations in the future.

[HR 153](#) - (PN 1161) Resolution designating the week of November 16 through 22, 2025, as "County Row Office Employee Appreciation Week" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was **reported as amended**, with Republicans voting in the negative except Reps. Bonner and Marla Brown (R-Lawrence).

[A00281](#) was **withdrawn**.

[A01913](#), by Hill-Evans, includes the county recorder of deeds and elected county auditors. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Rep. Ben Sanchez (D-Montgomery), the resolution's prime sponsor, said the resolution is a "shout out" to employees working across the commonwealth.

Chairman Roae stated, "Because the budget's four months past due, we should be focused on that, so I'm going to be voting no on all the resolutions."

Rep. Scott Barger (R-Blair) agreed with Chairman Roae. "I think that a great way to show appreciation for our county row officers would be to pass a timely budget that doesn't spend beyond what our revenue will allow," he said.

Rep. Wendy Fink (R-York) said, "It seems like what we do here in Harrisburg lately is name days and spend money that we don't have." She suggested having meetings to see where spending and regulations could be cut.

Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta (D-Philadelphia) rebuked some of his colleagues, saying, "We did, in fact, pass a budget, and I don't understand how voting yes on this amendment will speed or further delay the budget." He explained the purpose of the resolution is to recognize county employees for their work and described them as being used as "political football."

[HR 162](#) - (PN 1218) Resolution urging all agencies of the commonwealth to have the ability to use diacritical marks on names on all commonwealth-issued documents by July 1, 2027. The resolution was **reported as committed**, with Republicans voting in the negative except Reps. Bonner and Brown.

Rep. Johanny Cepeda-Freytiz (D-Berks), the resolution's prime sponsor, explained the importance of diacritical marks. "A name isn't just a word — it's identity, it's dignity and it's belonging," she said. She described examples of issues that could arise if diacritical marks on not on documentation, such as delays or confusion on records. She further explained that the resolution does not cost anything, nor does it create new programs or new spending. She urged Pennsylvania to modernize its agency systems.

Chairman Roae wanted to speak on the resolution. Chairman Hill-Evans replied, "You already stated that you were going to be voting no on all the resolutions. Is there something more that you need to say?" Chairman Roae asked if the Shapiro administration or any cabinet secretary refused to do diacritical marks. He said he doesn't know why a resolution is needed. Rep. Cepeda-Freytiz noted there are some delays and said other departments need to modernize. Chairman Roae asked if there is a state law that bans agencies from the practice or if agencies could do it on their own. Rep. Cepeda-Freytiz said, "I presume they could." She explained her resolution is an "urge and a push." Chairman Roae simply said, "I'm not sure why they don't just do it."

Rep. Sanchez said he lost a diacritical mark in his name and emphasized the importance of identity.

Chairman Hill-Evans described her own experience with her last name and expressed her appreciation.

[HR 342](#) - (PN 2442) Resolution designating November 15, 2025, as "Articles of Confederation Day" in Pennsylvania; and recognizing the City of York, York County, for its important contribution to the forging of the nation. The resolution was **reported as committed**, with Republicans voting in the negative except Reps. Bonner and Brown.

Chairman Hill-Evans, the resolution's prime sponsor, said, "Yay York."

Rep. Fink expressed her love for York County but reiterated previous comments about the lack of a state budget and continuing to "name names and throw these things around."

Rep. Russ Diamond (R-Lebanon) recalled a history teacher he had who said, "There was only one thing wrong with the Articles of Confederation — they didn't work." Rep. Diamond expressed his love for York County but said he was not going to vote for a resolution that "celebrates a failure." Chairman Hill-Evans replied, "We'll be talking afterwards."

[HR 347](#) - (PN 2467) Resolution designating the week of November 17 through 21, 2025, as "Certified Public Accountant Week" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was **reported as committed**, with Republicans voting in the negative except Reps. Bonner and Brown.

Rep. Sanchez, the resolution's prime sponsor, mentioned the resolution was previously passed out of committee in prior sessions and noted its bipartisan co-sponsor, Rep. Keith Greiner (R-Lancaster).

[HR 348](#) - (PN 2481) Resolution recognizing the month of November 2025 as "Native American Heritage Month" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was **reported as committed**, with Republicans voting in the negative except Reps. Bonner, Brown and Diamond.

Rep. Darisha Parker (D-Philadelphia), the resolution's prime sponsor, discussed the importance of Native American heritage and their contributions to the country. "Let's listen, learn, uplift and honor the voices and wisdom of native communities," she said.

[HR 324](#) - (PN 2338) Resolution designating November 5, 2025, as "Guru Nanak Day" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was **reported as committed**, with Republicans voting in the negative except Reps. Bonner and Brown.

Chairman Hill-Evans said the resolution's prime sponsor, Rep. Gina Curry (D-Delaware), was unable to attend the meeting to speak on her resolution.



## Senate Institutional Sustainability and Innovation Committee

10/28/2025, 10:00 a.m., Room 8E-A, East Wing

By Julia Walters, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

[SB 522](#) - (PN 497) Amends the Fiscal Code, providing for Collaborative Care Model and Primary Care Behavioral Health Model Implementation Program. Adds definitions. Provides for primary care grants to meet the initial costs of establishing and delivering behavioral health integration services through the collaborative care model or primary care behavioral health model. Outlines the use of the grants and requires priority be placed on practices in rural areas or those that are in a county in which suicide or overdose death rates are higher than the national average. Provides for technical assistance grants, outlines the regional divisions and describes technical assistance. Outlines eligibility requirements and provides for exceptions. Effective immediately. The bill was **passed over**.

Chairman Frank Farry (R-Bucks), the bill's prime sponsor, noted that SB 522 was originally on the voting schedule. "We need to go over that bill because we've gotten some feedback from some of the stakeholders," he said. Chairman Farry mentioned the committee was working on an amendment for the bill.

[SB 804](#) - (PN 902) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety), providing a chapter for medical devices. Lists General Assembly findings and declarations. Provides several definitions. Establishes prohibition on intravenous solution containers and tubing, and the replacement of di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (DEHP) with another ortho-phthalate in a new or revised medical device. Requires a health care practitioner to notify a patient prior to use of an intravenous solution container or intravenous tubing that contains DEHP or other ortho-phthalate in the course of treatment. Lists contents. Effective in 90 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as amended**.

[A01662](#), by Farry, provides for a compromise amendment with the manufacturers of the intravenous (IV) bags and tubing to extend the timeline for the prohibition of the IV containers until 2030 and for the IV tubing until 2035. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Chairman Farry stated the bill prohibits the sale, manufacture and distribution of DEHP in IV containers and tubing.

Chairman Farry offered his amendment, A01662, and said it gives "a more appropriate timeline to address research and development." He noted that other states, such as California and North Carolina, have enacted similar legislation relating to the contents of his amendment. Chairman Farry continued that the amendment includes a "lengthy" Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval process for new devices. He mentioned it "brings the bill in line" using legislative language passed in other states' similar bills.

[SB 998](#) - (PN 1216) The Nurse Education Capacity Expansion Grant Program Act provides for the Nurse Education Capacity Expansion Grant Program; and imposes duties on the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). Provides definitions. Establishes the program in DCED to expand the capacity of accredited nursing education programs to increase the number of qualified students. Details grant eligibility, specifying what an eligible nursing education program shall have. Stipulates that no grant may exceed \$500,000 to any one nursing education program during the length of the program. Requires the nursing education program application to include a detailed explanation of the proposed use of the grant and lists what proposed uses may include. Directs DCED to develop a standard application for the program and publish guidelines for the administration of the program, and prioritize grant applications from eligible nursing school providers that serve underrepresented student populations and underserved communities. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Sen. Rosemary Brown (R-Lackawanna), the bill's prime sponsor, mentioned she previously believed there was a lack of interest in nursing programs post-COVID-19. She noted that during a meeting with East Stroudsburg University, she learned there was still a "very strong interest" in nursing programs, but there are other "major issues" with getting students involved. "East Stroudsburg University receives hundreds of applications to their nursing program, but due to the lack of appropriate level nurse educators, they can only accept a limited number of students," Sen. Brown continued. She stressed the importance of ensuring higher education institutions have the resources necessary to educate the future workforce, including "higher-level educated nurses" available to teach. "Senate Bill 998 creates a mechanism for a grant for targeted funding specifically for accredited nursing programs, enabling them to build appropriate nursing faculty and increase the number of nurse preceptors," Sen. Brown explained. She added that investments can be used to recruit and retain faculty, provide professional development and enhance training opportunities. Sen. Brown said her bill is designed to use current state funding, as well as working with Appropriations committee members, "to identify specific workforce development funding" and potential federal funding.

Sen. Maria Collett (D-Montgomery), a co-sponsor of the bill, thanked Sen. Brown for SB 998 and said she was proud to work on the bill. “As a nurse who has worked in hospitals, home care and long-term care, I know firsthand what’s at stake when we don’t have enough nurses,” she stated. Sen. Collett mentioned COVID-19’s “devastating” impact on health care workers and added that the diminishing workforce is still a challenge. She warned that Pennsylvania is predicted to be short 20,000 nurses in seven years. Sen. Collett praised SB 988 for creating a grant program for nursing schools to access more resources, including nursing professionals, and for “strengthening clinical partnerships.” She added, “Every nurse we turn away today impacts a patient who may not get care tomorrow.”

[HB 157](#) - (PN 475) The Rural Health Care Grant Program Act provides for grant awards to entities in rural counties and designated medically underserved areas to pay for the education debt of practitioners employed at the entity. Provides definitions and adds dental and dental hygienists to the list of practitioners that are eligible to receive loan repayment. Establishes the Rural Health Care Grant Program in the Department of Health (DOH) to be administered by DOH and outlines the duties of the department and the distribution requirements by an entity. Provides grant awards, criteria for grants from the department and for limitation of awards of no more than \$250,000. Provides that an entity must distribute the grant to one or more chosen practitioners who are employed by the entity. Outlines the eligibility requirements for a practitioner to receive a payment of education debt. Provides for entity applications for grants and outlines the requirements and certification procedures. Provides for review of application requirements. Provides for disbursement requirements of grants and establishes reporting requirements. Adds that grants awarded under this act are not considered taxable income to an entity or practitioner. Provides for compliance. Reimbursement for noncompliance and for agreements between entity and practitioner. Effective in 120 days. (Prior PN: 99). The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Rep. Kathy Rapp (R-Warren), chairman of the House Health Committee and the bill’s prime sponsor, stated HB 157 will create a Rural Health Care Grant program to help practitioners who work in a rural or a “designated medically underserved area” pay off their educational debt. Rep. Rapp noted key differences between her bill and the current Primary Care Loan Repayment Program (LRP). She explained the bill provides grant money directly to employers to use as an incentive, requires three years of service instead of two and “specifically targets” physicians, nurses, midwives, nurse midwives, dentists and dental hygienists. Rep. Rapp mentioned a recent study from the Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania (HAP), which showed “vacancy rates for nursing support staff and registered nurses in rural hospitals were 28% and 26% respectively, compared to 19% and 14% statewide.” She added that 62 out of the 67 Pennsylvania counties are considered “full or partial Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) for primary care” and noted the seven maternal health deserts in Pennsylvania. Rep. Rapp warned that the country is in a “health care workforce emergency” and Pennsylvania is not equipped to meet its rural residents’ health care needs. “The more we can do to help bring providers to these areas, the better off the commonwealth will be,” she said.



