

## March 20 – 26, 2026

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### SESSION STATUS

At 3:27 p.m. on Wednesday, March 25, 2026, the House stands adjourned until Monday, April 13, 2026, at 12:00 p.m., unless sooner recalled by the Speaker.

At 12:42 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24, 2026, the Senate recessed until Monday, April 20, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. unless sooner recalled by the President Pro Tempore.

### UPCOMING SESSION DAYS

#### House

April 13-15, 27-29  
May 4-6  
June 1-3, 8-10, 15-17, 22-30  
Sept. 28-30  
Oct. 5-7, 19-21  
Nov. 9, 10

#### Senate

April 20-22  
May 4-6  
June 1-3, 8-10, 22-26, 29-30

*The Education Recap is a comprehensive weekly report on legislative and executive actions on education-related legislation in Pennsylvania state government, as compiled and edited by PLS. Additional information, including video, transcript and testimony, is available to [PLSGovTrac](https://www.pslgovtrac.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*

### **PMEA CELEBRATES MUSIC EDUCATION ADVOCACY DAY**

By Dominic Kenny, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | March 23, 2026

Legislative allies joined the Pennsylvania Music Educators Alliance (PMEA) to celebrate Music Education Advocacy Day during a press conference in the Main Capitol Rotunda today.

Mark Despotakis, director of public and government affairs, PMEA, stressed music's importance in forming a well-rounded education. He said students who participate in music education become more engaged in academics and stronger members of their community, along with creative, cultural and social benefits. He stated that PMEA believes that every pre-K through 12th-grade student in the commonwealth deserves guaranteed access to music education from certified educators.

Rep. Joe Ciresi (D-Montgomery) talked about his musical background, including participating in his school choir. "The arts shaped my life," he said. "Music is what brings us together." He urged the audience to fight against budget cuts to music education the same way they would for the football team.

Maggie Rogers, student, Pierce Middle School, discussed the impact music education has had on her life, including the opportunity to express herself and to learn lessons about patience and teamwork. "That's something I don't think you can learn from a textbook," she said, adding that music education "is vital for many students."

Rep. Eddie Day Pashinski (D-Luzerne) recalled his nearly four-decade-long experience as a music teacher. He discussed his rock band, *Eddie Day and TNT*, which plays classic rock. He noted his membership at PMEA for many years before becoming a politician, emphasizing that he knows what music teachers go through. He said music education is often the first thing cut by school districts, urging members of the audience to advocate for it. He praised Gov. Josh Shapiro for his work in securing additional education funds.

Anna Gutzler, teacher, West Shore School District, praised the PA Student Teacher Support Program stipend as "life-changing," allowing her to support herself financially while pursuing her teaching career. She said many of her close friends chose to remain in Pennsylvania, rather than returning to their home states, due to the program's financial support. "This stipend doesn't just support individuals, it helps Pennsylvania retain high-quality educators in a time where we need them the most," she said. "If we want what is best for our students across Pennsylvania, we must continue to invest in the educators that serve them." She called for the expansion of the student teaching stipend.

Sen. Carolyn Comitta (D-Chester) stressed the importance of music teachers in education. She noted that music education serves to boost academic performance, reduce stress and improve behavior for students. She highlighted the legislature's goal of funding education and expanding the student-teacher stipend. She discussed a bill she co-sponsored, [SB 759](#), which would license professional music therapists in Pennsylvania. She also discussed the companion bill in the

House, [HB 563](#). She praised the advocacy and career of Rep. Pashinski, who is retiring from the General Assembly at the end of his term.

Despotakis outlined PMEA's request for this year's budget. He said PMEA is requesting continued and meaningful increases in the basic education subsidy and adequacy payments in order to prevent further cuts to the arts in schools. He also supported increased funding for the field teacher study program and other higher education programs. He closed by urging the General Assembly to license music therapists in the commonwealth.

Brett Keith, state president, PEMA, noted that March is "Music in Our Schools" month, highlighting the impact of music education in schools. He said PMEA's mission is to advance comprehensive and innovative music education through promoting effective instruction, providing meaningful learning experiences and ensuring impactful and equitable music engagement. He stressed the role music plays in society and culture, calling it a "great inheritance."



## **PLC, LEGISLATORS HOLD LITERACY RALLY IN MAIN CAPITOL ROTUNDA**

By Julia Walters, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | March 23, 2026

Legislators, along with the Pennsylvania Literacy Coalition (PLC), met in the Main Capitol Rotunda today to advocate for funding to implement literacy policies.

Rachael Garnick, coalition manager, PLC, introduced PLC's literacy press conference and mentioned that one-third of students in the commonwealth are at a proficient reading level in third grade.

"This is a critical turning point where students go from learning how to read to reading to learn," she stated. Garnick said catching up at that "critical juncture" is challenging. She explained that Pennsylvania is losing out on money every year that the literacy gap is not addressed. Garnick argued that literacy is an economic and workforce development issue as much as it is an educational issue.

Sen. David Argall (R-Schuylkill) emphasized that if students cannot read, it is much more difficult to succeed in other areas of study. "It is just going to reverberate again and again and again in a negative way throughout your life," he said. Sen. Argall added that it was not enough to come up with policy and that funding is needed to address Pennsylvania's literacy challenges. He noted the General Assembly should pass entire pieces of legislation rather than bits and pieces of proposals. "Sometimes there's a carrot and a stick, and you need the stick as well," Sen. Argall reiterated. He stated this challenge was solvable if resources and energy were put behind it.

Rep. Justin Fleming (D-Dauphin) highlighted the "tens of thousands of hours" that go into advocating for bills and legislation. He thanked the advocates from PLC for devoting their time and efforts to advancing literacy programs and funding in the commonwealth. Rep. Fleming discussed how his daughter was identified as having literacy issues in first grade and was able to overcome her challenges by working with a dedicated reading specialist. "If you have difficulty reading, you can't hope to understand literature or social science or science," he said. "So, this is the building block." Rep. Fleming emphasized the \$10 million in last year's budget devoted to boosting literacy efforts. He stated that he is "not satisfied" yet with the funding alone, and the General Assembly will keep advocating for strengthened literacy programs. Rep. Fleming added that putting efforts toward improving literacy includes preparing teachers for continuing education and professional training to teach students with research-based curricula. "I don't care where you're born or where you grow up," Rep. Fleming said. "You have a right, a fundamental right, to a quality education."

Dr. Kymyona Burk, senior policy fellow, early literacy, the Foundation for Excellence in Education (ExcelinEd), described her past role as the former state literacy director for Mississippi. She mentioned how Mississippi went from 49th to 9th in the nation for reading scores and education ranking. Burk noted the significance of "the poorest state in the nation" transforming its educational landscape. She stated that while funding and changes in policy are important, she emphasized the significance of implementation. Burk explained that this transformation is colloquially known as the Mississippi Miracle. She specified that rather than a miracle, this educational change was the product of hard work between teachers, parents and family, funding, policy and implementation.

VeAundrea Smith, educator, Susquehanna Township School District (STSD), described her role as an elementary school educator for the past 30 years. She recalled helping a fifth-grade student with literacy support who was reading at a second-grade level. Smith mentioned that because he struggled with reading, he was struggling with every subject. She noted he had no other learning

difficulties. Smith emphasized that students should be given the proper tools to succeed and discussed the importance of research-based instruction in classrooms. “Literacy should be a guarantee, not a gamble,” Smith said.

Ryan Unger, executive director, Harrisburg Regional Chamber & CREDC, said that literacy “exists squarely at the intersection of education and our economy.” He highlighted how literacy directly relates to workforce infrastructure. Unger explained that students are “already facing barriers” before they reach middle school. He stated students who are not proficient readers are “far more likely” to disengage from school. “Our members see this every day across industries,” Unger said. “They tell us they struggle to find workers with the durable skills to succeed in our modern workplaces.” He highlighted [Act 47 of 2025](#) as an “important step forward” to establish clear expectations around evidence-based grade instruction. Unger emphasized the importance of implementing procedures and policies rather than solely legislation changes and funding. He noted the significance of funding local education initiatives as well. Unger mentioned that if people want to see Pennsylvania grow and become more competitive, literacy issues must be addressed.

Garnick thanked legislators for their bipartisan support in securing state funding for literacy programs in last year’s budget. She highlighted that the PLC was created in January 2025 and emphasized how much can be accomplished in the span of one year. Garnick said PLC was now calling for \$50 million in implementation support. “Where is this \$50 million going?” she questioned. “It’s going to teacher training and professional development, and it’s going to universal screeners.” Garnick stated that when literacy issues are caught early, failures can be prevented before they occur.

Deon Butler, former NFL player and literacy advocate, recalled how his grandmother placed much importance on completing an education. He explained how he got through high school but graduated while reading at a fourth-grade level. Butler explained he went on to graduate from college by “beating all the odds.” He continued, “I reached my goal, and I still fell short because I couldn’t read the playbook.” Butler called his literacy challenges “the hardest thing I had to face in my life.” He mentioned that he decided to learn to read at 27 years old, which resulted in him owning his own business and becoming a national speaker.

Garnick thanked the speakers for presenting and the audience for attending.



## **PPC HOLDS “FOR OUR COMMON WEALTH” CAMPAIGN, ADVOCATING FOR FAIR TAXES**

By Julia Walters, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | March 24, 2026

The Pennsylvania Policy Center (PPC) and various legislators gathered in the Main Capitol Rotunda today to advocate for tax system updates and additional revenue streams.

Dwayne Heisler, campaign director, PPC, opened the press conference and stated that a responsible budget requires responsible revenues with fair taxes. He said Pennsylvania struggles with investing in schools, health care and other essential services. “Those investments are only possible if they build a tax system that works for everyone, not just those at the very top,” Heisler emphasized. He thanked everyone for standing together at the press event and said that paying fair shares of taxes makes a fair commonwealth.

Felicity Williams, executive director, PPC, mentioned she helps lead the “People Together For Our Common Wealth” campaign. She stated that Pennsylvania is currently at a “turning point” when it comes to revenue streams. Williams highlighted PPC’s recent paper titled “A Path to Affordability For Our Common Wealth.” She explained Pennsylvania’s budget deficit is not a result of spending too much and is instead a result of the tax system not keeping “pace with the needs of our people, our communities or our economy.” She continued, “We have papered over that gap with temporary solutions, whether that be federal relief one time, fixes or budget transfers.” Williams explained there is a growing gap between the state’s needs and what it can provide. She added that Pennsylvania is not a poor state, but it is “one of the worst states to be poor in” due to policy choices. Williams noted that the commonwealth is leaving “\$6.2 billion on the table each year” when large corporations do not pay fair shares of taxes. “We have the resources, we just have not structured our system to generate and invest them in a way that works for everyone,” Williams said. She reiterated that a responsible budget requires responsible taxes. Williams highlighted some progress Pennsylvania has seen, including the Working Pennsylvanians Tax Credit (WPTC). She stated that the commonwealth cannot celebrate its wins without also acknowledging remaining challenges.

Sen. Art Haywood (D-Montgomery) emphasized it is “long overdue” to raise the minimum wage. He explained that Pennsylvania’s surrounding states have higher minimum wages, and the commonwealth is losing out on members of the workforce to other areas who would otherwise contribute to Pennsylvania taxes. Sen. Haywood argued against the idea that a higher minimum wage would have a negative impact on the economy. “Do you know any small business that doesn’t want people who are shopping with more money?” he questioned. “Would you rather have an \$8 shopper or a \$15 shopper?” Sen. Haywood noted that when people make more money, they pay more in taxes. He explained that a higher minimum wage allows certain individuals to stay off welfare programs. Sen. Haywood reiterated that higher incomes would allow more workers to stay in Pennsylvania and pay state taxes.

Rep. Tara Probst (D-Monroe) stated the importance of adequately funding essential services like health care programs and education. She highlighted the 2019 Commonwealth Court ruling that asserted Pennsylvania was constitutionally underfunding its rural schools. Rep. Probst noted she has four schools from the lawsuit located in her district and that the needed revenue shifted to small businesses and individual taxpayers. She mentioned how Gov. Josh Shapiro outlines several ways to increase revenue to the commonwealth, including the regulation of skill games and adult-use cannabis regulation. Rep. Probst noted how many legislators discuss viewing the budget “like a business.” She continued, “Any business that doesn’t find new revenue streams will fail.” Rep. Probst expressed her belief that Pennsylvania should implement a severance tax for gas drilling, which would bring in more money as well. “There’s no reason that our commonwealth shouldn’t generate additional revenue from the multibillion-dollar gas companies,” she said. “We are second only to Texas, and we get next to nothing.” Rep. Probst explained she supports the governor’s budget proposal, and additional funding streams are necessary to implement it fully.

Rep. Kyle Donahue (D-Lackawanna) acknowledged progress Pennsylvania has made, including increased funding for K-12 education and higher education, and the implementation of new tax credits. He mentioned there is more work to be done regarding funding for education, public transit, child care and general affordability. Rep. Donahue reiterated that Pennsylvania does not have a spending problem and stated that taxes are “not keeping up” with the economy. He supported combined reporting policies so that “international companies can’t hide the profits and avoid paying their fair share.” Rep. Donahue mentioned regulating skill games and taxing adult-use cannabis instead of letting the revenue leave the state. “If we make those changes, we can begin to generate the revenue we need to invest in our people, strengthen our communities and make life more affordable,” he added.