## House Finance Committee

10/28/2025, 10:30 a.m., Room B-31, Main Capitol

By Kyle Purchase, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider two bills.

Chairman Steve Samuelson (D-Northampton) reminded members of new processes for obtaining the committee agenda and said the public can also access it on his website.

[HB 1214](#) - (PN 1362) Amends the General County Assessment Law, in subjects of taxation and exemptions, further providing for temporary tax exemption for residential construction. Extends the timeline for temporary tax exemption for residential construction not to be valued or assessed for purposes of real property taxes until 30 months or the commencement of improvement, whichever is later. Removes the no building permit or other notification of improvement requirement. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **re-referred** to the House Local Government Committee.

[HB 1900](#) - (PN 2405) Amends the Tax Reform Code, adding an article to provide for teacher tax credit. Provides definitions. Permits a taxpayer who is a certified teacher and incurs expenses for the purchase of classroom supplies in a taxable year to apply for a tax credit. Asserts that the tax credit shall be equal to 100% of the amount that the taxpayer spent on unreimbursed classroom supplies during the taxable year, up to a maximum of \$100. Adds that if the amount of credit that the taxpayer is eligible to receive exceeds the taxpayer’s tax liability, the Department of Revenue (DOR) shall pay the excess amount to the taxpayer. Outlines eligibility, providing for the determination of eligibility and ineligibility. Prohibits a taxpayer from carrying forward, carrying back, selling, or

assigning all or a portion of a tax credit granted to the taxpayer. Permits DOR to develop written guidelines for implementation. Applies this act to taxable years commencing after Dec. 31, 2025. Effective immediately. The bill was **reported as amended**, with Rep. Leslie Rossi (R-Westmoreland) voting in the negative.

A01980, by Samuelson, removes “certified teacher” and replaces it with “educator” to align with federal definitions; elaborates joint returns for married spouses who are both educators; and explains the department may request further verifying information. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Chairman Samuelson spoke on both the amendment and the bill. On the amendment, he provided an overview of how much educators can write off as deductions on their tax returns and noted he worked in collaboration with the Department of Revenue (DOR). Chairman Samuelson explained the amendment would match the language in regulations from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). On the bill as amended, Chairman Samuelson said he believes it is an “important step to honor and recognize the work that our educators are doing and to provide a \$100 tax credit to help offset those out-of-pocket expenses.”



### **Senate Judiciary Committee**

*10/28/2025, 11:00 a.m., Room 8E-B, East Wing*  
Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

SB 911 – (PN 1038) Amends Title 44 (Law and Justice), providing for miscellaneous provisions and for violent incident clearance and technological investigative methods; establishing the Violent Incident Clearance and Technological Investigative Methods Program; and imposing duties on the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. Adds definitions. Establishes the Violent Incident Clearance and Technological Investigative Methods Program to provide grants to law enforcement agencies so they have the necessary tools and resources to improve clearance rates of homicides and other violent crimes. Requires the commission to establish application forms. Outlines the use of grants. Provides that the grants are to be used to supplement, not supplant, existing funding, and allows for subsequent applications, requiring geographic diversity. Allows for multijurisdictional applications. Establishes reporting requirements for each grant recipient. Provides for limitations on administrative expenses, prohibiting the commission from expending more than 3% of the money appropriated to the commission for the program. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as amended**.

A01989, by Baker, makes technical changes and specifies the contents of reporting requirements. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Sen. Joe Picozzi (R-Philadelphia), the bill’s prime sponsor, said his bill aims to improve the clearance rates of violent crimes through a special grant program within the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) for law enforcement agencies. He mentioned a decline in violent crime clearance rates in Pennsylvania due to a shortage of police personnel and a lack of technological resources. Sen. Picozzi explained SB 911 proposes using grants for hiring and training investigators, upgrading forensic equipment and supporting witnesses, with program evaluation measures included to ensure effectiveness and accountability.

SB 1050 - (PN 1224) Amends Title 23 (Domestic Relations), in child protective services, further providing for persons required to report suspected child abuse. Establishes additional reporting requirements to include a report of suspected child abuse in accordance with section 6313 via the statewide toll-free telephone number or by electronic submission if the mandated reporter comes into contact with or has reasonable cause to suspect the existence of child sexual abuse material or artificially generated child sexual abuse material. Adds that the subsection applies whether or not the material was created, displayed or exhibited to others by a minor. Requires the department to transmit a copy of the report to the appropriate law enforcement agency and may transmit a copy of the report to the appropriate county agency. Effective in 90 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as amended**.

A00210, by Pennycuick, adds dissemination of intimate image sexual abuse of children to the list of offenses that require mandated reporting, regardless of child-on-child contact, and incorporates Senate Bill 1034. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Sen. Tracy Pennycuick (R-Berks), the bill's prime sponsor, highlighted the bill's aim to address the rise in AI-generated child sexual abuse material. She mentioned previous legislative efforts and acknowledged Sen. James Malone's (D-Lancaster) contributions. Sen. Pennycuick stated she appreciated his "willingness" to incorporate key elements of his bill, SB 1034, in the amendment. "Staying ahead of criminals who use AI for nefarious purposes requires we remain vigilant," said Sen. Pennycuick. She added that updating the mandated reporting requirements is an important step forward.

Sen. Scott Martin (R-Lancaster) commended the bill for its bipartisan proposal requiring mandated reporters — including teachers, childcare workers and health care providers — to report all instances of child sexual abuse material, even if produced by a minor. He said the measure builds on previous efforts to criminalize the creation and dissemination of such material, particularly as AI worsens the problem. "We're going to continue to work as a Senate, bipartisanly, to better protect young people against the serious threats that are posed by the creators of these materials using AI," he said. Sen. Martin thanked victims and families who shared their stories "to make sure that this doesn't happen to future generations of Pennsylvania children."

Chairman Lisa Baker (R-Luzerne) thanked the makers of the bill for working to protect young people in Pennsylvania.

Sen. Malone spoke in support of strengthening protections against sexually explicit AI "deep fakes" after an incident in his district where 48 female students were victimized by manipulated images. His proposal, now included in an amendment to Senate Bill 1050, would require mandated reporters to report cases of children sharing explicit or AI-generated sexual images of other children. "It's wild that this is a point of contention where someone was literally willing to say, oh, it's not mandatory reporting, as their excuse for not stopping this," Sen. Malone said.

Sen. Camera Bartolotta (R-Washington) thanked the makers of the bill. "More people really need to understand how prevalent this is becoming," she said. She warned of how "widespread" online images can be and expressed her support for SB 1050.

Sen. Cris Dush (R-Jefferson) praised the bipartisan effort behind legislation addressing child sexual abuse material and trafficking, noting the urgent need to strengthen protections for children. He shared stories from survivors, illustrating the lasting trauma caused by such crimes. "These images affect these kids forever," Sen. Dush said. He emphasized Pennsylvania must improve its laws, as the state currently holds a "D rating" from Shared Hope International for anti-trafficking legislation.

Chairman Amanda Cappelletti (D-Montgomery) expressed concerns about the safety of children on the internet, mentioning that she does not allow pictures of her daughter on the internet. She expressed optimism that A00210 would address the Department of Human Services' (DHS) concerns around the bill's implementation.

[HB 1176](#) - (PN 2382) Amends Title 20 (Decedents, Estates and Fiduciaries), in intestate succession, further providing for shares of others than surviving spouse; and, in dispositions independent of letters, family exemption, probate of wills and grant of letters, further providing for payments to family and funeral directors. Provides for the order of succession and includes the order for an endowed community fund. Defines "community foundation" and "endowed community fund." Provides for a total standing to the credit of the decedent in that institution that does not exceed \$20,000. Increases the payment amount under unclaimed property of the funds or the value of the property to \$20,000. The amendment of section 2103 is effective in 60 days. The amendment of 20 PA.C.S. § 3101(b) is effective in 60 days. The amendment of section 3101 (e)(1)(i) is effective in 180 days. The remainder of the act is effective immediately. (Prior PN: 1313). The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Rep. Joe Ciresi (D-Montgomery), the bill's prime sponsor, discussed his bill to simplify the process for claiming unclaimed property. He explained HB 1176 would raise the claim threshold to \$20,000 and allow claims to be processed quickly, without a lawyer, for a \$25 fee. Rep. Ciresi stated the goal of the bill is to ease the burden on families and ensure deserving heirs receive their funds more promptly.

Chairman Baker thanked Rep. Ciresi for including language relating to "an endowed community fund."