Rep. Elizabeth Fielder (D-Philadelphia) called Pennsylvania’s regressive tax system “one of the worst in the nation.” She highlighted that the system allows less funding for essential services and places the tax burden on small businesses and individual taxpayers. Rep. Fielder stated this system was “outdated” and needs modernization updates. She emphasized [HB 1610](#), of which she is the prime sponsor, would implement combined reporting requirements for large corporations doing business in Pennsylvania. Rep. Fielder said her bill would close the Delaware Loophole so that large corporations would be required to pay Pennsylvania taxes. “Big corporations paying their fair share is the least they can do,” she added. Rep. Fielder said 28 states plus D.C. have combined reporting requirements established. She stated HB 1610 has been awaiting movement in the Senate Finance Committee for the past nine months. “If you do business in Pennsylvania, pay Pennsylvania taxes and give back to communities,” Rep. Fielder emphasized.

Heisler said PPC would organize “People Together For Our Common Wealth” campaign events the week leading up to Tax Day on April 15. He noted it is a good opportunity to continue the conversations around the tax systems. Heisler thanked those in attendance and closed the press conference.



## Committee News

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

### House Environmental and Natural Resources Protection Committee

03/23/2026, 10:00 a.m., Room G-50, Irvis Office Building

By Derek Danneker, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

[HB 2229](#) - (PN 2922) Amends the Solid Waste Management Act, in general provisions, further providing for powers and duties of the department. Directs the department to forward a notice received by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to the municipality where the violation occurred within 14 calendar days of receipt and to provide a copy of all notices of violation issued under the authority of this act to the municipality where the recipient facility or site is located. Allows a municipality to request at any time not to receive copies of notices of violation or noncompliance referenced in paragraphs (19) and (20). Explains that the request must be in writing from an authorized municipal representative to the regional waste program manager in the appropriate regional office of the department. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Minority Chair Jack Rader (R-Monroe) said, "It's an excellent bill." He emphasized the importance of informing local municipalities about spills.

[HB 2246](#) - (PN 2937) Amends Title 27 (Environmental Resources), in water resources planning, further providing for state water plan to include section 3118.1 (relating to covered data centers) and adding a section to provide for covered data centers; and promulgating regulations. Provides for departmental powers in order to implement the provisions of the added section, subject to the provisions of section 501 of the Clean Streams Law. Outlines preapplication notification. Specifies additional permit considerations. Requires coordination. Provides for denial of a request if it is found that there is a reasonably foreseeable risk of adverse impact to adjacent water users, waters of the commonwealth, wetlands or any other water use. Requires monitoring. Directs forms created in accordance with this section to be published and made available on the department's website. Outlines fees and regulations. defines "covered data center." Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as committed** with Republicans voting in the negative, excluding Reps. Thomas Mehaffie (R-Dauphin) and Brenda Pugh (R-Luzerne).

Rep. Joseph Webster (D-Montgomery), prime sponsor of the bill, highlighted the need for regulatory guardrails for data centers and the importance of managing water usage and temperature. He said the bill is moderate, which creates some agency oversight and reporting requirements.

Chair Rader pointed out that local governments should be the ones to control the issue. He added that agencies can already handle water quality problems. He warned that the bill could place several layers of government on the problem. "I hate to see government duplication," he said.

Rep. Nikki Rivera (D-Lancaster) said she supports the bill. She pointed out that in Lancaster, the data centers will be using closed-loop systems, which will report how much water is being used and provide transparency.

Rep. Dallas Kephart (R-Clearfield) criticized the delegation of authority to the Environmental Quality Board (EQB) for setting fees or bond requirements. He argued that such powers should remain with elected legislators because they are accountable to the public.

Rep. David Zimmerman (R-Lancaster) suggested that the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) authority might be extended to include water quantity in addition to quality.

[HB 2161](#) - (PN 2804) Amends Title 66 (Public Utilities), in service and facilities, providing for tree removal agreements. Declares that on or after the effective date of this subsection, if a public utility determines that the removal of a tree is necessary for the public utility to provide adequate and reliable service to the public and that the tree is the property of a city, municipality or municipal authority, the public utility shall offer to enter into an agreement with the city, municipality or municipal authority that owns the tree requiring the public utility to plant a tree in replacement of the tree removed. Requires the replacement to be made within two years. Explains that a city, municipality or municipal authority shall not be obligated to accept the public utility's offered agreement upon the removal of the tree. Elaborates on the replacement tree size. Permits the request for a replacement fee. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as committed**, on a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

Rep. Abigail Salisbury (D-Allegheny), prime sponsor of the bill, explained her motivation for introducing the legislation was to ensure utilities replace trees after work, similar to how they repair pavements. She described how the loss of vegetation can change the nature of a community.

Chair Rader expressed concerns about the potential increase in electric bills due to the tree replacement requirement. Rep. Salisbury suggested selecting certain tree species could result in long-term cost savings for utilities.

Rep. Gary Day (R-Lehigh) stated that although he supports the idea behind the legislation, he is concerned about its implementation. He explained that many times when a utility company trims a tree, they “cut it apart and leave the base to where it’s not even able to perform what we like about the tree.” He said the bill may increase that practice.

[HB 289](#) - (PN 234) Amends the Public School Code, in grounds and buildings, providing for radon testing. Directs schools to be tested for radon gas every school year starting in 2026-2027. Provides that if a test result is at least four picocuries per liter of air, the school building shall be mitigated and retested until the radon levels are less than four picocuries per liter of air. Establishes what shall apply to the initial testing of a school building’s radon gas levels. Requires radon gas testing to be performed by an individual who is certified under the Radon Certification Act in accordance with the version of ANSI-AARST MA-MFLB Protocol for Conducting Measurements of Radon and Radon Decay Products in Multifamily, School, Commercial and Mixed-Use Buildings in effect on the effective date. Specifies what shall apply to radon gas mitigations, including requiring radon gas mitigation system installations to be completed within six months of positive results. Provides for communication of results to school officials, government agencies and parents. Provides for reporting of test results. Provides for radon-resistant construction of new school buildings. Provides definitions. Effective in 120 days. The bill was **reported as amended**, with Republicans voting in the negative, excluding Reps. Day, Mehaffie and Pugh.

[A02653](#), by Vitali, provides a gut-and-replace omnibus amendment to provide funding, remove non-public schools and update reporting requirements. The amendment was adopted with Republicans voting in the negative, excluding Reps. Day, Mehaffie and Pugh.

Rep. Tim Briggs (R-Montgomery), prime sponsor of the bill, said he has introduced the legislation in several sessions. He highlighted that radon is the second-highest contributor to lung cancer, following smoking. He stated the bill is a “commonsense” approach to mitigate students’ and staff exposure to the gas. He explained that every five years there would be a test for the gas, and if it reached certain levels, there would be a mitigation effort. He said the bill focuses on radon testing and mitigation in schools, highlighting the health risks of radon exposure and the financial implications of mitigation efforts, estimated in the tens of millions of dollars.

Chair Rader stated that although he supports the idea of the bill, it is best to allow local municipalities to control their school districts. He suggested the monitoring could increase property taxes, as well as mandates on schools. He added that the House Appropriations Committee should consider appropriating funds for the endeavor.

Rep. Mehaffie said he supports the bill. He said that radon often gathers in basements, and although it can be more difficult to mitigate the issue in larger buildings, it is worth it. He asked why the amendment removes non-public schools from the mandate. Chair Vitali explained that the \$27 million in funding for the bill comes from a specific account designated for school environmental repairs. He said the amendment adjusts the definition of eligible schools to match the fund’s scope.

Rep. Mary Isaacson (D-Philadelphia) said she supports the bill and understands why non-public schools cannot be included. She highlighted the importance of keeping children and staff safe in schools.

Rep. Timothy Twardzik (R-Schuylkill) said it is “a little disappointing that we don’t do this already in schools.” He questioned whether the bill would require the state to test private homes if a student is homeschooled. Chair Greg Vitali (D-Delaware) said, “I tend to doubt that.”

Rep. Day questioned the constitutionality of separating schools for specific actions. Chair Vitalie stated that public and non-public schools have been treated differently in many ways. “It’s probably not an issue here,” he said.

Rep. Brenda Pugh (R-Luzerne) expressed concern about the high costs of installing radon testing and mitigation systems in schools, especially in larger ones, and questioned the allocation of funds between adequately funded and underfunded schools within her district. Evan Franzese-Peterson, majority executive director, explained that the department would prioritize reimbursements for economically disadvantaged schools under the mitigation funding. Chair Vitalie said the bill would use money that is specific to public schools. He suggested the committee could use other funds for non-public schools.

Rep. Lee James (R-Venango) asked if the bill is an annual commitment of funding or if the General Assembly would have to vote on funding each year. Chair Vitali specified that funds were allocated for lead and asbestos but not radon, and it was not recurring. Rep. Isaacson explained that part of the new school funding formula includes funding for facility maintenance. She stated, “It’s something that we’re going to have to address and fund.”

Chair Rader inquired if the bill would use the \$25 million in the fund. Rep. Briggs stated it would not “zero” the fund. Rep. Isaacson said the amount spent to mitigate radon would need to be determined during the budget process. Chair Rader expressed concerns about the bill potentially becoming an unfunded mandate in the future and suggested a resolution encouraging school districts to conduct testing.

Rep. David Zimmerman (R-Lancaster) commended Rep. Briggs for introducing the bill. He asked if there is a way to prioritize schools in areas with high rates of radon. Rep. Briggs acknowledged the variability of radon levels and expressed openness to discussing prioritization of testing based on those levels. He mentioned the possibility of finding creative ways to reduce testing costs but emphasized that radon is a statewide issue.

Rep. Pugh asked for confirmation about the availability of funds for school maintenance and whether they were immediately accessible. Franzese-Peterson stated that the amendment specifies a \$27 million transfer into an account reserved for radon testing and mitigation efforts. Chair Vitali explained that it would be necessary to budget appropriately to ensure the account has the funds reserved for this purpose if the proposal passes. Rep. Briggs stated that the funds for radon testing and mitigation efforts would need to be voted on before being allocated to the designated account. Rep. Pugh inquired why it is necessary to retest for radon every five years when the mitigation systems installed have monitors. Chair Vitali mentioned that a five-year interval for retesting mitigation systems is the maximum that experts are comfortable with due to underground changes.

Chair Rader asked who decides on the transfer of money into a special account. Franzese-Peterson stated that the Secretary of the Budget would be responsible for this decision.



### **House Labor and Industry Committee**

*03/23/2026, 11:00 a.m., Room G-50, Irvis Office Building*  
Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider two bills.

[HB 64](#) - (PN 53) The Employee Protection from Captive Audience Meeting Act prohibits the penalization of employees for nonparticipation in religious or political matters. Provides for an employee to bring action against an employer in a court of competent jurisdiction to enforce compliance and requires action to be brought no later than one year after the incident. Directs the Department of Labor and Industry to investigate alleged violations. Provides for an employer to issue notice of the rights of employees where notices are customarily posted by the employer. Effective in 90 days. The bill was **reported as amended**, on a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

[A02258](#), by Dawkins, makes changes to the definition of “section” and adds enforcement provisions, including investigatory powers for the department and administrative penalties. The amendment was **adopted**, along a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

Rep. Tark Khan (D-Philadelphia), prime sponsor of the bill, explained that his legislation is focused on fairness in the workplace by ensuring employees are not disciplined for not attending meetings about politics or religion. He noted the bill does not restrict the ability of employers to express their views, but workers cannot be punished for not sitting through those meetings.

Minority Chair Lee James (R-Venango) expressed concerns about the bill’s potential infringement on First Amendment rights and its constitutionality. He noted there has been opposition from various groups such as the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). He added that a federal court recently enjoined a similar California Law. He urged a negative vote.

Rep. Joe D’Orsie (R-York) opposed the bill, citing concerns over restricting protected speech.

Rep. Marc Anderson (R-York) criticized the bill for its subjectivity in enforcement and definitions of political or religious speech. “I just think it’s a pretty slippery slope when we start saying what is political and even what is religious,” he said.

Rep. Barb Gleim (R-Cumberland) raised concerns about the bill's lack of definition for "institution of higher education" and the potential oversight of not exempting primary and secondary schools. She questioned the consequences for employers who violate the act, including the possibility of being sued by each employee and receiving a fine of \$2,500 per employee. Rep. Khan stated the provision is intended for employers, not students. Rep. Gleim noted that school districts employ many people. She asked if an employer is found in violation, could they both be open to civil lawsuits and the fine. Ryan Beaston, majority executive director, explained that the bill would allow for both administrative penalties and private lawsuits against employers who discipline employees for not participating in certain meetings. Rep. Gleim expressed her opposition to the bill, hoping for a future solution that benefits both employers and employees.

Rep. Jim Haddock (D-Luzerne) asked Rep. Khan to confirm that the bill does not prevent employers from holding meetings but prohibits disciplining employees who choose not to attend based on personal beliefs. Rep. Khan confirmed.

Rep. Emily Kinkead (D-Allegheny) reiterated that the bill does not allow an employer to punish an employee for not attending a meeting about religion or politics. She said she does not understand how the ACLU believes the bill would violate an employer's free speech. "It just restricts their ability to have other people hear it, and that is not a right that any employer should have, to force their employees to listen to something that is not directly related to their employment," she said.