[HB 1425](#) - (PN 1950) Amends the Tax Reform Code, in tobacco products tax, further providing for definitions, for incidence and rate of tax, for licensing of wholesalers and for licensing of retailers and providing for electronic nicotine delivery system directory. Redefines and provides several definitions. Specifies that a retailer may only purchase tobacco products from a licensed wholesaler. Adds to the requirements for the licensing of wholesalers. Provides provisions for the required surety bond relative to the licensing of wholesalers. Revises the requirements that applicants for a retail license or renewal of that license shall meet. Explains intent for the electronic nicotine delivery system directory. Requires certification and declaration for manufacturers. Lists required contents. Establishes confidentiality. Provides for notification to the Attorney General. Requires the maintenance by the Attorney General to maintain and make available on the Attorney General's website a directory that lists all manufacturers of electronic cigarettes that contain nicotine, brand names, categories, such as e-liquid, e-liquid cartridge, e-liquid pod or disposable, product names and flavors for which certification forms have been submitted and approved by the Attorney General and shall update the directory at least monthly to ensure accuracy. Provides for compliance. Permits a manufacturer or manufacturer's electronic cigarette that contains

nicotine to be included or retained in the directory under an Attorney General determination and lists applicability. Permits denial by the Attorney General for a manufacturer's certification. Further provides for surety bonds. Provides for removal from the directory and for product returns. Asserts that electronic cigarettes that contain nicotine not included in the directory under subsection (g) may not be sold for retail sale in the commonwealth either directly or through an importer, distributor, wholesaler, retailer or similar intermediary or intermediaries, outlining what shall apply. Establishes penalties, adding that the Attorney General, an agent, or the department may negotiate the civil penalty for a first offense to an amount sufficient to cover the costs of seizure, storage and disposal of contraband electronic cigarettes that contain nicotine, provided that the retailer demonstrates compliance with removal or proper listing within 30 business days of the violation notice and nothing shall limit the Attorney General or department from seeking the full penalty due, absent an agreement with the violator stating otherwise. Subjects a wholesaler licensee who, after stating that a product not listed in the directory was intended to be sold outside of this commonwealth, is found to have sold the unlisted product to a retailer in this commonwealth, to an additional penalty of \$500 per each unlisted product sold at the retailer. Directs the department to destroy identified contraband and specifies what applies to the cost of destruction. Provides for the Tobacco Products Administration Cash Fund. Outlines provisions for enforcement, violations and compliance. Requires the Attorney General to maintain, provide via electronic mail to each licensed wholesaler that has provided the Attorney General with a current and valid electronic mail address and publish on its website a tobacco noncompliance database. Provides for an agent for the service of process. Provides for foreign importers and for determination by the Attorney General. Prohibits retailers from purchasing electronic cigarettes that contain nicotine for resale except from a licensed wholesaler operating with a valid license. Permits the promulgation of rules and regulations. Mandates reporting and the publication of the report. Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 1660). The bill was unanimously **reported as amended**.

A01976, by Baker, specifies the responsibilities of the Department of Revenue (DOR) and the Office of Attorney General (OAG), removes surety bond requirements for wholesalers and makes technical changes. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Regarding the bill itself, Sen. Bartolotta expressed her support for HB 1425, stating her intention to vote yes in committee. She agreed with the bill's goal to prevent the sale of illicit products but raised concerns about ensuring the bill does not unfairly benefit certain industry players and creating "winners and losers." Sen. Bartolotta specified a similar piece of legislation in Nebraska as a positive model.

Chairman Baker HB 1425 is supported by OAG, the Pennsylvania Fraternal Order of Police (PA FOP), the State Troopers Association (PSTA), the Pennsylvania Sheriff's Association, Teamsters, Sheetz and the Pennsylvania Food Merchants Association (PFMA).



### **House Children and Youth Committee**

*10/29/2025, 9:00 a.m., Room 523, Irvis Office Building*

By Zoe Buchmann, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider two bills and one resolution.

HB 1558 - (PN 1842) The Baby Diaper Changing Station Accessibility Act requires baby diaper changing stations in certain public buildings when a restroom is installed or renovated; and imposes penalties. Provides definitions. Stipulates that a baby diaper changing station be installed and maintained in each public building with restrooms open and accessible to the public or when an existing restroom is totally renovated and becomes accessible to the public. Directs that changing stations be installed regardless of the gender for which the restroom is designated, in accordance with the standards for accessible design and maintained in a safe and sanitary condition. Provides for signage. Asserts that the act does not establish a private right of action for failure to comply. Provides for exemption waivers. Provides for applicability. Directs the Department of Labor and Industry to enforce penalties. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as amended**, with Republicans voting in the negative, excluding Rep. Joe Hogan (R-Bucks).

A02001, by McNeill, adds definitions; adjusts section titles; adds language to section 5 regarding penalties; provides for regulations and enforcement; and adjusts the effective date, splitting the sections' effective dates. The amendment **was adopted**, with Republicans voting in the negative, excluding Rep. Hogan.

Daniele Bowers, Democratic executive director, noted that the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs and the Pennsylvania Restaurant and Lodging Association are opposed to the legislation.

Minority Chairman Kate Klunk (R-York) thanked Chairman Jeanne McNeill (D-Lehigh) for her work on the amendment. She argued that while she believes the amendment clarifies the bill, it still leaves problems and will potentially lead to confusion for local businesses.

On the bill, Chairman Klunk acknowledged the importance of diaper-changing stations for families but raised concerns about the proposed legislation requiring businesses to install them. She argued that many Pennsylvania business groups worry about costs, regulatory burdens and compliance issues. She noted that some local businesses, like a coffee shop in her district, have voluntarily installed stations in response to customer needs. She asserted that businesses best understand their customers and should make these decisions independently. She stated that she will vote no on the bill due to its potential impact on businesses and existing confusion in the bill's language.

[HB 1663](#) - (PN 2031) Amends the Public School Code, establishing the Statewide Imagination Library Program and the Imagination Library of Pennsylvania Restricted Account; and imposing duties on the Department of Education. Provides definitions. Establishes the Imagination Library of Pennsylvania Restricted Account in the General Fund. Permits the State Treasurer to accept outside revenues for deposit into the account. Asserts that money from the account shall be allocated to qualified local entities that agree to a dollar-for-dollar match for purposes of the program. Permits the department to waive the dollar-for-dollar match requirement to prevent undue financial hardship. Stipulates that money remaining in the account at the close of the fiscal year will not lapse and instead will be carried forward to the next fiscal year. Stipulates that any interest that accrues in the account will remain. Establishes the Statewide Imagination Library Program within the Department of Education to promote the development of a comprehensive statewide initiative to encourage children from birth to five years of age to develop a love of reading and learning. Directs qualified local entities to use allocated money to provide one age-appropriate book to each registered child from birth to five years of age in participating counties. Asserts that books will be sent monthly to each child's home at no cost to families. Directs the department to match the amount required of local participating programs. Provides departmental duties. Permits the department to promulgate necessary regulations. Directs the department to submit a report to the General Assembly no later than January 1, 2026, and each January 1 thereafter. Provides for the contents of the report. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as committed**, with Republicans voting in the negative, excluding Reps. Hogan and Jamie Flick (R-Lycoming).

Bowers noted that the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) is opposed to the legislation.

Rep. Tarik Khan (D-Philadelphia), a co-sponsor of the bill, thanked the committee and stated that the bill was inspired by Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. He noted that only one-third of Pennsylvania children are proficient in reading, emphasizing the importance of early literacy. He stated that the bill would mail one book per month to every child from birth to age five, helping families across all economic backgrounds build home libraries. He argued that early reading supports intellectual development, school readiness, vocabulary growth and long-term educational outcomes, while low proficiency correlates with higher dropout rates and reduced economic productivity. He added that the program would cost the state about \$13 per child and operate as a public-private partnership, with private funding covering the rest. He described it as a cost-effective investment in children's future prosperity and urged support for the bill.

Rep. Liz Hanbidge (D-Montgomery), the bill's prime sponsor, emphasized that 90% of a child's brain develops before they reach school. She stated that many Pennsylvania children start school unable to recognize letters at all, putting them significantly behind. She explained that the proposed book-mailing program has been repeatedly shown through independent research to improve literacy and third-grade outcomes. She added that by giving children their own books, it fosters ownership, knowledge and long-term social and economic empowerment. She stressed that early investment is one of the most effective ways to ensure future success. She noted that similar programs work in both red and blue states and urged colleagues to support the bill to invest in every child in Pennsylvania.

Rep. Scott Barger (R-Blair) expressed affection for Dolly Parton and support for reading programs. He questioned why PDE opposes it, suggesting it raises concerns about the program's effectiveness or priorities. He noted that several states, including Washington, Indiana and Nevada, have recently moved to defund or debate defunding similar programs due to rapidly rising costs. He stated that, given Pennsylvania's unresolved budget and the need for fiscal restraint, it is irresponsible to take on a program that may become increasingly expensive. He noted that based on these concerns, he will be a no vote.

Chairman Klunk thanked the bill's sponsors and noted that she personally participated in the Imagination Library with her daughter, while also using public and community libraries. She recalled testimony from PDE highlighting many existing early literacy programs and stressed that the state still lacks a finalized budget. She questioned how this new program would be funded and how PDE would determine "undue financial hardship" for local partner organizations. She cited projected costs of \$5 to \$6 million, with potential increases driven by postage, paper and administrative expenses. She argued that early literacy also requires supporting parents'

ability to read to their children, noting PDE's family literacy programs. She emphasized the importance and financial struggles of local libraries, which offer free access to books and story times. She stated that while she appreciates the bill's intentions, concerns about cost, implementation and alternative existing resources will lead her to vote no.

Chairman McNeill noted that not everyone can afford books or have the time to take their children to the library. She urged a yes vote.

[HR 337](#) - (PN 2430) Resolution designating the week of November 17 through 21, 2025, as "Pennsylvania Education for Students Experiencing Homelessness Awareness Week" and November 21, 2025, as "Red Shirt Day" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was **reported as committed**, with Rep. Barger voting in the negative.

Rep. Ismail Smith Wade-El (D-Lancaster), the resolution's prime sponsor, noted that the number of homeless students in Pennsylvania has risen from 19,000 a decade ago to 50,000 in the most recent PDE report. He stressed the universal agreement that children deserve a safe, warm place to sleep, especially when they are expected to attend school and take standardized tests. He stated that the resolution continues the tradition of raising awareness through Students Experiencing Homelessness Week and Red Shirt Day, with the hope that one day such advocacy will no longer be needed.

Rep. Gina Curry (D-Delaware), a co-sponsor of the resolution, explained that homelessness often includes "couch surfing," where children move from home to home without a stable space of their own, which creates serious challenges for their well-being. She announced upcoming awareness events, a rally on November 18 and Red Shirt Day on November 21 or 22, though members are asked to wear red on the 18th when the advocacy group visits the Capitol. She thanked the committee for considering the resolution.

Rep. Barger apologized and explained that he has recently taken a principled stance against all resolutions due to frustration over the lack of progress on the state budget. He noted that human services organizations in his district cannot open their pre-K programs, and staff are losing jobs, while schools face hardships. He said that he feels he cannot proceed with "business as usual" in Harrisburg. He added that although he supports the issue behind the resolution and appreciates the planned Red Shirt Day, he will vote no, emphasizing that passing a budget must take priority.



### **House Health Committee**

*10/29/2025, 9:00 a.m., Room G-50, Irvis Office Building*

By Kyle Purchase, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider two bills.