Rep. Mike Jones (R-York) questioned the necessity of the bill, suggesting it benefits trial lawyers more than addressing a real issue. He questioned whether discussing the impact of tariffs in a meeting would violate the bill. Chair Dawkins said, "I think no, because, again, I think it goes back to the employee having the discernment to attend that meeting." Rep. Jones further asked if an employee could leave a meeting if politics are discussed. Chair Dawkins stated that employees have the right not to listen to suggestions beyond their work requirements. Rep. Jones asked if an employee can leave a meeting, where additional job-related items are going to be discussed, when politics were discussed earlier. Chair Dawkins stated that employees have always had the right to leave meetings if their employer discusses something outside of their work requirements. Rep. Jones argued the bill creates a "slippery slope" where employees can choose which meetings to attend based on potential or past discussions about religion or politics. He mentioned his experience with non-mandatory Bible studies at his company and suggested that employees already have protections against being fired for not attending such meetings. Rep/ Jones concluded that the bill is unnecessary and stated he would vote against it.

Rep. Wendy Fink (R-York) questioned why the bill includes a special exemption for unions from the requirement to protect employees who refuse to attend meetings discussing religion or politics. She highlighted her concern with unions requiring members to participate in activities supporting the Democratic Party, despite some members preferring Republican candidates. Rep. Khan explained that the bill includes commonsense carve-outs for unions and religious organizations, where specific types of speech are expected and protected due to the nature of the work. He highlighted that these exemptions are logical, similar to how religious institutions are expected to engage in religious speech. Beaston explained that the amendment in section nine, which pertains to union exemptions, was added at the request of the Office of Administration (OA). He added that the amendment allows union access to employees they represent under the terms of a collective bargaining agreement. Rep. Fink asked if the purpose of the bill was to protect employees and if the carve-outs, such as for churches and unions, were necessary for that protection. She said she understood the rationale for church carve-outs but questioned if the purpose of union carve-outs was to promote the Democratic Party. She asked if mail received from a union urging a vote for a particular candidate would violate the bill. Rep. Khan specified that the bill in question is strictly aimed at protecting workers, emphasizing its clear and limited scope. He stated that the concerns being discussed were beyond the bill's intent and how it was written. Rep. Fink reiterated that she did not understand why unions are not included in the bill.

Rep. Robert Merski (D-Erie) pointed out that the bill is moot unless the employer institutes a punishment for the employee for not attending a meeting.

Rep. Haddock stated the bill pertains only to meetings at work and is unrelated to the mail system or receiving mail at home. Rep. Khan agreed and stated the bill is limited to protecting workers. Beaston explained that section four of the bill protects employees from negative employment actions if they choose not to attend employer-sponsored meetings, decline communications, or report violations of this section in good faith.

Rep. Brian Rasel (R-Westmoreland) asked whether employees who refuse to participate in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training or meetings, considering them political, would be exempt from punishment under the bill. Chair Dawkins asked if Rep. Rasel considers DEI training to be political. Rep. Rasel said he does. Rep. Khan emphasized that the bill's aim is to protect workers from being forced into political or religious speech. Rep. Rasel questioned the criteria for determining what is considered political. Beaston stated that the determination of what is political would fall to the department and the courts.



Rep. Anderson argued that the bill is too broad and unclear. He pointed out that if legislators cannot agree on the application of the bill, the public will also have difficulties. He concluded that the bill is “messy” and “too subjective,” and not ready for consideration. Chair Dawkins stated that critics are misunderstanding the bill’s purpose, which is solely about preventing employee discipline for inaction, not broader scenarios.

Rep. Chad Reichard (R-Franklin) highlighted that the bill also includes communications. He asked if a CEO sends an email regarding tariffs without an unsubscribe feature, if it would open the company up to civil liability. Rep. Khan remarked that concerns about unwanted communications are not relevant to the bill’s scope, which addresses forced engagement with content, not receiving emails.

Rep. Merski highlighted that the hypothetical situations have not included a disciplinary measure, which is necessary for the bill to take effect. He asked if employers could discuss with an employee the reasons for walking out of a meeting and how to resolve such issues without imposing discipline. Rep. Khan confirmed that under the proposed bill, such discussions would be allowed without resorting to discipline.

Chair James expressed his intention to vote no on the bill, citing concerns about its implications and the potential for numerous court cases.

Chair Dawkins encouraged a positive vote on the bill, highlighting its aim to protect employees participating in non-work-related activities.

[HB 678](#) - (PN 692) The Labor Broker Registration Act provides for the registration of labor brokers; imposes duties on the Department of Labor and Industry and the Secretary of Labor and Industry; establishes the Labor Broker Registration Account as a restricted revenue, interest-bearing account in the General Fund; and imposes penalties. Provides several definitions. Prohibits a person from holding oneself out of engaging in an act as a labor broker without satisfying the registration requirements under this act. Requires proof of registration. Mandates the development of a verification system. Provides for application registration. Lists contents of application. Provides expiration and renewal. Requires a labor broker to update its registration within 30 days of any change in personal or business information required to be provided to the department under this act. Establishes fees. Stipulates money in the account and interest earned on the money is appropriated on a continuing basis to the department for administering and enforcing the provisions of this act. Establishes prohibited acts. Authorizes investigations and penalties. Provides for suspension of registration and other relief. Permits the department to promulgate regulations as necessary to implement and administer this act. Effective in one year. The bill was **reported as amended**, on a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

[A02500](#), by Dawkins, makes changes to the penalty section and requires the department to prepare educational materials. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

[A02689](#), by James, amends the definition of “disbarment” to provide that to be considered a successor entity, a construction business must meet at least five of the nine criteria listed in the definition. The amendment was **withdrawn**.

Chair James said he withdrew his amendment because a future amendment may be considered on the floor to address his concerns.

Rep. Gleim expressed her intention to vote against the bill due to concerns about the stringent criteria for subcontractors set forth but acknowledged the bill’s overall positive impact.

Rep. Reichard inquired about the criteria exempting subcontractors from certain requirements, questioning how minor collaborations on job sites would affect their classification. Beaton remarked that the section Chair Dawkins referred to mandates subcontractors to have exclusive control over their work, including the authority to hire and fire and to direct the methods and means of construction work on the project.

Chair James agreed with Rep. Gleim that the bill has improved. He said he is interested in additional stakeholder feedback because the bill includes disbarment as a potential punishment.

Chair Dawkins announced plans to work together on an amendment for a bipartisan product he believes can pass and urged members to support the bill to move it out of committee.



## Senate Education Committee

03/23/2026, 12:00 p.m., Room 8E-A, East Wing

By Derek Danneker, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider several bills.

[SB 128](#) - (PN 77) Amends the Public School Code, in terms and courses of study, providing for online curriculum availability. Requires that beginning with the 2025-2026 school year and each school year thereafter, a school entity shall post an Internet link or title for every textbook used by the school entity, a course syllabus or a written summary of each instructional course and the state academic standards for each instructional course offered by the school entity on its publicly accessible Internet website. Requires the information to be updated no later than 30 business days after each time the list of textbooks, syllabi, course descriptions or state academic standards used by the school entity is revised. Provides chief school administrator responsibility for implementation. Specifies that the requirements are not construed for a school entity to violate copyright, trademark or other intellectual property right of the creator or the owner of the curriculum. Defines "chief school administrator" and "school entity." Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as amended**, along a party-line vote, with Democrats voting in the negative.

[A02659](#), by Culver, updates the starting date to the 2027-2028 school year. The amendment was **adopted**, along a party-line vote, with Democrats voting in the negative.

Sen. Doug Mastriano (R-Franklin), prime sponsor of the bill, said his legislation would allow parents to see what is being taught in school. He highlighted the importance of transparency as a basic principle of governance and public trust. He noted the bill does not "tell teachers what to teach," restrict instruction or mandate new courses. "This matters deeply across Pennsylvania, parents want to be engaged in their children's education," he said. "They want to know what their children are learning, how they can support them at home and how coursework aligns with expectations. Too often, that information is difficult to find or inconsistent from one district to another."

Minority Chair Lindsey Williams (D-Allegheny) noted this is the third time she has voted on the bill. She said the legislation is a "thinly veiled attempt to restrict truthful instruction and censor content." Sen. Mastriano remarked that transparency is not political and the bill does not change the curriculum.

Sen. Greg Rothman (R-Cumberland) said current law requires a school to produce a curriculum if requested. Cindy Urban, majority executive director, said that is correct, but schools vary on how they produce that information. Sen. Rothman said that "this makes perfectly good sense" to require schools to post the curriculum online. "I don't know why the governor would veto something like this," he remarked. Sen. Mastriano noted that many schools are already posting their curricula online, and the bill will bring uniformity to all schools.

Sen. Anthony Williams (D-Philadelphia) stated that, historically, when curricula have been posted online, activists will work to remove factual information. "That's not a Democratic issue, nor Republican issue. It's just the reality of how we react today in society with the issues that we don't agree with," he said.

[SB 378](#) - (PN 240) Amends Title 24 (Education), in preliminary provisions, providing for student data privacy and protection; conferring powers and imposing duties on the Department of Education; and imposing penalties. Provides legislative intent to protect student data privacy. Provides for findings that educational entities are custodians of large amounts of personally identifiable information and the state lacks guarantees for their protection. Directs the secretary of education to designate an individual to serve as the chief data privacy officer to ensure that student data is contained within the state data system, provide support, evaluate legislative and regulatory proposals and provide reports. Directs the department to develop forms for the notice of disclosure and promulgate rules and regulations. Requires educational entities to adopt and implement reasonable security policies and procedures, designate an individual to act as student data manager, establish a review process for data requests and prepare an annual report. Provides that a student is the owner of the student's data, as well as any work or intellectual product. Requires an educational entity to provide an annual written notice outlining the conditions under which the student's data may be disclosed. Provides for the maintenance of each signed acknowledgment. Provides for conditions of disclosure. Provides for limited use of information by third parties. Requires educational entities to notify the chief data privacy officer of a data breach and students. Prohibits public funding from being provided to an education entity if that entity does not allow a student or student's legal guardian to inspect, review or correct the student's record. Imposing civil and administrative penalties. The addition of 24 Pa.C.S. §§ 511(c) and 515 and The addition of 24 Pa.C.S. Ch. 5 Subchs. C and D are effective August 1, 2024. Section 2 is effective immediately. The remainder of this act is effective in 120 days. The bill was **reported as amended**, along a party-line vote, with Democrats voting in the negative.

[A02663](#), by Culver, changes the definition of educational entity to refer to public schools and modifies the effective date to 180 days. The amendment was **adopted**, along a party-line vote, with Democrats voting in the negative.

Sen. Kristin Phillips-Hill (R-York), prime sponsor of the bill, explained that her legislation works to protect the privacy of students' personal data from unauthorized or inappropriate disclosure. She highlighted that technology has created a large repository of sensitive student data, and federal laws do not cover the full extent of that data. She said her bill protects personal information, prohibits third-party contractors from selling or exchanging student data and bans targeted marketing.

Chair Williams said she believes there is additional work to be done on the bill, which has faced broad stakeholder opposition and outstanding questions regarding conflicts with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

[SB 402](#) - (PN 349) Amends the Public School Code, adding Article XIV-C to provide for administration of emergency anti-seizure medication. Provides General Assembly declarations. Provides several definitions. Permits emergency anti-seizure medication to be administered by a school nurse who has been trained in anti-seizure medication administration. Permits administration by nonmedical employees. Provides exception. Allows parental or guardian requests. Requires training. Stipulates an employee who volunteers as specified under this section may not be required to provide emergency medical assistance until completion of the training program adopted by the school district or charter school, and documentation of completion is recorded in the employee's personnel file. Declares if a school district or charter school elects to participate as specified under subsection (b), the school district or charter school shall be immune from liability for the good faith conduct of an employee acting under this section and shall ensure that each employee who volunteers shall be provided defense and indemnification by the school district or charter school for any and all civil liability. Requires this information shall be reduced to writing, provided to the volunteer and retained in the volunteer's personnel file. Mandates an accommodations notice. Requires program creation and lists contents of the program. Provides compensation. Requires development of guidelines and best practices. Mandates reporting and recordkeeping. Requires the student's parent or guardian to provide all materials necessary to provide emergency medical assistance. Stipulates that a school or charter school may not be responsible for providing the necessary materials. Effective immediately. The bill was **reported as amended**, with Chair Williams and Sen. Carolyn Comitta (D-Chester) voting in the negative.

[A02672](#), by Culver, changes the due date for department guidelines from December 2025 to December 2026. The amendment was **adopted** with Chair Williams and Sen. Comitta voting in the negative.

Sen. David Argall (R-Schuylkill), prime sponsor of the bill, explained that currently only licensed health care providers can administer treatment needed for seizure relief. He said that it can be difficult when there is no full-time health professional in the building. He said the bill would establish voluntary emergency treatment training for employees of school districts, which licensed health care professionals must conduct.

Sen. Williams said he believes he heard there will be additional amendments to address stakeholder feedback.

Chair Williams said she is uncomfortable with the approach to school nursing. "We as policymakers need to stay focused on ensuring that all students have access to a certified school nurse in their building," she said.

[SB 835](#) - (PN 928) Amends the Public School Code, in grounds and buildings, further providing for display of United States flag and development of patriotism. Requires that when the U.S. flag is displayed, the official POW/MIA flag must also be displayed where it can be reasonably accommodated. Effective in 180 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Sen. Tracy Pennycuick (R-Montgomery), prime sponsor of the bill, emphasized the sacrifice some service men and women have made to protect the United States. She described several cases of Americans being held prisoner or missing. She said the flags would help ensure that students "do not forget the history of what has happened before."



## Legislative Budget & Finance Committee

03/24/2026, 9:00 a.m., Hearing Room 1, North Office Building  
Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to release two reports entitled, *The Impact of Tavern Gaming in the Pennsylvania Lottery (Act 90 of 2013)* and *A Study Pursuant to [HR 318 of 2024](#)*, the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA).