[HB 305](#) – (PN 258) Amends the Insurance Company Law, in casualty insurance, adding a section to provide for coverage for insulin. Prohibits a health insurance policy providing prescription coverage of insulin from imposing on a covered individual a copayment, coinsurance or deductible of more than \$35 per 30-day supply of insulin, regardless of the amount or type of insulin needed to fill the covered individual's prescription. Specifies that nothing shall prevent a health insurance policy from offering a lesser monthly price for a 30-day supply of insulin than the provided price. Allows the Insurance Department to promulgate regulations as necessary to implement and enforce the established maximum price. Outlines the types of policies this section shall not apply to. Imposes duties on the Attorney General including investigating the pricing of prescription insulin drugs, compiling and analyzing data, and submitting the findings of the investigation in a report to the General Assembly. Specifies that the report shall be made accessible to the public no later than one year after the effective date and details what the report must include. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **re-referred** to the House Insurance Committee.

Chairman Dan Frankel (D-Allegheny) explained his reasoning for the referral by citing the bill's language that includes references to insurance coverages. He believed the House Insurance Committee would be the more appropriate committee to consider the bill.

[SB 9](#) - (PN 177) The Fairness in Women's Sports Act provides for sport activities in public institutions of higher education and public school entities to be expressly designated male, female or coed; and creates causes of action for harm suffered by designation. Provides definitions. Prohibits athletic teams or sports designated for females, women or girls from being open to students of the male sex. Allows students to participate in an interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural or club athletic team or sport designed for the student's sex or designated coed or mixed. Prohibits a government entity, licensing or accrediting organization or an athletic

association or organization from entertaining a complaint, opening an investigation or taking any other adverse action against a school or institution of higher education for maintaining separate interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural or club athletic teams or sports for students of the female sex. Permits a student who is deprived of an athletic opportunity or suffers direct or indirect harm as a result of a known violation to bring a cause of action for injunctive relief, damages, psychological, emotional and physical harm suffered, attorney fees and costs and any other relief available under law against the school or institution of higher education. Allows a student who is subject to retaliation or other adverse action by a school, institution of higher education or athletic association or organization as a result of reporting a violation to an employee or representative of the school, institution or athletic association or organization or to any federal or state agency with oversight of schools or institutions of higher education in Pennsylvania to bring a cause of action. Permits a school or institution of higher education that suffers direct or indirect harm as a result of a violation to bring cause of action. Prohibits a person from bringing a civil action later than two years after the day on which the harm underlying the cause of action occurs. Provides that if a part of this act is found invalid, all valid parts that are severable from the invalid part shall remain in effect. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **re-referred** to the House Judiciary Committee, along a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

Chairman Frankel cited concerns with the bill's language that addresses seeking injunctive relief by students and potential legal claims. He said he prefers the House Judiciary Committee to consider the bill.

Minority Chairman Kathy Rapp (R-Warren) said she supports the bill itself and noted she signed the discharge motion to consider the bill but voiced opposition to the re-referral. She read a quote by House Education Committee Majority Chairman Peter Schweyer (D-Lehigh), who said, "We had a conversation internally, speaking with the Majority Chair of Health, and we decided this would be a better, more appropriate place to consider this legislation." Chairman Rapp said she attended the meeting where the quote was spoken. She mentioned bills of a similar nature, [HB 158](#) and [HB 1849](#), noting they are both in the House Education Committee. She believed the committee is not voting on the bill because "politically, this is a losing issue for them." She accused the majority of "moving the bill around" to "play games." She mentioned the time when her party was in the majority and stated, "I can sit here today and honestly tell you that I didn't like it then, and I certainly do not like it now." She reaffirmed her support for the bill on its merits and cited a January 2025 *New York Times* survey that reported "69% of Democrats and 94% of Republicans surveyed agreed that transgender female athletes should not be allowed to compete in women's sports." She concluded by citing instances of female athletes becoming injured by a transgender opponent to support her reason for opposing the re-referral.

Rep. Brad Roae (R-Crawford) opposed the re-referral motion and reiterated the bill's title. He believed re-referring the bill "wouldn't be fair." He voiced concern for girls who have to "change in locker rooms when there's boys in there."

Rep. Charity Grimm Krupa (R-Fayette) argued the bill belongs in the House Health Committee. "When biological males believe that they should compete in women's sports, that reflects a deep mental and emotional struggle that deserves compassion, honesty and proper care," she said. She accused society of telling people to "ignore biology" and called for discussion on the bill and to vote on it rather than re-referring it. She thanked Sen. Judy Ward (R-Blair) for sponsoring the bill, Rep. Barbera Gleim (R-Cumberland) for the discharge petition and Rep. Martina White (R-Philadelphia) for her advocacy.

Rep. Stephanie Borowicz (R-Clinton) said, "Biological males don't belong in women's sports." She called the bill "common sense," and the idea of biological males in women's sports "nonsense." She said she believed "common sense will prevail."

Rep. Jamie Walsh (R-Luzerne) provided legislative background of the bill by referencing former governor Tom Wolf's veto in 2022. "A re-referral of SB 9 would further put schools in jeopardy with complaints, investigations and other adverse actions that could lead to injunctive relief, damages, attorney fees and costs," he said. He criticized the delays in voting on the bill and cited the "broad" support for the bill.

Chairman Rapp reiterated her opposition to the re-referral.

Chairman Frankel said, "When I look at the language of this bill, I can't help but think about all the physicians and hospitals who come into my office discussing the impact of lawsuits on their provision of care." He pointed out the phrase "any other relief" in the bill and regarded it as "extremely broad." He asked members for an affirmative vote to re-refer the bill.



## House Energy Committee

10/29/2025, 10:00 a.m., Room B-31, Main Capitol

Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee held a public hearing on House Bill 1539.

[HB 1539](#) – (PN 1810) The Electric School Bus Grant Program Act establishes the Electric School Bus Grant Program and the Electric School Bus Grant Program Fund; and imposes duties on the Department of Education (PDE). Provides definitions. Establishes the grant program within PDE to award grants for eligible costs to eligible applicants on a competitive basis. Directs the department to establish an application process and guidelines. Permits the department to randomly audit and monitor grantees. Directs the department to develop criteria for grantees under the program. Directs the department to require periodic reporting requirements for grantees. Directs the department to develop procedures for addressing a grantee's noncompliance. Directs the department to limit the amount of a grant so as not to exceed 100% of the difference between the cost of an internal combustion engine bus and the total eligible costs for an electric school bus. Stipulates that grants received by a school district will not be included when calculating the amount to be paid to a charter school. Establishes the grant program fund within the State Treasury. Provides for sources and deposits of funds. Permits the department to use up to 8% of the money in the fund to cover direct and indirect costs. Directs the department to reserve a portion of the money in the fund to provide ongoing technical assistance to school entities. Directs the department to submit a report summarizing the progress of the program. Stipulates that the report be sent to the chairman and minority chairman of the relevant committees in the House and Senate. Effective in 60 days.

Chairman Elizabeth Fiedler (D-Philadelphia) thanked committee members, testifiers and guests for attending a public hearing on HB 1539, sponsored by Rep. Dave Madsen (D-Dauphin), which would establish a grant program to help school districts purchase electric school buses. She described a personal experience riding an electric bus at Steelton High School, noting how surprisingly quiet it was and how reduced noise can positively affect students. She noted hearing directly from the bus driver about the benefits. She acknowledged the health and environmental advantages of electric buses. She expressed interest in learning more about those benefits, along with the financial considerations, from the testifiers.

Minority Chairman Martin Causer (R-Cameron) thanked Chairman Fiedler for organizing the hearing, noting that he has a number of questions he intends to ask.

Rep. Madsen thanked the chairs and committee members. He emphasized that students deserve cleaner, safer and more reliable transportation. He highlighted that HB 1539 would help school districts transition from older diesel buses to electric buses, reducing emissions and improving air quality. He added that it especially benefits working-class and under-resourced districts that often bear the brunt of aging fleets. He stated that the bill aims to provide equitable grant access so no community is left behind in the shift to clean transportation. He noted that reliable, safe buses support learning by ensuring students arrive on time and in good condition. He encouraged committee members to ask questions and offered a visit to the Steelton School District to experience the electric buses firsthand.

[Celia Kosinski, policy manager, Electrification Coalition](#), spoke in support of HB 1539, which would create an electric school bus grant program through the Department of Education (PDE). She explained that the program would fund purchasing or converting buses to electric, installing charging infrastructure, electrical upgrades, workforce training and administrative costs. She added that grants prioritize districts with poor air quality, high poverty, rural locations and older diesel fleets, ensuring funds reach communities with the greatest need. She continued that funding would come from state, federal, industry and philanthropic sources, covering up to 200% of the cost difference between diesel and electric buses. She noted that the program includes biannual public reporting and audits for accountability. She emphasized that while electric buses have higher upfront costs, they reduce fuel and maintenance expenses over time, freeing district funds for classrooms. She argued that the transition also creates workforce opportunities for mechanics and electricians, supports economic growth and positions Pennsylvania as a leader in advanced vehicle technology.

[Chris D'Agostino, principal, Advanced Energy United](#), highlighted the economic, environmental and energy benefits of electric school buses in support of the legislation. He noted that electric buses reduce maintenance costs and have lower fuel costs, at 14 to 20 cents per mile versus 40 to 50 cents per mile for diesel. He highlighted that these savings are especially significant for buses in sparsely populated areas, with lifetime recurring savings potentially exceeding \$100,000 per bus. He emphasized the value of vehicle-to-grid (V2G) technology, stating that electric buses could feed power back to the grid during outages or high-demand periods, providing resilience and new revenue streams. He listed examples, including a fleet discharging over 37 megawatt hours, generating nearly \$90,000 in revenue, and University of Delaware research estimating V2G benefits at \$15,000 per bus annually. He argued that the legislation would help Pennsylvania lead in the advanced energy sector, reduce long-term costs, improve public health, create good-paying jobs and strengthen grid resilience.

Willie Slade, interim superintendent, Steelton Highspire School District, shared how the district leveraged federal funding through the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Clean School Bus program to invest in students despite a 15-year budget deficit. He reported that the district received full funding for six new electric school buses, along with \$20,000 per charger, making the transition financially feasible. He stated that the switch to electric buses saved the district about \$20,000 annually in fuel and maintenance costs, while improving community health in an area historically affected by industrial pollution. He noted that in collaboration with Penn State Health, the district conducted a health impact study to monitor air quality improvements as diesel buses were replaced, incorporating real-time data into student curricula to teach sustainability impacts firsthand. He added that the district installed a solar array through a power purchase agreement, cutting energy usage and the district's energy bill in half, saving another \$15,000 to \$20,000 annually.

Chairman Fiedler announced that due to technical issues with the internet, the fourth testifier, Alice Kwak, policy research associate, World Resources Institute, will be unable to testify. She noted that the committee staff will continue to work on the issue, but that they will move to questions. She thanked the testifiers for their testimony and addressed D'Agostino, highlighting the importance of the economic savings mentioned in his testimony. She shared her personal experience riding an electric bus at Steelton, observing that the quieter, smoother ride positively affected student behavior. She asked D'Agostino to further emphasize the economic savings of electric school buses. D'Agostino categorized the economic savings of electric school buses into three areas: first, fuel and maintenance costs could amount to over \$100,000 over the lifetime of a bus; second, there are health cost savings, as outlined in Kwak's written testimony; and third, V2G technology offers additional potential savings by monetizing battery use. He added that research from the University of Delaware estimates that, assuming a \$28 per megawatt-hour tariff, V2G could generate around \$15,000 per bus annually. He argued that the combined savings could bring electric buses not just to cost parity with diesel buses, but beyond.

Chairman Fiedler inquired about the economic challenges schools currently face, specifically what obstacles exist for schools that want to adopt electric buses and realize the associated benefits in their fleets. Kosinski acknowledged that electric school buses have higher upfront costs but emphasized that they offer savings and other benefits. She explained that one major challenge for schools was establishing the necessary charging infrastructure and upgrading bus depots. She said that utility partnerships with school districts also posed obstacles. She noted that the grant program associated with HB 1539 could help address these challenges by funding charging infrastructure, depot upgrades and the planning and administrative costs involved in the transition to electric buses.

Chairman Causer asked about the difference in price between an electric school bus and a conventional diesel, propane or other type of bus. Kosinski responded that recent Pennsylvania data showed electric school buses cost approximately \$320,000 to \$380,000, compared with \$180,000 to \$200,000 for diesel buses. She emphasized that while the upfront cost was higher, the long-term benefits over the vehicle's lifetime made the investment worthwhile. She added that the grant program was designed to help support the transition and ensure that savings and benefits flowed back to the school districts. Chairman Causer asked how far you can travel on an electric bus versus another source. Kosinski noted that while she could not provide the exact range of electric school buses offhand, the information was included in her written testimony. She explained that the typical duty cycle, picking up students in the morning, charging for six to eight hours, and then driving in the afternoon, made range less of a concern. She added that based on these use patterns, electric school buses were well-suited for their routes and did not require frequent charging. She suggested that the Steelton School District could provide additional insights from its experience with buses in motion. Slade explained that he had not experienced any issues using electric buses for their regular routes. He said that the buses were used to pick up students in the morning and drop them off in the afternoon, and most extracurricular trips also relied on them. He noted that for longer trips of an hour or more, the district still used diesel buses while they continued learning about the electric buses' range.

Chairman Causer raised questions about the grant program's focus on electric buses, noting that some rural districts have longer routes, which could make electric buses more challenging to use. He asked why the program excluded other clean fuel options, such as propane, which some districts use and which are abundant and clean-burning in Pennsylvania. He noted that the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) had expressed caution and was not fully supportive of the bill and invited comments on these concerns. D'Agostino responded that one advantage of the electric bus program over a propane program was the ability to participate in V2G technology. He argued that this feature, which could not be applied to propane buses, offers additional revenue opportunities and represents an innovative solution, making it a particular advantage of electric buses. Kosinski noted that her testimony included a map showing electric buses already deployed across the state, including in rural districts such as Halifax, Northern Potter and Troy. She acknowledged that while challenges exist in rural areas, the program aims to address these obstacles and position the initiative as an economic opportunity for Pennsylvania.

Chairman Causer asked if they would support broadening the program to include propane. Kosinski answered that they would be happy to have that conversation. Chairman Causer questioned why the grant program was limited to electric buses, noting that some school districts were not advocating for or requesting the program. He asked why the program could not be broadened to include other types of buses. Slade explained that he does not feel knowledgeable enough to comment on propane buses. He emphasized that their main concerns were health and financial impacts. He stated that his district has an unusually high number of

students with asthma, so reducing emissions with electric buses addresses important health issues. He added that electric buses significantly reduced fuel costs for the district. He noted that he is uncertain how propane would compare on these points but emphasized that for his district, health benefits and fuel savings were the two primary considerations.

Chairman Fiedler asked D'Agostino to expand on his statements regarding the impact on the grid. D'Agostino explained that the program could involve the Public Utility Commission (PUC) and relevant utilities developing a tariff structure and compensation rate for electric bus batteries. He argued that this would allow the batteries to be used not only while the bus is operating but also during critical times of the day, such as emergencies at a school, when the bus could supply electricity. He added that compensation for this service would help offset costs and contribute to the overall financial argument for adopting electric buses.

Rep. Mandy Steele (D-Allegheny) acknowledged that propane buses are an improvement over traditional buses but highlighted the advantages of electric buses, particularly in Pittsburgh, where steep valleys and frequent storms often cause extended power outages. She shared a personal experience with a bi-directional electric vehicle (EV) that could power her home for three days during an outage. She noted that school districts in Pittsburgh were interested in electric buses for similar reasons, as they could keep schools operational, provide power to students and allow the community to charge devices and medical equipment during emergencies. She argued that this capability made electric buses a priority, as propane buses could not serve this function. D'Agostino emphasized the power and longevity of electric bus batteries. He noted that the combined energy capacity of 25 electric buses could power roughly 110 Pennsylvania homes for a full day. He highlighted that these batteries could last for 15 years.

Rep. Mike Armanini (R-Clearfield) asked Rep. Steele how long her EV could power her house during an outage. Rep. Steele answered that it could power the house for around three days for the refrigerator and the essentials. Rep. Armanini inquired how she would then drive and charge the car if she is using it to power her house essentials. Rep. Steele replied that she would not drain the battery to zero but instead would drive it to an available and functioning charging station.

Rep. Armanini raised concerns about electric buses, questioning their practicality and cost. He noted that while electric buses could theoretically provide power during blackouts, this conflicted with their primary transportation role. He challenged the cost assumptions, citing higher actual prices, \$430,000 for electric versus \$160,000 for propane. He questioned the projected savings, arguing that two propane buses could be purchased for the price of one electric bus. He expressed skepticism about health benefits, questioning whether diesel emissions in buses truly posed significant risks to children. He stated that, given the budget crisis in Pennsylvania, the bill was unwise and that he would not support it. D'Agostino specified that the energy capabilities of electric school buses are an added benefit, not their primary function. He emphasized that buses are just one piece of the broader energy solution and could provide revenue while contributing to resilience. He stressed that this feature should not be seen as a sole solution during outages but as one of many complementary benefits, alongside the health and environmental advantages of electric buses.

Rep. Armanini asked how that would generate revenue, because they are not covering the initial cost of the bus. D'Agostino explained that the program would be implemented by PUC, which would collaborate with utilities to establish a tariff and compensation rate. He referenced University of Delaware research indicating that electric buses could earn \$28 for every megawatt-hour of energy supplied back to the grid. Rep. Armanini expressed concern that the costs of the program, including tariffs and incentives coordinated with PUC, would ultimately fall on taxpayers and residents. He argued that the state has already subsidized such initiatives extensively and suggested that electric buses should now be able to operate independently without additional financial support.

Chairman Fiedler thanked the testifiers and noted that members have received a detailed packet on protecting children from diesel pollution, which included information on health impacts. She emphasized the urgency of the current energy crisis in Pennsylvania and nationally, highlighting concerns about high utility bills and the human cost, including potential lack of heat in winter and air conditioning in summer. She argued for finding common ground and increasing energy production to mitigate these issues, suggesting that the legislation could be part of a broader solution.

Chairman Causer expressed skepticism about the bill, describing it as largely a taxpayer handout for schools that are not requesting or advocating for electric buses. He questioned claims that electric buses are safer than diesel, suggesting that any diesel-related health issues could be addressed by properly maintaining bus exhaust systems. He stated that the bill is "ill-timed" and "a waste of dollars for the taxpayer," but appreciated the testimony and questions from members.

Chairman Fiedler noted hearing from "a number of school districts across the commonwealth recently who are interested in bringing fleets online." She cited a list and map of all the schools in the commonwealth in the back of the electrification coalition testimony. "I think this is technology that can be useful to school districts," she said. "Some school districts are very interested in pursuing."



## **Pennsylvania Athletic Oversight Committee (PAOC)**

*10/29/2025, 10:00 a.m., Room 156, Senate Majority Caucus Room, Main Capitol*  
Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider the approval of the 2024 PAOC Annual Report, committee reorganization and to hold an informational meeting with the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA).

Sen. Scott Martin (R-Lancaster) was **elected as chair** of the committee.

Rep. Robert Matzie (D-Beaver) was **elected as vice chair** of the committee.

The 2024 PAOC Annual Report was unanimously **adopted**.

Doug Brown, chief of staff to Sen. Patty Kim (D-Dauphin), awarded Dr. Robert Lombardi, executive director, PIAA, a citation from the Senate congratulating his upcoming retirement in December 2025 and expressed well wishes to him.

Lombardi provided updates on PIAA, mentioning its status as a voluntary, 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, the introduction of girls' flag football and partnerships for broadcasting championships. He acknowledged legislative support for sports officials and the productive relationship with the General Assembly.

Rep. Jesse Topper (R-Bedford) raised concerns about the transition to cashless systems for entry into athletic events and inquired about measures to ensure no one is turned away due to payment method issues. Lombardi explained a new policy allowing cash entry for championship events, emphasizing that electronic ticketing helps manage crowd sizes but assured that cash payments would be accommodated. Rep. Topper expressed concerns about basketball officiating and the capacity for management as a new season approaches, specifically bringing up the topic of adopting a shot clock and asking for thoughts on its implementation. Lombardi discussed the board's consideration of a shot clock in basketball, mentioning its initial rejection and subsequent approval for a third reading. He highlighted issues such as cost, timing of implementation and the need for training of officials and staff. He stated that if approved, implementation would not occur for another three-year school cycle to allow for budgeting and preparation. Mark E. Byers, chief operating officer (COO), PIAA, noted that PIAA is working with hometown ticketing for football championships.

Chairman Matzie emphasized the importance of inclusivity with paying for cash in attending school activities beyond athletics and appreciated the board's efforts in securing broadcasting agreements. He discussed the request for proposal (RFP) process for championship venues and raised concerns about competition and safety in football, specifically mentioning a situation involving two schools. He asked about the consideration of such issues within the board's bylaws and the broader national context. Lombardi responded to concerns about competition and safety in high school sports, explaining the review process at the end of each sports season and mentioning other states' adoption of eight or nine-man football formats. He acknowledged the cyclical nature of sports participation and the state's development of modified ways to play junior varsity and junior high school games.