*The Impact of Tavern Gaming in the Pennsylvania Lottery (Act 90 of 2013)*. The report was unanimously **released** to the public.

Matthew Thomas, senior analyst, Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LBFC), reported tavern gaming generated only \$1.3 million in tax revenue in 2025 — a small fraction of the lottery’s revenue — and did not materially impact state lottery sales.

Chair Kristin Phillips-Hill (R-York) asked about streamlining the tavern gaming licensing process and the potential for removing the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board (PGCB) from the process. Thomas agreed about the “complicated process” but noted their assessment did not cover potential changes to the process.

[HR 318](#) - (PN 2593) Resolution directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LBFC) to conduct a study, issue a report and make recommendations on the current status, management, structure, policies and finances of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA). Replaces “middle” with “junior high.” Strikes language stating there have been consistent concerns and serious questions raised. Adds that the study will include an examination and review, in collaboration with a public accounting firm that compiles PIAA’s annual audited financial statements, of the financial transactions of PIAA as reflected on PIAA’s regularly maintained accounts with financial institutions or as disclosed on PIAA’s annual IRS form 990 and any companion filings with the Bureau of Charitable Organizations of the Department of State during the previous three years, broadcast agreements entered into by PIAA during the previous four years, the name, image and likeness policy of PIAA, the revised competition classification formula used by PIAA when available after acceptance by PIAA member schools, the transfer policy of PIAA, requests for proposals used to determine the location of state championship games, the composition of the board of directors of PIAA and the feasibility of recommending to PIAA the addition of State departmental and legislative appointees to the board of directors and the expansion and enhancement of the oversight authority of the Pennsylvania Athletic Oversight Committee. Inserts that LBFC will ensure that communications covered by the attorney-work product doctrine or attorney-client privilege are protected during the study and that expenses incurred by PIAA in cooperating with LBFC for the study do not exceed \$25,000. The report was unanimously **released** to the public.

David Beaudoin, project manager, LBFC, presented the findings of a study on the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA), including recommendations for a statewide body to monitor student athlete transfers, revising the feeder school policy and documenting championship host venue requirements. He said the study also covered PIAA’s finances, policies on student transfers and governance structure.

Sen. Cris Dush (R-Jefferson) inquired about the vagueness of the feeder school policy. Beaudoin explained that the issue was schools misinterpreting the policy definition. Mark Byers, executive director, PIAA, described the efforts to clarify the feeder school definition, including a new approval process for feeder schools by the PIAA Board of Directors for a two-year classification period, with recent progress indicating a unanimous approval of the proposed language amendment. Sen. Dush asked if PIAA or schools make money from exclusivity rights for championships. Byers replied that schools do not receive a portion of the exclusive rights to playoffs during the regular season and was unable to provide specific figures at the moment but offered to do so later. Sen. Dush mentioned the lack of television coverage in his district for state championships, emphasizing the importance of making these events more accessible to his constituents. Byers understood Sen. Dush’s sentiment.

Sen. Nick Pisciotano (D-Allegheny) referred to LBFC’s recommendation for an independent statewide body to oversee transfer policy. He asked LBFC’s perspective on whether this task should be handled by the legislature, the Athletic Oversight Committee or the PIAA independently. Beaudoin suggested looking into how similar organizations were formed in other states to determine the best approach for establishing an independent body to oversee transfer policies. Sen. Pisciotano inquired if the PIAA would prefer to handle the establishment of a recommendation legislatively or independently. Byers said a constitutional amendment would be required for any change to how eligibility issues are adjudicated, possibly no earlier than April next year, and raised concerns about the structure and accountability of a potential independent body. Sen. Pisciotano asked about the preference for handling a recommendation through the PIAA’s constitutional processes and inquired about District Eight’s financial statements and their oversight by the PIAA. Beaudoin explained that District Eight’s activities are not segregated financially from the Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS), preventing the separation of financial information for inclusion in PIAA’s financial results. Sen. Pisciotano asked if the PIAA’s financial statement does not incorporate any financial results from the City of Pittsburgh Public School System. Beaudoin said it does not. Sen. Pisciotano then asked why PPS is treated differently from the Philadelphia School System. Byers responded that District Eight uniquely aligns with a single school district, the Pittsburgh Public School District. Sen. Pisciotano inquired about the auditing process for Districts Six and Seven, questioning if it was a coincidence that these districts have different auditors from

the PIAA's auditors. Byers said some district committees conduct their own audits, which are then consolidated by Boyer & Ritter, LLC, collaborating with local groups or companies. Sen. Pisciotano asked if the districts themselves choose local auditors due to preference. Byers noted District Seven conducts its own audit due to its size and number of schools, a practice since 1999, and these audits are included in the consolidated audit by Boyer & Ritter, LLC, which also performs independent annual audits across all districts.

Sen. Art Haywood (D-Montgomery) asked about the absence of policies and procedures related to harassment prevention in the current report, mentioning his past reports of racial harassment within high school sports to the PIAA. Byers responded that the bylaws had been updated to include penalties for harassment, allowing for resolution without the need for game forfeiture. Byers said the matter was outside the scope of the study, but assured PIAA updated their bylaws and other provisions. Beaudoin stated harassment issues were not included in their report because it focused on a broad analysis of the governance structure of PIAA.

Rep. Steve Samuelson (D-Northampton) appreciated the comprehensive report and questioned the methodology of counting students for enrollment purposes if they attend a charter or magnet school outside their home district. Byers explained that students are not counted twice for interscholastic athletics enrollment if the charter school sponsors the sport. Rep. Samuelson inquired about the frequency and process of investigations into allegations of recruitment by schools and the consequences of recruitment violations. Byers mentioned that recruitment violation complaints are rare but cited a recent case involving a coach's one-year ban. Byers discussed the challenge of obtaining firsthand knowledge for investigations due to fear of retribution and potential impact on a student's eligibility. Rep. Samuelson asked about the possibility of having two separate playoffs for schools with limited areas and those that can draw students from wider areas. Byers referenced the history of private schools' inclusion in state championships since 1972 and expressed concerns about potential legal challenges regarding unequal treatment if a separation were to occur.

Rep. Donna Scheuren (R-Montgomery) asked about PIAA's stance on the safety and protection of girls in sports, focusing on the participation of "biological females" amidst various legislative considerations. Byers responded that PIAA follows the law and what the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) provides, requiring schools to conduct individual assessments of athletes.

Sen. Dush acknowledged the PIAA's allowance for students from districts without swimming pools to compete for the Brookville swim team, appreciating the opportunity for statewide competition and parental gratitude.



## House Education Committee

*03/24/2026, 9:30 a.m., Room 140, Main Capitol*

Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider several bills.

Before beginning the agenda, Rep. Jill Cooper (R-Westmoreland) welcomed a student who was shadowing her around the Capitol for the day.

[HR 417](#) - (PN 2900) Resolution designating the month of November 2025 as "Indiana University of Pennsylvania Appreciation Month" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Chair Peter Schweyer (D-Lehigh) thanked the resolution's prime sponsor, Rep. Jim Struzzi (R-Indiana), for the resolution. "Indiana University of Pennsylvania is one of our favorite institutions of all of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education schools," said Chair Schweyer.

[HR 434](#) - (PN 2993) Resolution recognizing the week of March 9 through 13, 2026, as "Civic Learning Week" in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Rep. Darisha Parker (D-Philadelphia), the resolution's prime sponsor, provided a brief overview of her resolution, emphasizing the importance of civics education in schools.

[HB 2218](#) - (PN 2912) Amends the Public School Code, adding an article to provide for comprehensive school counseling services. Provides definitions. Requires each school entity to develop and implement a written comprehensive school counseling plan and outlines the general requirements that the plan must meet. Specifies the components and contents that the plan must contain. Requires sufficient time at each school entity to be allotted for the school entity's counselor to carry out the duties stated in the school entity's plan. Provides for direct and indirect services. Allows a school counselor to spend a portion of the school counselor's working time during student contact days performing program planning and school support, after applying subsection (b) and with a goal of no more than 20%. Outlines monitoring and support, including the posting of the plan, oversight and Department of Education duties. Asserts that nothing in this article shall be construed to supersede or preempt the rights, remedies and procedures afforded to school employees or labor organizations under federal or state law or any provision of a collective bargaining agreement negotiated between a school employer and an exclusive representative of the employees in accordance with the Public Employee Relations Act. Effective immediately. The bill was **reported as committed**, along a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

Rep. Mandy Steele (D-Allegheny), the bill's prime sponsor, discussed the importance of school counselors and explained her bill would prevent counselors from being pulled from their "core responsibilities."

Rep. Marc Anderson (R-York) regarded the bill as an "excellent idea," but asked what would happen in a situation where a school that does not have enough substitute teachers to fill classrooms, and the only professionals left are counselors. Rep. Steele replied by discussing the current mental health "crisis" in schools and its impact on children. She stressed counselors should not be pulled from the counseling duties. Rep. Anderson said he did not disagree with anything Rep. Steele said, but his "question is reality." He again questioned what a school administrator would do in a situation he had asked about before.

Minority Chair Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster) agreed the issue is worthy of discussion and bringing to the committee's attention. He mentioned his efforts with Rep. Mike Schlossberg (D-Lehigh) about mental health and how to address it. He voiced concerns with the shortages of counselors and expressed hope for the issue to be addressed in the budget as a targeted area.

Chair Schweyer jokingly said, "I just heard Chair Cutler asked for additional money in public education." Chair Cutler replied, "Targeted." Chair Schweyer voiced support for the bill and mentioned similar bills and ideas from the House last session. Chair Schweyer pointed out the commonwealth "finally" funding schools.

[HB 830](#) - (PN 861) Amends the Public School Code, in student supports, further providing for policy relating to bullying. Requires bullying policy to include mechanisms to notify parents and legal guardians of children involved in a bullying or cyberbullying incident within five days of the incident. Stipulates that a school entity's notification to a parent about an incident or a report of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation must comply with 20 U.S.C. § 1232g (relating to family educational and privacy rights) and 34 CFR Pt. 99 (relating to family educational rights and privacy). Defines "cyberbullying." Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as amended**, with Reps. Anderson, Joe D'Orsie (R-York), Barbara Gleim (R-Cumberland) and Brian Rasel (R-Westmoreland) voting in the negative.

[A02654](#), by O'Mara, requires all incidents of alleged bullying to be investigated by the school entity and establishes a procedure for investigating a report of an incident of alleged bullying received by the school entity. The amendment was **adopted**, with Rep. Anderson voting in the negative.

Rep. Jennifer O'Mara (D-Delaware), the amendment and bill's prime sponsor, elaborated on the work put in behind the amendment among stakeholders and education groups. She discussed the personal background of the overall bill and noted her "surprise" about the bullying policy in Pennsylvania.

Chair Culter appreciated Rep. O'Mara's work on the amendment and bill, noted his personal experience with his kids on the issue and said he supports it.

Rep. O'Mara provided the brief story of a high school student who died by suicide in her district and emphasized the need for noting families of bullying incidents.

Rep. John Schlegel (R-Lebanon) said, "Regardless of language, regardless of a bill, regardless of any law that is passed out of this, I would certainly expect every single administrator that they would take every one of these allegations seriously and do whatever they can to make sure that they get to the bottom of it."

Rep. Gleim pointed out that she voted in the affirmative on the amendment. However, she said she would vote no on the bill and cited her reason as already having a law "on the books" to address the issue. She suggested reviewing the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS).

Chair Schweyer said he understood the complicated matter on the bill. He mentioned a similar bill that was sent by the Senate but said it had language that was not “implementable.” He thanked Rep. O’Mara for her efforts and flexibility.

[HB 1752](#) - (PN 2159) Amends the Public School Code, in preliminary provisions, providing for Keystone Exam alternative feasibility study. Directs the secretary of education to contract for an independent study to determine whether the ACT and SAT may be administered in lieu of the current statewide, standardized Keystone Exams in literature, algebra I and biology for high school students consistent with Federal requirements under 20 U.S.C. § 6311(b) (2)(H) (relating to state plans). Directs the secretary to submit, within one year after the effective date of this subsection, a report containing the results of the study and recommendations to the governor and the chairperson and minority chairperson of the House and Senate Education Committees. Outlines what the study shall include. Provides definitions. Effective immediately. The bill was unanimously **reported as amended**.

[A02316](#), by Schweyer, adds definitions and additional requirements to the study. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Rep. Gina Curry (D-Delaware), the bill’s prime sponsor, thanked Chair Schweyer for the amendment and regarded her bill as “really important.”

Chair Cutler said he would like to “just see the change” in the policy. “The reality is, if it’s good enough to get you in the college, it should be good enough to get you there in the first place by graduating,” he stated.

[HB 2237](#) - (PN 2930) Amends the New Economy Technology Scholarship Act, further providing for annual report. Establishes that the report will be published by September 1, following the end of the fiscal year, when funds have been allocated for the program. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Rep. Mary Isaacson (D-Philadelphia), the bill’s prime sponsor, explained the origins of the program within the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA), but noted the program has been closed. She said her bill repeals obsolete parts of the law.

Chair Cutler pointed out that he serves on PHEAA’s board and expressed his frustration with seeing reports for programs that no longer exist. “We should look all through the education world and find everything that needs repealed so we can focus on the matters at hand,” he suggested. Chair Schweyer echoed Chair Cutler’s sentiments.

[HB 2269](#) - (PN 2968) Amends the Public School Code, repealing provisions relating to medical education loan assistance. Effective immediately. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Rep. O’Mara, the bill’s prime sponsor, noted her service on PHEAA’s board and supports ideas that “make their job and our funding more effective.”