Chairman Matzie inquired about the possibility of sanctioning boys' flag football due to concerns about safety and chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), asking if this has been discussed at the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) or internally for potential support. Lombardi explained that NFHS currently does not have a committee or rules book for boys' flag football, as most states prefer tackle football, and mentioned the National Football League's (NFL) efforts to promote flag football and the high school level's focus on improving the safety of tackle football.

Chairman Martin commented on the growing interest in club football among boys, observing that many families consider it an option before transitioning to football in later middle school or early high school.

Sen. Greg Rothman (R-Cumberland) discussed championships in his district and thanked Lombardi for his years of service with PIAA.

Chairman Martin asked for clarification on discussions held over the past year by the PIAA regarding feeder schools for private and program schools, including how these discussions started and how private schools could be appropriately managed given the lack of limits compared to public services. Lombardi mentioned a survey that was done regarding feeder and parochial schools and reported the issue that caused the "uproar" was coaches going "anywhere" to recruit players. Chairman Martin discussed the trend

of students transferring from public to private schools at the eighth-grade level, noting that recruitment restrictions for coaches do not hinder the schools' ability to promote themselves for general enrollment. Lombardi responded by mentioning the cost-free nature of the natural grade transfer process and expressed a desire to discuss geographic patterns to facilitate improvement. Byers explained the recruitment rules established in 2006, which limit the schools that coaches can recruit from, focusing on student athletes and explaining the "natural break" at ninth grade and the feeder school language that allows private schools a district-like structure for recruitment.

Chairman Martin inquired about exceptions in student-athlete transfers in cases of distress, such as sexual assault, and whether these require special appeal processes. Byers explained that the postseason waiver form allows for the granting of postseason eligibility with proper documentation and that families can request a hearing before the district committee if their situation doesn't fit the listed categories. Chairman Martin then asked about the process for providing documentation when institutions keep juvenile records confidential. Byers mentioned that information from school principals can be shared with legal counsel to ensure confidentiality. Lombardi discussed the appeals process for students deemed ineligible at the local level, emphasizing the importance of documentation and the possibility of maintaining confidentiality during closed hearings. Chairman Martin expressed satisfaction with the discussion on the shot clock debate in basketball and raised concerns about overcrowding in long-distance races at state track and field finals, asking if measures are being considered to prevent such occurrences. Byers mentioned that steering committees recommended a maximum number of distances for all distance events in earlier seasons.

Rep. Thomas Mehaffie (D-Dauphin) congratulated Lombardi on his retirement, acknowledging his 37.5 years of service and leadership challenges, and said he would be receiving a citation from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the House of Representatives for his services.

Chairman Martin turned the meeting back to the conversation regarding PIAA Officials Week and asked for an update. Lombardi discussed the national adoption of Officials Appreciation Week, crediting PIAA staffers for their roles in its success and offering to provide more insights from them.

Patrick Gebhart, associate executive director, PIAA, highlighted the junior officials program's success, allowing 16 and 17-year-olds to officiate sub-JV contests, with around 400 participants. He noted a record high of 50,000 officials in April, mainly in basketball and football, but mentioned a shortage in field hockey and soccer.

Chairman Martin asked about the sports facing the most significant challenges in engaging the next generation. Gebhart responded that flag football is currently facing recruitment challenges, with fewer than 100 officials for over 150 schools. He mentioned the negative impact of coaches' "unruly" behavior on recruiting officials and the board's actions to increase penalties for misconduct. Chairman Martin discussed the impact of fan behavior on sports officials' willingness to serve, emphasizing the need for a safe environment in interscholastic athletics. He mentioned the movement behind [SB 255](#), which became Act 22 of 2025. He discussed the strengthening of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA) in Pennsylvania, classifying sexual assault by a sports official as a tier two offense. Gebhart supported the legislation and discussed the clearance process for officials initiated in 2015, involving three clearances at a cost of approximately \$60, valid for five years.

Chairman Martin inquired about the status of girls' wrestling teams. Lombardi noted significant growth and the goal of forming full teams and weight classes. He believed girls' wrestling could increase even further if those goals are achieved. Chairman Martin praised the "Grow PA" program aimed at keeping young people in Pennsylvania and acknowledged past disagreements with Lombardi but appreciated his focus on student athletes' best interests. Lombardi thanked Chairman Martin for his work and advocacy and credited the committee's efficiency to Chairman Martin. Chairman Martin emphasized the importance of ongoing communication and meetings beyond the required board meetings to address emerging issues. He appreciated the ability to discuss matters openly with the team and stressed the commitment to maintaining these discussions for the benefit of children in Pennsylvania. Chairman Martin noted the absence of further business and closed the meeting, saying he was looking forward to future engagements with Byers and Lombardi.



## Bullet.in.Points

### STATE BOARD OF NURSING; RULEMAKING; OPIOID PRESCRIPTION AND EDUCATION AND ORGAN DONATION EDUCATION

The State Board of Nursing amended Pennsylvania Code relating to continuing education on organ donation and opioids. Effective May 1, 2026. Additional information is available on the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

## Cosponsor Memos

### HCO2816 - School and Local Government Loan Reimbursement During Budget Impasses

#### Sponsor

Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta (D)

#### Summary

Requires the commonwealth to pay interest and cost reimbursements to political subdivisions that were forced to incur loan debt as a result of the budget impasse.

#### Intro Date

10/24/2025

#### Last Action

10/24/2025 H - Cosponsor memo filed

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### HCO2834 - Social Work Licensure Exam Alternative

#### Sponsor

Rep. Melissa L. Shusterman (D)

#### Summary

Requires the State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors to offer an alternative to the examination required for licensure as a bachelor social worker, a social worker or a clinical social worker.

#### Intro Date

10/29/2025

#### Last Action

10/29/2025 H - Cosponsor memo filed

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### HCO2835 - Emergency Instructional Flexibility for School Districts

#### Sponsor

Rep. Joe Ciresi (D)

#### Summary

Provides school districts with enhanced flexibility during declared emergencies.

**Intro Date**

10/29/2025

**Last Action**

10/29/2025 H - Cosponsor memo filed

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**SCO1389 - Safety and Violence Education (SAVE) Students Act****Sponsor**

Sen. Steven J. Santarsiero (D)

**Summary**

Requires schools to implement at least one hour, or a standard class period, per year of suicide prevention training, violence prevention training and social inclusion training to students in grades six through 12.

**Intro Date**

10/28/2025

**Last Action**

10/28/2025 S - Cosponsor memo filed

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**SCO1393 - Teaching the Historical, Economic, and Social Dangers of Communism in Pennsylvania Schools****Sponsor**

Sen. Doug Mastriano (R)

**Summary**

Directs public schools to include age-appropriate lessons on the history of communism and its impact worldwide.

**Intro Date**

10/30/2025

**Last Action**

10/30/2025 S - Cosponsor memo filed

## Basic Ed Bill Actions

**HB158 - An Act providing for sport activities in public institutions of higher education and public school entities to be expressly designated male, female or coed; and creating causes of action for harms suffered by designation.**

### Sponsor

Rep. Barbara Gleim (R)

### Summary

(PN 149) The Fairness in Women's Sports Act provides for sport activities in public institutions of higher education and public school entities to be expressly designated male, female or coed; and creates causes of action for harms suffered by designation. Provides definitions. Prohibits an athletic team or sport designated for females, women or girls from being open to students of the male sex. Specifies that students are not restricted from participating in an interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural or club athletic team or sport designed for the student's sex or designated coed or mixed. Asserts that a government entity, licensing or accrediting organization or an athletic association or organization may not entertain a complaint, open an investigation or take other adverse action against a school or institution of higher education for maintaining a separate interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural or club athletic team or sport for students of the female sex. Provides for cause of action, outlining deprivation of opportunity, retaliation, school's cause of action and limitation. Asserts that if part of this act is found invalid, all valid parts that are severable from the invalid part shall remain in effect. Adds that if a part of this act is invalid in one or more of its applications, the part remains in effect in all valid applications that are severable from the invalid applications. Effective in 60 days.

### Intro Date

01/17/2025

### Actions

01/14/2025 H - Introduced

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01/17/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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10/29/2025 H - Discussed during voting meeting - House Health

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**HB1405 (Chapter 41) - 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 career and technical instructional certificate.**

### Sponsor

Rep. Brian Munroe (D)

### Summary

(PN 1604) Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, further providing for career and technical instructional certificate. Includes evidence that a veteran has served in the United States Armed Forces for a minimum of 8,000 hours, equivalent to four years full-time, in the occupational area to be taught, for the issuance of a career and technical instructional certificate. Defines "veteran." Effective in 60 days.

### Intro Date

05/05/2025

### Actions

10/08/2025 H - Signed in House

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10/20/2025 S - Signed in Senate

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10/21/2025 G - Presented to the Governor

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10/27/2025 G - Approved by the Governor

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10/27/2025 G - Act No. 41 of 2025

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**HB1663 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, establishing the Statewide Imagination Library Program and the Imagination Library of Pennsylvania Restricted Account; and imposing duties on the Department of Education.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Liz Hanbidge (D)

**Summary**

(PN 2031) Amends the Public School Code, establishing the Statewide Imagination Library Program and the Imagination Library of Pennsylvania Restricted Account; and imposing duties on the Department of Education. Provides definitions. Establishes the Imagination Library of Pennsylvania Restricted Account in the General Fund. Permits the State Treasurer to accept outside revenues for deposit into the account. Asserts that money from the account shall be allocated to qualified local entities that agree to a dollar-for-dollar match for purposes of the program. Permits the department to waive the dollar-for-dollar match requirement to prevent undue financial hardship. Stipulates that money remaining in the account at the close of the fiscal year will not lapse and instead will be carried forward to the next fiscal year. Stipulates that any interest that accrues in the account will remain. Establishes the Statewide Imagination Library Program within the Department of Education to promote the development of a comprehensive statewide initiative to encourage children from birth to five years of age to develop a love of reading and learning. Directs qualified local entities to use allocated money to provide one age-appropriate book to each registered child from birth to five years of age in participating counties. Asserts that books will be sent monthly to each child's home at no cost to families. Directs the department to match the amount required of local participating programs. Provides departmental duties. Permits the department to promulgate necessary regulations. Directs the department to submit a report to the General Assembly no later than January 1, 2026, and each January 1 thereafter. Provides for the contents of the report. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

06/25/2025

**Actions**

06/25/2025 H - Introduced

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10/29/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee - House Children and Youth