[HB 2285](#) - (PN 2992) Amends the Public School Code, in school health services, further providing for health services; and, in reimbursements by commonwealth and between school districts, further providing for state reimbursement for health services. Establishes a staffing ratio of one certified school nurse for every 750 students. Increases the non-categorical reimbursement rate to \$12.61 multiplied by the average daily membership (ADM) of each school district. Specifies that reimbursement may not exceed the actual cost to the school district for health services in the school year. Requires the Department of Health, in consultation with the Department of Education, to use up to \$3,000,000 to award grants for feminine hygiene products to school entities to be provided to students at no expense. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as committed**, along a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

Rep. Lisa Borowski (D-Delaware), the bill’s prime sponsor, elaborated on the challenges school nurses face and told a brief story where one nurse dealt with 100 kids in a single day.

Rep. Anderson agreed the bill was a “great idea” and has no issue increasing the ratio but asked if the bill penalizes schools that do not meet the ratio. Kathryn Krueger, Democratic executive director, said there is no direct repercussion or consequence for failing to meet the ratio. Rep. Anderson said, “So then they don’t have to do it, there’s no consequence — why would a school hire another person?”

Chair Cutler said his comments are like his comments on HB 2218, and he would like to see targeted funding on addressing the shortages.

[HB 1045](#) - (PN 1134) Amends the Public School Code, in school health services, further providing for seizure recognition and related first aid training. Requires completion of seizure recognition and related first aid training beginning with the school year 2025-2026 and every two years thereafter. Provides that nothing in this section shall be construed to create, establish or expand any civil liability on the part of any school entity or any school entity employe. Stipulates the provisions of 42 Pa.C.S. §§ 8332 (relating to emergency

response provider and bystander good Samaritan civil immunity) and 8337.1 (relating to civil immunity of school officers or employees relating to emergency care, first aid and rescue) shall apply to a school entity employe who provides treatment to a student experiencing a seizure in a manner consistent with the policy adopted by the school entity. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **passed over**.

Chair Schweyer said it is still his intention to consider the bill in the future, but he spoke with Rep. Carol Kazeem (D-Chester), the bill's prime sponsor, who was not present, and said he wanted her to be present for the bill. "I know she's on her way to session, but sometimes real life happens," Chair Schweyer remarked.



### **House Democratic Policy Committee**

*03/25/2026, 8:15 a.m., Room G-50, Irvis Office Building*

By Daniel Sachetta, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee held an informational meeting on the wage disparity in higher education.

Rep. Tarik Khan (D-Philadelphia), acting chair, stated today's meeting would focus on the issue of wage disparity in higher education. He shared his personal experience with low wages as a lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) and praised the increase in unionization efforts in Pennsylvania. He invited Rep. Roni Green (D-Philadelphia) to share her thoughts due to her long-standing involvement in the union movement.

Rep. Green expressed her strong support for union organizations, sharing her experiences in both union and non-union jobs and highlighting the significant differences between the two. She encouraged continued efforts in unionization.

Marissa Baez, adjunct faculty, College of Arts and Architecture at Penn State University (Penn State) Main Campus, detailed her support for unionization to ensure transparency, equal opportunity and protection against retaliation from universities. She shared a policy change in which faculty who signed up for Affordable Care Act health insurance through the university could not teach over nine credits. She explained how this led to a significant reduction in her salary from \$51,000 to \$39,000 in one year, with a projected decrease to below \$35,000 in 2026.

Rep. Khan provided context about an ongoing election at Penn State, where approximately 5,600 workers were set to vote on unionization, wishing them luck with the vote.

Dr. Julio Palma, assistant professor of chemistry, Penn State Fayette, shared his journey from immigrating to pursue a PhD to becoming a faculty member in 2016. He emphasized his involvement in organizing a faculty union since 2020 after learning that the University Faculty Senate has no power. He expressed his concern for the closure of his campus without faculty consultation. He highlighted the importance of a faculty union in ensuring shared governance, transparency and equity. He acknowledged the privilege of tenure that he currently has. He shared his personal experience of being reassigned to another campus, given only three days to make a decision, without the opportunity to negotiate workload or salary. He emphasized the importance of practicing democracy in the workplace and not making faculty decisions without faculty involvement in the process.

Rep. Khan thanked Palma for his testimony and asked whether he taught organic chemistry. Palma confirmed that he teaches Organic Chemistry 1. Rep. Khan jokingly said that Palma's class would have helped him in college. He acknowledged the presence of Christopher Huntley, legislative director, SEIU 668 local.

Rep. Darisha Parker (D-Philadelphia) expressed disappointment over an individual being given only three days to make a career and life-changing decision, contrasting it with longer periods allowed for other matters like parking tickets. She questioned the rationale behind such a decision, suggesting that those responsible need to be made aware of the consequences of their actions. She emphasized the need to prevent such incidents in the future.

Rep. Heather Boyd (D-Delaware) shared her personal experience as an adjunct professor, highlighting the challenges of low pay, lack of benefits and job insecurity in academia. She emphasized the importance of investing in faculty for the benefit of the quality of education. She commended Palma for advocacy in this issue, noting that a lot of tenured professors would not do so. She highlighted the expensive nature of attending college today, acknowledging its unaffordable nature for some families. She expressed



her support for the work being done to improve conditions for educators. Rep. Khan asked if Rep. Boyd's son, Graham, was going to college. Rep. Boyd stated it was her son, Cole, but noted that Graham would be coming to the Capitol today with his high school band.

Rep. Khan asked about the experiences of adjunct faculty and instructors in managing economic challenges such as rising gas prices and the overall cost of living. He shared his own experience of teaching at UPenn, where he earned between \$3,000 to \$5,000 for teaching one class. Baez discussed the challenges faced by adjunct faculty, including fluctuating salaries and the stress of financial instability. She highlighted one experience where adjuncts were not paid for one month, and some individuals had to request an advance. She referenced that the new rule has led to faculty preferring remote teaching or consolidating their teaching days to reduce travel to University Park. Palma discussed the challenges faced by faculty at closing campuses, highlighting his own situation of having tenure but acknowledging the struggles of adjunct and non-tenure full-time faculty. He noted the low morale among faculty and staff and the difficulties in hiring due to non-competitive salaries. He argued that forming a faculty union would provide a platform for improving job conditions and the quality of education at Penn State. Rep. Khan thanked the panelists for sharing their stories and remarks.

Rep. Green emphasized the importance of representation and the non-adversarial nature of joining a union. She highlighted her experience with SEIU, where collaboration led to significant achievements and encouraged continued advocacy for change. She stated her office will always support unions.

Jennifer Wilkes, vice president for human resources and chief human resources officer, Penn State, spoke about Penn State's operations, workforce and contributions to Pennsylvania's economy. She highlighted Penn State's role as the commonwealth's sole land-grant institution, educating over 86,000 students and contributing \$15.8 billion annually to the state's economy. She detailed Penn State's workforce and stressed the importance of flexibility in faculty roles and commitments to compete nationally for talent and funding. She underscored the university's commitment to professional development, competitive pay, excellent benefits and flexible work arrangements for its employees. She highlighted an 8% employee turnover rate, contributions to 75% of employee health care costs, a 75% discount on tuition for employees and their dependents and a \$10 million investment in faculty promotions for the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 budgets. She detailed working alongside the faculty senate to navigate issues surrounding pay and workplace concerns. She stressed an open dialogue with Penn State Faculty Alliance and the SEIU through current faculty unionization efforts. She emphasized the importance of not using university funds or taxpayer dollars to discourage faculty from joining a union. She expressed hope to continue open and respectful dialogue with faculty and the commonwealth regardless of the outcome.

Rep. Khan asked about a frequently asked question (FAQ) on Penn State's website, suggesting that unionization could make it more difficult to attract top-tier faculty. He expressed confusion since unionization typically leads to higher wages, better benefits and increased bargaining power. Wilkes explained that the language on their website used words like "may" or "could" because the outcomes of future negotiations are uncertain. Rep. Khan suggested that if the impact of unionization on faculty recruitment is uncertain, it should not be mentioned on the website. He stressed the need for neutrality and questioned the rationale behind including speculative information. Wilkes emphasized the goal of ensuring that faculty are informed and encouraged to vote, highlighting the importance of education on the matter. Rep. Khan recommended a course of action to answer these questions neutrally. Wilkes stated she will review the specific question and answer again.

Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta (D-Philadelphia) criticized Wilkes for contradictions in her statement that conflicted with the president's remarks, highlighting misinformation on Penn State's website regarding central unionization. He urged Penn State to remove the website's union-busting language and allow a free and fair unionization process. He stressed that his frustration is not directed at Wilkes, but the president of the university, who has been on "the wrong side" of diversity and inclusion initiatives and this unionization election. He detailed his concerns with the president, stating in front of the House Appropriations Committee, that union-busting will not happen, but the school has a website "full of union-busting language," stating that a law firm would be paid to stop the unionization process. He asked for the website and the information on this topic to be taken down and for the administration to engage in a free and fair way moving forward. He emphasized the problematic nature of this issue and the university's language, asking them to stop. Wilkes stated that Penn State respects people's democratic right to form a union and has been respectful of this right. She noted that the university is attempting to be responsive to questions they are receiving from individuals on the issue. Rep. Kenyatta reiterated Rep. Khan's concerns about the FAQ website, which he found problematic and contradicted the president's comments to the House Appropriations Committee.

Rep. Green emphasized her unwavering support for workers' rights and her opposition to union busting. She highlighted that the faculty working at Penn State are in these representatives' districts as constituents, which will always be their number one concern. She urged that this message be conveyed to Penn State.

Rep. Parker expressed strong dissatisfaction with the university website, demanding its immediate removal and a written apology from the university president. She emphasized the importance of treating people with humanity, decency and order, noting this is not the first time discussions like this have happened with the Penn State president.

Rep. Abigail Salisbury (D-Allegheny) discussed her experience as an adjunct at the University of Pittsburgh during its unionization process. She criticized the contradiction of higher education institutions teaching about labor rights while discouraging their own employees from unionizing. She highlighted the irony of teaching courses on global workers' rights while the institution itself opposes these efforts. She shared her personal experience teaching First Amendment law and being paid \$3,000 a semester without benefits or resources, emphasizing the previous lack of negotiation power for individual employees. She highlighted the importance of unionization opportunities, now available at Pitt, and encouraged auditing a class on labor rights at Penn State to understand the value of collective bargaining. Wilkes spoke about her and her colleague's commitment to making Penn State an excellent workplace, emphasizing their care for all employees. She highlighted efforts to encourage education and open voting among employees. She detailed an agreement with the union on inclusion criteria, urging eligible employees to request and submit a ballot for unionization.

Rep. Khan thanked members and the policy staff for showing up early for today's hearing, as well as the testifiers for their remarks on this issue.



### House Health Committee

03/25/2026, 9:00 a.m., Room B-31, Main Capitol

By Kyle Purchase, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider several bills.

[HB 1077](#) - (PN 1195) Amends the Public School Code, in school health services, establishing the Commission on Children's Vision and providing for duties of Commission on Children's Vision. Establishes the commission as a departmental administrative commission under the concurrent authority of the Department of Education (PDE) and the Department of Health (DOH). Mandates that the commission consist of the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Health and no less than twelve vision care professionals that work for local nonprofit organizations that provide eyeglasses to children. Directs initial members to draw lots to determine term lengths. Directs that the chairperson of the commission annually rotate between the Secretary of Education and the Secretary of Health. Permits the commission to perform acts and implement policies, procedures and guidelines as may be necessary. Requires the commission to hold its first meeting within 30 days of the effective date. Directs the commission hold meetings at the call of the chairperson. Asserts that members may not receive compensation or reimbursement for their service. Directs the General Assembly to provide administrative support, meeting space and other assistance required by the commission. Directs the commission to work with vision care professionals in developing a statewide plan to provide follow-up vision examinations and glasses to all children who need follow-up vision examinations and glasses. Requires the commission to develop a model for statewide programs to provide vision screenings, eye examinations, follow-up eye examinations and glasses to students who need them for little to no cost. Directs the commission to provide support and coordination for statewide and local activities. Requires the commission to review findings and recommendations related to children's vision care. Directs the commission to consult with and utilize experts to assist in carrying out duties. Requires the commission to investigate, review and issue an annual report on the status of the programs. Directs the commission to submit a report to the Governor of the General Assembly by December 31 of each year. Mandates PDE and DOH to provide staff. Defines "commission" and "school entity." Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as amended**, with Reps. Stephanie Borowicz (R-Clinton), Charity Grimm Krupa (R-Fayette), Brad Roae (R-Crawford), Leslie Rossi (R-Westmoreland), Joanne Steher (R-Schuylkill), Tim Twardzik (R-Schuylkill), Jamie Walsh (R-Luzerne) and David Zimmerman (R-Lancaster) voting in the negative.

[A02669](#), by Khan, streamlines the commission and adjusts commission membership. The amendment was **adopted**, with Reps. Borowicz, Krupa, Roae and Walsh voting in the negative.

Chair Dan Frankel (D-Allegheny) thanked Rep. Tarik Khan (D-Philadelphia) for offering the amendment and explained that the amendment is to make the structure "less cumbersome."

Rep. Johanny Cepeda-Freytiz (D-Berks), the bill's prime sponsor, discussed the challenges students face who need vision care and the access to acquiring eyeglasses. She reasoned that kids falling behind was not due to a lack of ability, but rather a lack of access. She provided an overview of the bill, which aims to create a statewide commission with various experts, professionals and individuals from the Department of Education (PDE) and Department of Health (DOH), and to emphasize follow-up care for kids.

Rep. Roae criticized the number of authorities, boards and commissions and said he didn't see the necessity. He noted that screenings are already being done at schools, and the federal Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) covers glasses for low-income children. Rep. Cepeda-Freytiz said she understood his point. However, she pointed out that eye disorder problems might not be detected, emphasizing what the commission would do to prevent kids from "falling through the cracks."

Rep. Krupa commended Rep. Cepeda-Freytiz for her bill, but said, "If 50% of these kids who are failing their eye exam are not getting the follow-up care that they need, it seems like that the problem's already been identified." She criticized the expansion of government and asked about the potential costs for a new commission. Ericka Fricke, Democratic executive director, explained the amendment streamlines the commission, and the work done within the commission is mainly by volunteers. She noted the bill only goes into effect if the General Assembly funds it. Rep. Krupa replied, "When we say that it's funded by the General Assembly, that means it's funded by the hard working Pennsylvania taxpayers who are being raked over the coals in terms of utility bills, property taxes, food prices rising and gasoline." She said she believed another government commission is not necessary to address the issue and called society to "get its act together."

Minority Chair Kathy Rapp (R-Warren) voiced support for the bill and acknowledged its merits but expressed concerns about the potential costs of a commission. She noted the committee is still waiting to see new regulations from DOH about school vision screenings per Act 122 of 2020.

Chair Frankel provided what the current law does and does not require. He said he believed the bill would connect "the school nurses, Bureau of Community Health, community organizations and eye care professionals to help connect the dots to make sure a failed division screening isn't the end point, but the starting point for actual care." He mentioned Republican Ohio Governor Mike DeWine instituted a Vision Strike Force in 2024.

[HB 2265](#) - (PN 2963) Amends the Health Care Facilities Act, adding a chapter to provide for onsite emergency physicians. Provides definitions. Requires a hospital with an emergency department to ensure that a board-certified emergency physician or board-eligible emergency physician is onsite, on duty and primarily responsible for the emergency department at all times when the emergency department is open, unless an exception has been approved. Permits exceptions to the requirements to be granted if a hospital is located in an area not designated as an urbanized area by the U.S. Census Bureau and satisfies the eligibility conditions. Outlines the conditions that a hospital must demonstrate to qualify for the exception. Requires an exception to be processed in accordance with 28 Pa. Code §§ 51.31 (relating to principle), 51.32 (relating to exceptions for innovative programs), 51.33 (relating to requests for exceptions) and 51.34 (relating to revocation of exceptions). Specifies that nothing in this chapter shall be construed to authorize the use of a tele-emergency department model in lieu of the requirement for an on-site physician. Effective in 60 days. The bill was **reported as amended**, with Reps. Tim Bonner (R-Mercer), Borowicz, Krupa, Roae, Rossi, Stehr, Twardzik, Walsh and Zimmerman voting in the negative.

[A02699](#), by Frankel, changes the requirement for who constitutes an emergency physician and allows existing tele-ED models without a physician presence. The amendment was **unanimously adopted**.

On his amendment, Chair Frankel provided an overview of the changes his amendment would make.

Chair Rapp thanked Chair Frankel for the amendment and acknowledged the work put into it.

Chair Frankel explained the amendment was in response to concerns the committee heard.

Rep. Paul Takac (D-Centre), the bill's prime sponsor, discussed the importance of high-quality, rural health care and access to care. He highlighted the volunteer emergency medical service (EMS) providers in rural areas and the weather they may face. He said he hoped his bill would help physicians across the commonwealth. He thanked his co-sponsor, Rep. Tina Pickett (R-Bradford) and all other stakeholders.

Rep. Arvind Venkat (D-Allegheny) provided background on the federal Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act of 1986 (EMTALA) and the challenge of determining the acuity of a patient coming into the emergency department. He emphasized the need for physicians in emergency rooms (ERs) and dismissed claims made by opponents of the bill, who say it would be "economically challenging."

Rep. Roae regarded the bill as “well-intended,” but pointed out exceptions in the bill where a hospital does not have to get a physician on duty, regardless of the bill being passed. Rep. Takac replied, “We very often pass legislation and grandfather in existing exceptions.” Rep. Takac continued, “Ideally, they would have a physician on site, and hopefully at some point in the future, through other options and opportunities, as I mentioned, we will be able to do that, but given that they have an existing exception, and they have a system that is working there, we felt that it was important to allow them to continue to do that and not negatively impact care in that area.”

Rep. Lisa Borowski (D-Delaware) expressed concerns about hospital closures and consolidations and asked if the bill covers the issue. Rep. Takac said he is open to dealing with changing situations and emphasized the importance of protecting the “erosion of quality of care based on business decisions.”

Chair Rapp said she was committed to voting the bill out of committee, but not on the floor. She thanked the work done on the amendment of the bill but voiced her concerns with the exclusion of the use of the tele-ED model. She referenced several quotations from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Obama administration, the Wolf administration and DOH about the usefulness of telehealth and telemedicine. “There is a recognition at both the federal and state levels that telemedicine services should be made available under certain circumstances, as the alternative may be another hospital closure,” she emphasized.

Chair Frankel acknowledged the challenges facing rural health and mentioned the committee recently heard technological advances changing medicine, the human element and expertise. He said he believes the bill would address it “head on.”

Before discussing the resolutions, Chair Frankel thanked the committee for the “thoughtful discussion” on the last bill. “In case any of you were worried that we were short on resolutions, I’m glad to tell, you won’t be disappointed this week,” he remarked.

[HR 404](#) - (PN 2813) Resolution recognizing the month of April 2026 as “Limb Loss Awareness Month” in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 405](#) - (PN 2814) Resolution recognizing May 5, 2026, as “World Asthma Day” in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 414](#) - (PN 2865) Resolution recognizing the week of May 9 through 15, 2026, as “National Stuttering Awareness Week” in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 428](#) - (PN 2978) Resolution recognizing April 25, 2026, as “Diabetic Eye Screening Day” in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 430](#) - (PN 2984) Resolution designating the week of May 3 through 9, 2026, as “Tardive Dyskinesia Awareness Week” in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 432](#) - (PN 2986) Resolution designating the month of April 2026 as “Donate Life Month” and April 10, 2026, as “Blue and Green Day” in Pennsylvania in support of organ donation awareness. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 435](#) - (PN 2995) Resolution recognizing the month of May 2026 as “Osteoporosis Awareness Month” in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 443](#) - (PN 3017) Resolution recognizing the month of May 2026 as “Mental Health Awareness Month” in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 447](#) - (PN 3023) Resolution recognizing the week of April 19 through 25, 2026, as “National Infertility Awareness Week” in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HR 458](#) - (PN 3049) Resolution recognizing April 13 through 19, 2026, as “National Osteopathic Medicine Week” in Pennsylvania. The resolution was unanimously **reported as committed**.



## House Appropriations Committee

03/25/2026, 12:00 p.m., Room 140, Main Capitol

By Dominic Kenny, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider several bills.

Chair Jordan Harris (D-Philadelphia) and Minority Chair Jim Struzzi (R-Indiana) began by congratulating Republican Executive Director Ritche Lafaver on his retirement, celebrating his long career in the General Assembly.

[HB 200](#) – (PN 3076) The Family and Medical Leave Act establishes family and medical leave benefits, Paid Family and Medical Leave Account and the Paid Family and Medical Leave Grant Program; confers powers and imposes duties on the Department of Labor and Industry (L&I); and imposes penalties. Provides definitions. Asserts that employers have a duty to provide family and medical leave to covered individuals. Outlines what L&I needs to do to fulfill its responsibilities under this act. Provides eligibility for family and medical leave, including basis for receipt of benefits, medical certification, qualifying act of violence certification, adjudication of claims, interaction with workers' act and unemployment compensation law and married or domestic partners employed by the same employer. Provides for the duration of benefits, including maximum leave duration, initial payment of benefits and payment of benefits. Provides for the amount of benefits, including calculation of benefits, limitations, adjustments and limits on taking benefits and nonsequential leave. Provides for employment protections, including restoration of employment position, the maintenance of health care benefits, prohibiting interference with benefits and retaliation, the consideration of employee absence during leave and good faith protection. Provides for federal coordination of benefits, along with coordination of other paid leave, employer obligations, prohibition on subsequent collective bargaining agreements or employer policy, impact on the Workers' Compensation Act and impact on the Public Employee Relations Act. Direct employers to provide notice of the requirements of the act and an acknowledgement of the leave request. Provides for erroneous payments and disqualification for benefits. Permits judicial review of decisions. Directs L&I to promulgate necessary regulations. Provides for civil action by employees and by the L&I secretary. Establishes the Paid Family and Medical Leave account as a restricted account in the General Fund. Establishes the Paid Family and Medical Leave grant program, along with application process, program guidelines and administration. Section 505, Chapter 7 and Section 2101 are effective immediately. The remainder of the act will be effective six months after the publication of the notice under Section 505(B)(2). (Prior PN: 561, 2916, 2920). The bill was **reported as committed**, along a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

[HB 1191](#) – (PN 3068) Amends Title 66 (Public Utilities), in railroads, providing for prohibition on blocking of crossings, for limitation on length of freight or work trains, for authorization to monitor safety practices and operations by collective bargaining representatives, for safe staffing levels for trains or light engines, for wayside detector systems, for study of transportation of hazardous materials or waste, for reporting system for transportation of hazardous materials or waste and for hazard impact assessment; and imposing penalties. Prohibits a railroad owner or operator from allowing the blocking of a railroad/highway grade crossing that results in the delay of an emergency vehicle from assisting a person or property in distress for more than five minutes. Establishes a civil penalty of \$10,000 for each violation. Provides a limitation of 8,500 feet in length of freight or work trains. Authorizes collective bargaining representatives to monitor safety practices and operations. Requires safe staffing levels for trains or light engines. Establishes penalties. Stipulates that the Attorney General, upon the request of the commission, shall bring a civil action to collect the penalties specified under subsection (c) and the State Treasurer shall deposit all of the money collected from the civil penalties imposed under this section into the General Fund. Defines "train or light engine used in connection with the movement of freight." Provides system requirements. Permits investigations for refusal to cooperate. Requires submission of a report to the Federal Railroad Administration if a railroad does not appear to be in compliance with federal railroad safety laws based on an investigation conducted under subsection (b), no later than 60 days after the conclusion of the investigation. Mandates notice of defects. Provides definitions. Requires examination of federal and state laws and the submission of a report. Defines "department." Permits the commission to promulgate rules and regulations. Prohibits rail carriers from constructing a new railyard or expanding an existing one without first submitting a hazard impact assessment. Provides for the scope of hazard impact assessment. Directs rail carriers to include a mitigation plan if the assessment identifies a high-risk intersection. Provides for violations of the act. Provides additional definitions. Asserts that the provisions of this act are severable and provides for invalidity. The addition of 66 PA.C.S. § 2717 is effective in 60 days. Section 3 is effective immediately. The remainder of this act is effective in 180 days. (Prior PN: 1340). The bill was **reported as committed**, along a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

[HB 1718](#) – (PN 2822) Amends Title 40 (Insurance), adding a chapter to provide for flood insurance notification; imposing duties on the Insurance Department; and imposing a penalty. Explains the purpose of the chapter. Provides, amends and removes definitions. Establishes duties for the insurer, providing for the disclosure required, methods of compliance, method of transmission, contents and exemption. Outlines the duties of surplus lines licensees, including the disclosure required and the method of disclosure. Authorizes the department to promulgate regulations necessary and appropriate to implement the provisions of the chapter. Permits the Insurance Commissioner to impose a penalty of no more than \$500 for each violation of the chapter. Stipulates that penalties may not exceed \$25,000. Effective in 180 days. (Prior PN: 2114). The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1851](#) – (PN 2716) Amends the Vital Statistics Law, in general provisions, further providing for definitions; and, in death and fetal death registration, further providing for information for certificates and for coroner referrals. Defines “midwife.” Permits midwives to complete and sign death certificates. Adjusts language for certified midwives to certify fetal death, should the scope of practice change to allow it. Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 2297) The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 2163](#) – (PN 2800) Amends the Dental Law, further providing for definitions, for general powers of the State Board of Dentistry, for penalties and for restricted faculty license. Revises definitions. Stipulates that in assessing the moral character of an individual with a criminal conviction, the board shall conduct an individualized assessment in accordance with 63 Pa.C.S. § 3113 (relating to consideration of criminal convictions) for certifications in dentistry, dental hygienists and dental assistants. Changes language in the provision for penalties to assert that it is unlawful for any restricted faculty licensee to practice dentistry outside the facilities owned or operated by a dental school, an affiliated academic health care center or a dental school-owned faculty practice in this commonwealth at which the individual is licensed to teach. Stipulates that in assessing the moral character of an individual with a criminal conviction, the board shall conduct an individualized assessment in accordance with 63 Pa.C.S. § 3113 (relating to consideration of criminal convictions) for a certification for a restricted faculty license. Revises training requirements. Effective in 60 days. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1800](#) – (PN 2214) Amends Title 23 (Domestic Relations, in preliminary provisions relating to marriage, further providing for the definition of “Marriage” to be a civil contract between two individuals; and, in miscellaneous provisions relating to marriage, repealing provisions relating to marriage between persons of the same sex. Effective immediately. The bill was **reported as committed**, with all Republicans voting in the negative except Reps. Thomas Kutz (R-Cumberland) and Eric Nelson (R-Westmoreland).