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10/29/2025 H - Reported as committed - House Children and Youth

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10/29/2025 H - First consideration

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10/29/2025 H - Laid on the table

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**HB1900 - An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, providing for teacher tax credit.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Nikki Rivera (D)

**Summary**

(PN 2537) Amends the Tax Reform Code, adding an article to provide for educator tax credit. Amends language from “teacher” to “educator” throughout the bill. Provides definitions. Adds definition for “eligible educator.” Asserts that married taxpayers filing jointly who are both eligible educators are eligible for a credit equal to 100% of the amount that the taxpayers spent on unreimbursed classroom supplies during the taxable year, up to \$200. Asserts that eligible educators can be verified by another appropriate method. Allows Aging to request more information to determine eligibility. Permits a taxpayer who is a certified teacher and incurs expenses for the purchase of classroom supplies in a taxable year to apply for a tax credit. Asserts that the tax credit shall be equal to 100% of the amount that the taxpayer spent on unreimbursed classroom supplies during the taxable year, up to a maximum of \$100. Adds that if the amount of credit that the taxpayer is eligible to receive exceeds the taxpayer’s tax liability, the Department of Revenue (DOR) shall pay the excess amount to the taxpayer. Outlines eligibility, providing for the determination of eligibility and ineligibility. Prohibits a taxpayer from carrying forward, carrying back, selling, or assigning all or a portion of a tax credit granted to the taxpayer. Permits DOR to develop written guidelines for implementation. Applies this act to taxable years commencing after Dec. 31, 2025. Effective immediately. (Prior PN: 2405)

**Intro Date**

10/06/2025

**Actions**

10/22/2025 H - Meeting Scheduled - 10/28/2025, 10:30 AM - Voting Meeting (House Finance), Room B31, Main Capitol

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10/28/2025 H - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended - House Finance

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10/28/2025 H - Reported as amended - House Finance

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10/28/2025 H - First consideration

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10/28/2025 H - Laid on the table

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**HB1919 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in preliminary provisions, providing for student-related injury leave.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Thomas L. Mehaffie (R)

**Summary**

(PN 2547) Amends the Public School Code, in preliminary provisions, providing for student-related injury leave. Outlines applicability for student-related injury leave. Lists what shall not be superseded or preempted. Provides definitions. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

10/29/2025

**Actions**

10/29/2025 H - Introduced

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10/29/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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**HB2001 - An Act amending Title 24 (Education) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for incarcerated students; and abrogating a regulation.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Johanny Cepeda-Freytiz (D)

**Summary**

(PN 2548) Amends Title 24 (Education), adding a chapter to provide for incarcerated students; and abrogating a regulation. Provides definitions. Outlines eligibility. Lists applicable conditions. Asserts that a regulation, policy or internal procedure may not be adopted or enforced that restricts eligibility for state grants on the basis of incarceration alone. Explains that this chapter shall be broadly construed to ensure access to state grant aid for incarcerated students. Declares that no provision of statute or regulation may be interpreted to impose ineligibility for state grants on the basis of incarceration except as explicitly authorized under this chapter. Requires data collection and the submission of an annual report. Abrogates provisions of 22 Pa. Code § 121.6(b). Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

10/29/2025

**Actions**

10/29/2025 H - Introduced

10/29/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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**HB2002 - An Act authorizing the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to join the Interstate Compact for School Psychologists; providing for form of compact; and imposing additional powers and duties on the Governor, the Secretary of the Commonwealth and the Compact.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Manuel Guzman (D)

**Summary**

(PN 2552) The Interstate Compact for School Psychologists Act authorizes the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to join the Interstate Compact for School Psychologists; provides for form of compact; and imposes additional powers and duties on the governor, the secretary of the commonwealth and the compact. Grants the governor the authority to execute a compact. Outlines the purpose of the compact. Provides definitions. Establishes eligibility requirements and requirements to maintain eligibility as a member state. Directs each member state to grant an Equivalent License to practice School Psychology in that state upon application by a licensee who satisfies the criteria. Allows member states to set and collect a fee for granting an Equivalent License. Provides for school psychologist participation in the compact and for active military members or their spouses. Details discipline and adverse actions. Establishes a joint government agency whose membership consists of all member states that have enacted the compact known as the School Psychologist Interstate Licensure Compact Commission. Outlines commission membership, voting and meetings. Specifies commission powers. Directs the commission to establish and elect an Executive Committee, which shall have the power to act on behalf of the commission according to the terms of this compact, and details the powers, duties and responsibilities of the committee. Specifies that the committee shall be composed of up to seven members. Requires the commission to adopt and provide an annual report to member states. Outlines meetings and financing of the commission. Provides for qualified immunity, defense and indemnification. Directs the commission to provide for facilitating the exchange of information to administer and implement the provisions of this compact in accordance with the rules of the commission, consistent with generally accepted data protection principles. Establishes the licensee information that a member state shall agree to provide for the facilitation. Provides for rulemaking. Outlines oversight, dispute resolution and enforcement. Stipulates that the compact shall come into effect on the date on which the compact statute is enacted into law in the seventh member state. Asserts that a member state's withdrawal shall not

take effect until 180 days after enactment of the repealing statute. Further provides for withdrawal. Permits the compact to be amended by the member states. Outlines construction and severability. Details the consistent effect and conflict with other state laws. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

10/29/2025

**Actions**

10/29/2025 H - Introduced

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10/29/2025 H - Referred to - House Professional Licensure

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**SB9 - An Act providing for sport activities in public institutions of higher education and public school entities to be expressly designated male, female or coed; and creating causes of action for harm suffered by designation.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Judy Ward (R)

**Summary**

(PN 177) The Fairness in Women's Sports Act provides for sport activities in public institutions of higher education and public school entities to be expressly designated male, female or coed; and creates causes of action for harm suffered by designation. Provides definitions. Prohibits athletic teams or sports designated for females, women or girls from being open to students of the male sex. Allows students to participate in an interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural or club athletic team or sport designed for the student's sex or designated coed or mixed. Prohibits a government entity, licensing or accrediting organization or an athletic association or organization from entertaining a complaint, opening an investigation or taking any other adverse action against a school or institution of higher education for maintaining separate interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural or club athletic teams or sports for students of the female sex. Permits a student who is deprived of an athletic opportunity or suffers direct or indirect harm as a result of a known violation to bring a cause of action for injunctive relief, damages, psychological, emotional and physical harm suffered, attorney fees and costs and any other relief available under law against the school or institution of higher education. Allows a student who is subject to retaliation or other adverse action by a school, institution of higher education or athletic association or organization as a result of reporting a violation to an employee or representative of the school, institution or athletic association or organization or to any federal or state agency with oversight of schools or institutions of higher education in Pennsylvania to bring a cause of action. Permits a school or institution of higher education that suffers direct or indirect harm as a result of a violation to bring cause of action. Prohibits a person from bringing a civil action later than two years after the day on which the harm underlying the cause of action occurs. Provides that if a part of this act is found invalid, all valid parts that are severable from the invalid part shall remain in effect. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

02/03/2025

**Actions**

10/24/2025 H - Meeting Scheduled - 10/29/2025, 9:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Health), Room G-50, Irvis Office Building

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10/29/2025 H - Voted favorably from committee with request to re-refer to House Judiciary Committee - House Health

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10/29/2025 S - Press Conference Held - Dad Legislators Call for Action to Defend Daughters in Sports

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10/29/2025 H - Reported with request to re-refer to House Judiciary Committee - House Health

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10/29/2025 H - Re-referred to - House Judiciary

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**SB160 - An Act to provide appropriations from the General Fund for the expenses of the Executive, Legislative and Judicial Departments of the Commonwealth, the public debt and the public schools for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025; to provide appropriations from special funds and accounts to the Executive and Judicial Departments for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, and for the payment of bills remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025; to provide for the appropriation of Federal funds to the Executive and Judicial Departments for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, and for the payment of bills remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025; and to provide for the additional appropriation of Federal and State funds to the Executive and Legislative Departments for the fiscal year July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Scott Martin (R)

**Summary**

(PN 1258) The General Appropriation Act of 2025 provide appropriations from the General Fund for the expenses of the Executive, Legislative and Judicial Departments of the Commonwealth, the public debt and the public schools for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025; to provide appropriations from special funds and accounts to the Executive and Judicial Departments for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, and for the payment of bills remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025; to provide for the appropriation of Federal funds to the Executive and Judicial Departments for the fiscal year July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, and for the payment of bills remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025; and to provide for the additional appropriation of Federal and State funds to the Executive and Legislative Departments for the fiscal year July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024. Increases appropriations for debt services and school employees' pensions. Reduces the legislature's operating expenses. Adds miscellaneous provisions, inserting provisions for the deduction of expenditures under temporary expenditure symbols. Asserts that this act shall apply retroactively to July 1, 2025. Effective immediately. (Prior PN: 1225, 529)

**Intro Date**

04/03/2025

**Actions**

10/21/2025 S - Voted favorably from committee on concurrence, as amended - Senate Rules and Executive Nominations

10/21/2025 S - Motion to revert to Prior Printer's No. 529 - Senate Rules and Executive Nominations

10/21/2025 S - Re-reported on concurrence, as amended - Senate Rules and Executive Nominations

10/21/2025 S - Laid out for discussion

10/29/2025 H - Referred to - House Rules

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**SB246 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in student supports, providing for parental and employee notification of weapon incidents.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Jarrett Coleman (R)

**Summary**

(PN 1030) Amends the Public School Code, in student supports, adding a section to provide for parental and employee notification of weapon incidents. Directs schools to notify parents, guardians and school employees of an incident involving the possession of a weapon on any school property that constitutes a violation of Section 1317.2, 18 PA.C.S. § 912 (relating to possession of weapon on school property) or locally established policies of the school's governing body relating to weapons. Stipulates that the notification be made within 24 hours of the incident. Permits schools to limit notification to parents and guardians of students enrolled in or attending, or school employees assigned to, the school building where the incident occurred. Directs the school to notify parents, guardians and school employees if the school building at which the incident occurs shares a campus with other school buildings. Provides guidelines to be followed if the incident occurs at a school-sponsored activity or on a public conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity. Prohibits notification from containing personally identifiable information about a compliant student. Provides definitions. Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 199, 752, 764, 1009)

**Intro Date**

02/13/2025

**Actions**

10/22/2025 S - Laid out for discussion

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10/22/2025 S - Senate concurred in House amendments

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10/22/2025 S - Signed in Senate

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10/29/2025 H - Signed in House