[SB 375](#) – (PN 1538) Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, repealing provisions relating to CPR instruction; in school safety and security, further providing for School Safety and Security Grant Program; and, in school health services, further providing for definitions, repealing provisions relating to automatic external defibrillators (AEDs), providing for AED and CPR instruction and procedure, establishing the Automated External Defibrillator Program and providing for availability and specifications of automated external defibrillators. Asserts that the School Safety and Security Fund may only be used for the grant programs authorized under this article, and no money in the fund may be transferred or diverted to any other purpose by administrative actions. Establishes exceptions. Includes the purchase of AEDs and training in the specific purposes for which the committee shall provide grants to school entities. Defines “automated external defibrillator.” Requires each school entity and nonpublic school to make available instructions on CPR and AED usage to its employees and volunteers on school property at least once every two years, detailing what applies. Revises what applies to AED instruction and outlines requirements for AED locations and training. Provides continuing education requirements. Requires completion of training under this section to be documented and provides for the documentation. Specifies what applies to a cardiac emergency response plan. Asserts that the school safety and security committee established under section 1302-b shall award grants to nonpublic schools to satisfy the training requirements under subsections (a) and (c) and that this subsection shall expire three years from the effective date of this subsection. Adds and revises definitions. Provides a procedure for a biennial bid for the cost of AEDs, other equipment, and necessary supplies. Permits the General Assembly to appropriate funds to carry out the provisions of this section. Provides requirements of eligibility to obtain, purchase or loan AEDs under the program. Asserts that the provisions of 42 Pa.C.S. § 8331.2 apply to school entities and nonpublic school employees who render care with an AED. Allows the Department of Education to offer discounts or loans for AEDs as necessary. Permits a school entity or nonpublic school to accept donations for use in providing instruction to students, school employees and volunteers in the principles and techniques of CPR and operating an AED. Further provides for resources. Outlines and revises content requirements for reports to be published on PDE’s publicly accessible website no later than Dec. 31, 2026. Allows PDE to adopt other guidelines as necessary to implement this section. Adds more definitions. Requires school entities and nonpublic schools that participate in interscholastic athletics to have an AED readily accessible. Prohibits this section from being construed as establishing any liability against a school entity or nonpublic school or its officers, volunteers or employees. Requires school entities and nonpublic schools to ensure each AED is properly tested and maintained. Adds definitions. Specifies that school entities and nonpublic schools shall comply, as applicable, with the addition of sections 1423.1 and 1423.3 of the act no later than three years after the effective date of this section. Effective immediately. (Prior PN: 912, 934, 1427). The bill was **reported as amended**, with Reps. Nelson and Jim Rigby (R-Cambria) voting in the negative.

[A02744](#), by Harris, replaces “2026” with “2027.” The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

[SB 1218](#) – (PN 1510) Amends the Liquor Code, in licenses and regulations and liquor, alcohol and malt and brewed beverages, providing for Philadelphia 250 permits and further providing for special sporting event permits for public venue licensees; and, in distilleries, wineries, bonded warehouses, bailees for hire and transporters for hire, further providing for limited distilleries and distilleries. Removes changes in the maximum container size of regular cocktails. Removes Wine and Spirit Auction Permits for nonprofit organizations. Allows a restaurant, hotel, retail dispenser, brewery, distillery, limited distillery or limited winery licensee that is located in a city of the first class to apply to the board for a Philadelphia 250 permit, subject to the provided fees, limitations and privileges. Outlines an application for a permit, requiring applicants to file 30 days prior to operation. Establishes the conditions under which the board may not issue a permit. Specifies that a denial of a permit by the board under subsection (c) shall not be

appealable and provides for any disputes. Details what shall apply to a granted permit. Requires a copy of each approved permit to be made available to the public on the board's website and conspicuously displayed at the place of business. Allows the board to immediately revoke a permit if the licensee holding it operates outside the scope of the permit and allows the enforcement bureau, a city of the first class or a local law enforcement agency to make a report to the board requesting the revocation of the permit. Asserts that the added section and permits issued under it shall expire on July 20, 2026. Removes "ready to draft premixed keg cocktail" provisions for public venue licenses in sections 412 and 491. Asserts that a permit issued in 2026 to a public venue licensee in a city of the first class for an international soccer tournament shall be valid for a period of no more than 50 days in association with the international soccer tournament. Makes changes to the qualifications regarding licensure for distilleries of historical significance. Effective immediately. (Prior PN: 1505, 1503). The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 2400](#) – (PN 3067) The General Appropriation Act of 2026 provides 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, 2026, to June 30, 2027, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026; provides appropriations from special funds and accounts to the Executive and Judicial Departments for the fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027, and for the payment of bills remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026; provides for the appropriation of federal funds to the Executive and Judicial Departments for the fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027, and for the payment of bills remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026; and provides for the additional appropriation of federal and state funds to the Executive and Legislative Departments 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. Effective July 1, 2026, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was **reported as committed**, along a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

Chair Struzzi thanked Chair Harris for moving budget negotiations forward by introducing the bill. He informed the committee that Republicans could not support it due to it being the governor's spending proposal and the timing of its filing.

[HB 2411](#) – (PN 3087) An Act making appropriations from the restricted revenue accounts within the State Gaming Fund and from the restricted revenue accounts within the Fantasy Contest Fund and Video Gaming Fund to the Attorney General (AG), the Department of Revenue (DOR), the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) and the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026. Provides for appropriations from the State Gaming Fund of \$1,776,000 to the AG, \$8,434,000 to DOR, \$44,442,000 to PSP and \$63,557,000 to the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board for salaries, wages and other necessary expenses for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026. Provides appropriations from the Fantasy Contest Fund of \$280,000 to the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board and \$150,000 to DOR for salaries, wages and other necessary expenses for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026. Provides for appropriations from the Video Gaming Fund of \$475,000 to the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board and \$250,000 to DOR for salaries, wages and necessary expenses, \$18,000,000 to the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board for skill games administration and \$25,000,000 to DOR for skill games operations for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026. Stipulates that the State Treasurer, Secretary of the Budget, Secretary of Revenue or the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board has no authority to transfer money within or between appropriations. Effective July 1, 2026, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was **reported as committed**, along a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

Chair Struzzi said Republicans would not be supporting the bill due to its inclusion of expenditures for skill games, which are not currently in statute.

[HB 2412](#) – (PN 3074) The State-related University Nonpreferred Appropriation Act of 2026 provides for funding for state-related universities for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027, for costs basis, for frequency of payments and for recordkeeping requirements; imposing a duty on the Auditor General; providing for financial statements, for the Agricultural College Land Scrip Fund and for restrictions; and making appropriations. Provides definitions. Asserts that payments made to a state-related university on account of an appropriation under this act shall be made on the basis of costs during the current fiscal year. Outlines the frequency and basis of payments. Provides for the purposes of expenditures and statement of expenditures and costs. Specifies the duty of a state-related university to provide information. Directs a state-related university to present and report its financial statements. Appropriates the money of the restricted account within the Agricultural College Land Scrip Fund for the current fiscal year, in accordance with the Fiscal Code, establishing the restricted account. Outlines restrictions and limitations on the use of appropriations. Appropriates the money within the State-related University Performance Fund for the current fiscal year, in accordance with sections 2034-L and 2035-L of the Public School Code. Details the appropriations for the Pennsylvania State University, the Pennsylvania College of Technology, the University of Pittsburgh, Temple University and Lincoln University. Effective immediately. The bill was **reported as committed**, along a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

Chair Struzzi said Republicans could not support the bill since they just received it yesterday and needed time to review it.

[HB 2401](#) – (PN 3077) The Capital Budget Act of 2026-2027 provides for the capital budget for fiscal year 2026-2027. Establishes overall limitations on debt to be incurred for capital projects. Provides that the maximum principal amount of additional debt to be incurred during the 2026-2027 fiscal year for capital projects shall total \$1,645,000,000, with \$1,200,000,000 for buildings and structures, \$20,000,000 for furniture and equipment, \$100,000,000 for transportation assistance projects and \$325,000,000 for redevelopment assistance projects. Effective immediately. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 2402](#) – (PN 3078) The Capital Budget Project Itemization Act of 2026-2027 provides for the capital budget for fiscal year 2026-2027; itemizes public improvement projects, furniture and equipment projects, transportation assistance, flood control projects, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) projects and Manufacturing Fund projects leased or assisted by the Department of General Services (DGS) and other state agencies, together with their estimated financial costs; authorizes the incurring of debt without the approval of the electors for the purpose of financing the projects to be constructed, acquired or assisted by DGS and other State agencies; authorizing the use of current revenue for the purpose of financing the projects to be constructed, acquired or assisted by DGS and other State agencies stating the estimated useful life of the projects; and makes appropriations. Details appropriation amounts for fiscal year 2026-2027. Asserts that in editing and preparing this act for printing, following the final enactment, the Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB) shall insert or revise letters or numbers for projects where the letters or numbers are missing or require revision. Requires the LRB to also revise the total monetary amounts for the total authorization, debt authorization, appropriations and department totals as necessary to agree with the total monetary amounts of the projects. Effective immediately. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 2403](#) – (PN 3079) An Act making appropriations from the Professional Licensure Augmentation Account and from restricted revenue accounts within the General Fund to the Department of State (DOS) for use by the Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs in support of the professional licensure boards assigned thereto. Appropriates \$68,417,000, or as much thereof as may be necessary, to DOS for the operation of the bureau for the fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027. Appropriates \$9,813,000, or as much thereof as may be necessary, from the restricted receipts account of the State Board of Medicine for the operation of the board for the fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027. Appropriates \$2,423,000, or as much thereof as may be necessary, from the restricted receipts account of the State Board of Osteopathic Medicine for the operation of the board for the fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027. Appropriates \$461,000, or as much thereof as may be necessary, from the restricted receipts account of the State Board of Podiatry for the operation of the board for the fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027. Appropriates \$1,270,000, or as much thereof as may be necessary, from the Athletic Commission Augmentation Account for the State Athletic Commission for the support and operation of the commission for the fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027. Stipulates that each appropriation listed shall not be treated as an augmentation to DOS, a general government appropriation or any other appropriation, but shall be treated and accounted for as separate appropriations respectively. Effective July 1, 2026, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 2404](#) – (PN 3080) An Act making appropriations from the Workmen's Compensation Administration Fund to the Department of Labor and Industry (L&I) and the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) to provide for the expenses of administering the Workers' Compensation Act, The Pennsylvania Occupational Disease Act and the Office of Small Business Advocate for the fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026. Appropriates \$81,302,000, or as much thereof as may be necessary, from the fund to L&I for the payment of all salaries, wages and other compensation and travel expenses, for contractual services and other expenses necessary for the administration of the Workers' Compensation Act and the Pennsylvania Occupational Disease Act, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026. Appropriates \$550,000 from the restricted revenue account within the fund to the Office of Small Business Advocate in DCED for the operation of that office for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027. Effective July 1, 2026, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 2405](#) – (PN 3081) An Act making an appropriation from a restricted revenue account within the General Fund to the Office of Small Business Advocate in the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). Provides \$2,235,000 should be appropriated to the Office of Small Business Advocate in DCED for operation in the fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027. Effective July 1, 2026, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 2406](#) – (PN 3082) An Act making an appropriation from a restricted revenue account within the General Fund to the Office of Consumer Advocate in the Office of Attorney General (OAG). Provides \$7,805,000 should be appropriated to the Office of Consumer Advocate in OAG for operation in the fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027. Effective July 1, 2026, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.



[HB 2407](#) – (PN 3083) An Act making appropriations from the Public School Employees' Retirement Fund and from the PSERS Defined Contribution Fund to provide for expenses of the Public School Employees' Retirement Board for the fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026. Provides \$65,537,000 should be appropriated from the Public School Employees' Retirement Fund to the Public School Employees' Retirement Board for salaries, wages and other compensation and travel expenses of employees and members of the Public School Employees' Retirement Board for contracted services and expenses for duties, functions and activities of the board from July 1, 2026, for paying all incurred bills and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year, June 30, 2026. Provides that \$1,499,000 or a necessary amount is to be appropriated from the PSERS Defined Contribution Fund to the Public School Employees' Retirement Board for contractual services and other expenses necessary for conducting duties, functions and activities related to the administration of the School Employees' Defined Contribution from July 1, 2026, for paying all incurred bills and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year, June 30, 2026. Effective July 1, 2026, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 2408](#) – (PN 3084) An Act making appropriations from the State Employees' Retirement Fund and from the SERS Defined Contribution Fund to provide for expenses of the State Employees' Retirement Board for the fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027, and for the payment of bills incurred and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026. Provides \$43,176,000 should be appropriated from the State Employees' Retirement Fund to the State Employees' Retirement Board for salaries, wages and other compensation and travel expenses of employees and members of the State Employees' Retirement Board for contracted services and expenses for duties, functions and activities of the board from July 1, 2026, for paying all incurred bills and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year, June 30, 2026. Provides that \$2,879,000 or a necessary amount be appropriated from the SERS Defined Contribution Fund to the State Employees' Retirement Board for contractual services and other expenses necessary for conducting duties, functions and activities related to the administration of the State Employees' Defined Contribution from July 1, 2026, for paying all incurred bills and remaining unpaid at the close of the fiscal year, June 30, 2026. Effective July 1, 2026, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 2409](#) – (PN 3085) An Act making appropriations from the Philadelphia Taxicab and Limousine Regulatory Fund to the Philadelphia Parking Authority for the fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027. Appropriates \$2,037,000 from the Philadelphia Taxicab and Limousine Regulatory Fund to the Philadelphia Parking Authority for the fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027. Effective July 1, 2026, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 2410](#) – (PN 3086) An Act making appropriations from a restricted revenue account within the General Fund and from federal augmentation funds to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) for the fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027. Makes a state appropriation of \$98,102,000 for the salaries, wages and all necessary expenses for the proper operation and administration of PUC. Makes a federal appropriation of \$5,383,000 for natural gas pipeline safety. Effective July 1, 2026, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 2413](#) – (PN 3088) An Act making appropriations to the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania. Appropriates \$31,560,000, or as much thereof as may be necessary, to the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania for the fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027, for veterinary activities. Appropriates \$1,793,000, or as much thereof as may be necessary, to the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania for the fiscal year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027, for the Center for Infectious Diseases. Further provides for payments to the University of Pennsylvania. Imposes duties on the university. Effective July 1, 2026, or immediately, whichever is later. The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.