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10/30/2025 G - Presented to the Governor

## **Higher Ed Bill Actions**

**HB158 - An Act providing for sport activities in public institutions of higher education and public school entities to be expressly designated male, female or coed; and creating causes of action for harms suffered by designation.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Barbara Gleim (R)

**Summary**

(PN 149) The Fairness in Women's Sports Act provides for sport activities in public institutions of higher education and public school entities to be expressly designated male, female or coed; and creates causes of action for harms suffered by designation. Provides definitions. Prohibits an athletic team or sport designated for females, women or girls from being open to students of the male sex. Specifies that students are not restricted from participating in an interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural or club athletic team or sport designed for the student's sex or designated coed or mixed. Asserts that a government entity, licensing or accrediting organization or an athletic association or organization may not entertain a complaint, open an investigation or take other adverse action against a school or institution of higher education for maintaining a separate interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural or club athletic team or sport for students of the female sex. Provides for cause of action, outlining deprivation of opportunity, retaliation, school's cause of action and limitation. Asserts that if part of this act is found invalid, all valid parts that are severable from the invalid part shall remain in effect. Adds that if a part of this act is invalid in one or more of its applications, the part remains in effect in all valid applications that are severable from the invalid applications. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

01/17/2025

**Actions**

01/14/2025 H - Introduced

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01/17/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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10/29/2025 H - Discussed during voting meeting - House Health

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**HB1405 (Chapter 41) - 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 career and technical instructional certificate.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Brian Munroe (D)

**Summary**

(PN 1604) Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, further providing for career and technical instructional certificate. Includes evidence that a veteran has served in the United States Armed Forces for a minimum of 8,000 hours, equivalent to four years full-time, in the occupational area to be taught, for the issuance of a career and technical instructional certificate. Defines "veteran." Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

05/05/2025

**Actions**

10/08/2025 H - Signed in House

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10/20/2025 S - Signed in Senate

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10/21/2025 G - Presented to the Governor

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10/27/2025 G - Approved by the Governor

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10/27/2025 G - Act No. 41 of 2025

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**HB1849 - An Act providing for sport activities in public institutions of higher education and public school entities to be expressly designated male, female or coed; and creating causes of action for harm suffered by designation.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Clint Owlett (R)

**Summary**

(PN 2285) The Dads Defending Daughters Act provides for sport activities in public institutions of higher education and public school entities to be expressly designated male, female or coed; and creates causes of action for harm suffered by designation. Provides definitions. Requires interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural or club athletic teams or sports that are sponsored by a public school entity, a public institution of higher education or any school or institution where students or teams compete against a public school entity or institution of higher education must be expressly designated as either male, men or boys, female, women or girls, or coed or mixed. Prohibits teams designated as females, women or girls from being open to students of the male sex. Provides protections for educational institutions from government entities, licensing or accrediting organizations or an athletic association or organization entertaining a complaint, opening an investigation or taking any other adverse action for maintaining separate interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural or club athletic teams for students of the female sex. Provides for cause of action for deprivation of opportunity, retaliation and the school's cause of action. Establishes limitations of later than two years after the day on which the harm underlying the cause of action occurs to bring a civil action. Provides for the severability of the act. Effective immediately.

**Intro Date**

09/09/2025

**Actions**

09/05/2025 H - Introduced

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09/09/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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10/29/2025 H - Discussed during voting meeting - House Health

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10/29/2025 H - Press Conference Held - Dad Legislators Call for Action to Defend Daughters in Sports

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**HB2001 - An Act amending Title 24 (Education) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for incarcerated students; and abrogating a regulation.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Johanny Cepeda-Freytiz (D)

**Summary**

(PN 2548) Amends Title 24 (Education), adding a chapter to provide for incarcerated students; and abrogating a regulation. Provides definitions. Outlines eligibility. Lists applicable conditions. Asserts that a regulation, policy or internal procedure may not be adopted or enforced that restricts eligibility for state grants on the basis of incarceration alone. Explains that this chapter shall be broadly construed to ensure access to state grant aid for incarcerated students. Declares that no provision of statute or regulation may be interpreted to impose ineligibility for state grants on the basis of incarceration except as explicitly authorized under this chapter. Requires data collection and the submission of an annual report. Abrogates provisions of 22 Pa. Code § 121.6(b). Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

10/29/2025

**Actions**

10/29/2025 H - Introduced

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10/29/2025 H - Referred to - House Education

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**SB9 - An Act providing for sport activities in public institutions of higher education and public school entities to be expressly designated male, female or coed; and creating causes of action for harm suffered by designation.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Judy Ward (R)

**Summary**

(PN 177) The Fairness in Women's Sports Act provides for sport activities in public institutions of higher education and public school entities to be expressly designated male, female or coed; and creates causes of action for harm suffered by designation. Provides definitions. Prohibits athletic teams or sports designated for females, women or girls from being open to students of the male sex. Allows students to participate in an interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural or club athletic team or sport designed for the student's sex or designated coed or mixed. Prohibits a government entity, licensing or accrediting organization or an athletic association or organization from entertaining a complaint, opening an investigation or taking any other adverse action against a school or institution of higher education for maintaining separate interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural or club athletic teams or sports for students of the female sex. Permits a student who is deprived of an athletic opportunity or suffers direct or indirect harm as a result of a known violation to bring a cause of action for injunctive relief, damages, psychological, emotional and physical harm suffered, attorney fees and costs and any other relief available under law against the school or institution of higher education. Allows a student who is subject to retaliation or other adverse action by a school, institution of higher education or athletic association or organization as a result of reporting a violation to an employee or representative of the school, institution or athletic association or organization or to any federal or state agency with oversight of schools or institutions of higher education in Pennsylvania to bring a cause of action. Permits a school or institution of higher education that suffers direct or indirect harm as a result of a violation to bring cause of action. Prohibits a person from bringing a civil action later than two years after the day on which the harm underlying the cause of action occurs. Provides that if a part of this act is found invalid, all valid parts that are severable from the invalid part shall remain in effect. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

02/03/2025

**Actions**

10/24/2025 H - Meeting Scheduled - 10/29/2025, 9:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Health), Room G-50, Irvis Office Building

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10/29/2025 H - Voted favorably from committee with request to re-refer to House Judiciary Committee - House Health

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10/29/2025 S - Press Conference Held - Dad Legislators Call for Action to Defend Daughters in Sports

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10/29/2025 H - Reported with request to re-refer to House Judiciary Committee - House Health

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10/29/2025 H - Re-referred to - House Judiciary

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**SB998 - An Act providing for the Nurse Education Capacity Expansion Grant Program; and imposing duties on the Department of Community and Economic Development.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Rosemary M. Brown (R)

**Summary**

(PN 1216) The Nurse Education Capacity Expansion Grant Program Act provides for the Nurse Education Capacity Expansion Grant Program; and imposes duties on the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). Provides definitions. Establishes the program in DCED to expand the capacity of accredited nursing education programs to increase the number of qualified students. Details grant eligibility, specifying what an eligible nursing education program shall have. Stipulates that no grant may exceed \$500,000 to any one nursing education program during the length of the program. Requires the nursing education program application to include a detailed explanation of the proposed use of the grant and lists what proposed uses may include. Directs DCED to develop a standard application for the program and publish guidelines for the administration of the program, and prioritize grant applications from eligible nursing school providers that serve underrepresented student populations and underserved communities. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

10/07/2025

**Actions**

10/07/2025 S - Introduced

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10/24/2025 S - Meeting Scheduled - 10/28/2025, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (Senate Institutional Sustainability and Innovation), Room 8E-A, East Wing

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10/28/2025 S - Voted Favorably From Committee - Senate Institutional Sustainability and Innovation

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10/28/2025 S - Reported as committed - Senate Institutional Sustainability and Innovation

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10/28/2025 S - First consideration

## Upcoming Events

**FRIDAY – 11/07/2025**

**9:00 AM, [Senate Labor & Industry](#)**

*Public Hearing, Carlow University, Gailliot Center, University Commons, 5th Floor, 3333 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh*

The committee will hold a public hearing on the role of private universities in addressing nursing workforce shortages.

**MONDAY – 11/17/2025**

**9:30 AM, [House Communications & Technology](#)**

*Public Hearing, Room 515, Irvis Office Building*

Public hearing on [HB 634](#).

**12:00 PM, [PA Center for International Exchange and Partnership](#)**

*Press Conference, East Wing Rotunda, Main Capitol*

The Pennsylvania Center for International Exchange and Partnership (PCIEP) will hold a press conference promoting study abroad programs to U.S.-based colleges and universities.

**3:00 PM, [Higher Ed Labor United](#)**

*Press Conference, Main Capitol Rotunda*

Higher education union workers will hold a press conference to advocate for larger investments in higher education.

## **In the News**

[10/27/2025 - Governor Shapiro, First Lady Shapiro, Lieutenant Governor Davis, and Second Lady Holmes Davis Host Second State Dinner to Honor Everyday Pennsylvanians Who Have Made a Lasting Difference in Their Communities](#)

[10/27/2025 – Governor Shapiro Signs Bills into Law](#)

[10/28/2025 - Committee advances Conklin bill to help public employee retirement plans operate more efficiently](#)

[10/28/2025 - PASSHE and College Access Organizations to Launch Campus Visit Program](#)

[10/28/2025 - Senate Committee Passes Bill Addressing AI-Generated Child Sexual Abuse Material](#)

[10/28/2025 - Senator Malone’s Legislation to Protect Minors from Sexually Explicit AI Deepfakes Advances Through the Judiciary Committee](#)

[10/28/2025 – Committee of Seventy Newsletter](#)

[10/28/2025 - Rivera, Neilson legislation for a teacher-supplies tax credit referred out of committee](#)

[10/29/2025 - 20+ State Legislators Say Taxing Billionaires Is the Only Way to Prevent PA’s Next Budget Crisis](#)

[10/29/2025 - Lawmakers, Advocates: It’s Always the Right Time to Defend Our Daughters](#)

[10/29/2025 - Resolution raising awareness of youth homelessness referred out of committee](#)

[10/29/2025 - Collett’s bipartisan nurse education bill advances through committee](#)

[10/29/2025 - ICYMI: Nursing student applauds Governor Shapiro’s efforts to safeguard public health](#)

[10/29/2025 - Rapp Rebukes Democrats Following Another Re-Referral of ‘Save Women’s Sports Act’](#)

[10/29/2025 - House Energy Committee hold public hearing on benefits of electric school buses](#)

[10/30/2025 - Watro Continues Effort to Protect Women’s Sports in PA](#)

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.

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