## Bullet.in.Points

No Bullet.in.Points this week.

# Cosponsor Memos

## HCO3275 - Supporting Pennsylvania's Newly Employed Teachers

### Sponsor

Rep. Jim Prokopiak (D)

### Summary

Allows newly employed teachers to request no more than \$500 in grant funds for essential classroom materials or specific educational projects like STEM, literacy or foreign languages.

### Intro Date

03/23/2026

### Last Action

03/23/2026 H - Cosponsor memo filed

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## HCO3283 - Prom Sales Tax Holiday

### Sponsor

Rep. Marla Brown (R)

### Summary

Proposes a sales tax holiday for prom-related items.

### Intro Date

03/24/2026

### Last Action

03/24/2026 H - Cosponsor memo filed

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## HCO3300 - Establishing a 3-Month Sales Tax Holiday for Back-to-School Items

### Sponsor

Rep. Ann Flood (R)

### Summary

Establishes an annual back-to-school sales tax holiday.

### Intro Date

03/25/2026

### Last Action

03/25/2026 H - Cosponsor memo filed

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## HCO3306 - Celebrating April 28, 2026, as “Delta Day” at the State Capitol

### Sponsor

Rep. Morgan Cephas (D)

### Summary

Aims to recognize April 28, 2026, as “Delta Day” at the State Capitol.

### Intro Date

03/26/2026

### Last Action

03/26/2026 H - Cosponsor memo filed

## Basic Ed Bill Actions

### HB289 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in grounds and buildings, providing for radon testing.

### Sponsor

Rep. Tim Briggs (D)

### Summary

(PN 3055) Amends the Public School Code, in grounds and buildings, providing for radon testing. Requires a school entity to test each school building for radon gas and outlines the schedule the testing shall follow. Directs a school entity to complete the installation of a radon gas mitigation system within one year, or as soon as practicable, of a test that identifies radon gas levels at or above four picocuries per liter of air in the affected school building. Outlines the standards that apply. Mandates a school entity to report the results of radon tests and, if applicable, plans for mitigation within 60 days after the school entity has received the information. Provides for maintaining and updating a list of the most recent information received by a school building for each school entity at least quarterly on the Department of Education’s website. Asserts that information posted publicly by the school entity or the department shall not include building plans or infrastructure records that expose or create vulnerability through the disclosure of the location, configuration or security of crucial systems. Requires new buildings to be built using radon-resistant new construction techniques. Does not permit additional costs incurred by a school entity to be included in the calculation of maximum project cost or maximum construction cost. Provides for the transfer of money to the School Environmental Repairs Program Restricted Account and for funding used to reimburse school entities for testing and remediation. Adds definitions. Effective in 120 days. (Prior PN: 234)

### Intro Date

01/23/2025

### Actions

03/16/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 03/23/2026, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Environmental and Natural Resource Protection), Room 515, Irvis Office Building

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03/23/2026 H - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended House Environmental and Natural Resource Protection

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03/23/2026 H - Reported as amended House Environmental and Natural Resource Protection

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03/23/2026 H - First consideration

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03/23/2026 H - Laid on the table

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**HB830 - 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, further providing for policy relating to bullying.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Jennifer O'Mara (D)

**Summary**

(PN 3063) Amends the Public School Code, in student supports, further providing for policy relating to bullying. Requires a bullying policy to require all incidents of alleged bullying to be investigated by the school entity and establish a procedure for investigating a report of an incident of alleged bullying. Adds that upon investigation and not later than 24 hours, determining that an incident of bullying occurred, the school entity shall notify the parents and legal guardians of the target and the aggressor. Adds that nothing shall be construed to prohibit a school entity from contacting a parent or legal guardian of a target or aggressor about the report prior to the determination that bullying occurred. Strikes definitions for "bullying," "cyberbullying" and "school setting." Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 861)

**Intro Date**

03/10/2025

**Actions**

03/16/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 03/24/2026, 9:30 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room 140, Main Capitol

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03/24/2026 H - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended House Education

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03/24/2026 H - Reported as amended House Education

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03/24/2026 H - First consideration

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03/24/2026 H - Laid on the table

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**HB1042 - An Act amending Titles 61 (Prisons and Parole) and 63 (Professions and Occupations (State Licensed)) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in general administration, providing for earned vocational training and education credit; in Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, further providing for parole power and for short sentence parole; and, in powers and duties, further providing for consideration of criminal convictions.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Napoleon J. Nelson (D)

**Summary**

(PN 2884) Amends Titles 61 (Prisons and Parole) and 63 (Professions and Occupations (State Licensed)), in general administration, adding Subchapter E to provide for earned vocational training and education credit; in Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, further providing for parole power and for short sentence parole; and, in powers and duties, further providing for consideration of criminal convictions. Provides the scope and purpose of the subchapter. Allows an inmate sentenced on or after the effective date and committed to the department to earn vocational training and education credit toward the reduction of an aggregate minimum sentence according to the outlined schedule. Provides the schedule. Establishes limitations and specifies that credits shall not be applied if the inmate has less than nine months to serve before parole eligibility. Revises exclusions, asserting that an inmate sentenced for a conviction of 18 Pa.C.S. § 2502 (relating to murder), 18 PA.C.S. § 2507 (relating to criminal homicide of law enforcement officer), an offense requiring registration under 42 Pa.C.S. Ch. 97 Subch. h (relating to registration of sexual offenders) or i (relating to continued registration of sexual offenders), a second or subsequent crime of violence as defined in 42 Pa.C.S. § 9714(g) (relating to sentences for second and subsequent offenses) or criminal attempt, criminal solicitation or criminal conspiracy

to commit a crime of violence as defined in 42 Pa.C.S. § 9714(g) or an equivalent crime in another jurisdiction may not earn vocational training and education credits. Adds that a person shall not be eligible for earned vocational and education credits if they have been found guilty of a major disciplinary infraction involving drugs, violence or a sexual act after the effective date. Permits the parole board to exercise its power to parole an inmate at the expiration of the minimum term of imprisonment fixed by the sentencing court, less any earned vocational training and education credits as provided under this subchapter. Stipulates that eligibility for earned vocational training and education credits shall be considered an element of the disposition and sentence for the purposes of notice requirements under section 213(f) of the Crime Victims Act. Establishes rules and regulations. Adds provisions outlining how the chapter shall not be construed. Revises parole power to include the earned vocational training and education credit. Effective in one year. (Prior PN: 1131)

**Intro Date**

03/25/2025

**Actions**

02/04/2026 H - Re-committed to House Appropriations

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03/23/2026 H - Voted Favorably From Committee House Appropriations

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03/23/2026 H - Re-reported as committed House Appropriations

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03/23/2026 H - Laid out for discussion

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03/23/2026 H - Third consideration and final passage

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**HB1045 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in school health services, further providing for seizure recognition and related first aid training.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Carol Kazeem (D)

**Summary**

(PN 1134) Amends the Public School Code, in school health services, further providing for seizure recognition and related first aid training. Requires completion of seizure recognition and related first aid training beginning with the school year 2025-2026 and every two years thereafter. Provides that nothing in this section shall be construed to create, establish or expand any civil liability on the part of any school entity or any school entity employe. Stipulates the provisions of 42 Pa.C.S. §§ 8332 (relating to emergency response provider and bystander good Samaritan civil immunity) and 8337.1 (relating to civil immunity of school officers or employees relating to emergency care, first aid and rescue) shall apply to a school entity employe who provides treatment to a student experiencing a seizure in a manner consistent with the policy adopted by the school entity. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

03/25/2025

**Actions**

03/25/2025 H - Introduced

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03/25/2025 H - Referred to House Education

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03/16/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 03/24/2026, 9:30 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room 140, Main Capitol

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03/24/2026 H - Passed over in committee House Education

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**HB1077 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in school health services, establishing the Commission on Children's Vision and providing for duties of Commission on Children's Vision.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Johanny Cepeda-Freytiz (D)

**Summary**

(PN 3089) Amends the Public School Code, in school health services, establishing the Commission on Children's Vision and providing for duties of Commission on Children's Vision. Establishes the Commission on Children's Vision, administratively housed in the Department of Health. Strikes language regarding concurrent authority of the Department of Education and Health. Outlines the membership requirements, changing the language to include the chief of division of the school health program, no fewer than three school nurses, no fewer than six vision care professionals and representatives from community organizations that connect children to eyeglasses. Directs the commission to hold meetings at the call of the chairperson. Asserts that members may not receive compensation or reimbursement for their service. Replaces the General Assembly with the Department of Education and the Department of Health regarding the provision of data, research and other information to the commission. Directs the commission to work with vision care professionals in developing a statewide plan to provide follow-up vision examinations and glasses to all children who need follow-up vision examinations and glasses. Requires the commission to develop a model for statewide programs to provide vision screenings, eye examinations, follow-up eye examinations and glasses to students who need them for little to no cost. Directs the commission to provide support and coordination for statewide and local activities. Requires the commission to review data and research, and make findings and recommendations related to students' vision care. Strikes the investigation and review requirement under the duties of the commission. Establishes reporting requirements by December 31 of each year to the General Assembly. Adjusts language to direct the Department of Health to provide staff support to the commission as determined by the secretary of health. Adds that every six years the commission shall be reconstituted in accordance with subsection (c) and hold public hearings to review the status of children's access to vision screening, eye examinations and eyeglasses in the state. Strikes private schools and nonpublic schools from the definition of "school entity." Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 1195)

**Intro Date**

04/01/2025

**Actions**

03/17/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 03/25/2026, 9:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Health), Room B31, Main Capitol

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03/25/2026 H - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended House Health

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03/25/2026 H - Reported as amended House Health

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03/25/2026 H - First consideration

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03/25/2026 H - Laid on the table

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**HB1752 - 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 Keystone Exam alternative feasibility study.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Gina H. Curry (D)

**Summary**

(PN 3064) Amends the Public School Code, in preliminary provisions, providing for Keystone Exam alternative feasibility study. Directs the secretary of education to contract for an independent study to determine whether the ACT, SAT or Smarter Balanced assessments may be administered in lieu of the current statewide, standardized Keystone Exams in literature, algebra I and biology for high school students, consistent with federal requirements under 20 U.S.C. § 6311(b) (relating to state plans). Directs the secretary to submit, within one year after the effective date of this subsection, a report containing the results of the study and

recommendations to the governor, the chairperson and minority chairperson of the House and Senate Education Committees and the State Board of Education. Outlines what the study shall include. Provides definitions. Effective immediately. (Prior PN: 2159)

**Intro Date**

07/22/2025

**Actions**

03/16/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 03/24/2026, 9:30 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room 140, Main Capitol

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03/24/2026 H - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended House Education

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03/24/2026 H - Reported as amended House Education

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03/24/2026 H - First consideration

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03/24/2026 H - Laid on the table

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**HB2218 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, providing for comprehensive school counseling services.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Mandy Steele (D)

**Summary**

(PN 2912) Amends the Public School Code, adding an article to provide for comprehensive school counseling services. Provides definitions. Requires each school entity to develop and implement a written comprehensive school counseling plan and outlines the general requirements that the plan must meet. Specifies the components and contents that the plan must contain. Requires sufficient time at each school entity to be allotted for the school entity's counselor to carry out the duties stated in the school entity's plan. Provides for direct and indirect services. Allows a school counselor to spend a portion of the school counselor's working time during student contact days performing program planning and school support, after applying subsection (b) and with a goal of no more than 20%. Outlines monitoring and support, including the posting of the plan, oversight and Department of Education duties. Asserts that nothing in this article shall be construed to supersede or preempt the rights, remedies and procedures afforded to school employees or labor organizations under federal or state law or any provision of a collective bargaining agreement negotiated between a school employer and an exclusive representative of the employees in accordance with the Public Employee Relations Act. Effective immediately.

**Intro Date**

02/12/2026

**Actions**

03/16/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 03/24/2026, 9:30 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room 140, Main Capitol

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03/24/2026 H - Voted Favorably From Committee House Education

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03/24/2026 H - Reported as committed House Education

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03/24/2026 H - First consideration

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03/24/2026 H - Laid on the table

**HB2269 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, repealing provisions relating to medical education loan assistance.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Jennifer O'Mara (D)

**Summary**

(PN 2968) Amends the Public School Code, repealing provisions relating to medical education loan assistance. Effective immediately.

**Intro Date**

03/06/2026

**Actions**

03/16/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 03/24/2026, 9:30 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room 140, Main Capitol

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03/24/2026 H - Voted Favorably From Committee House Education

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03/24/2026 H - Reported as committed House Education

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03/24/2026 H - First consideration

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03/24/2026 H - Laid on the table

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**HB2285 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in school health services, further providing for health services; and, in reimbursements by Commonwealth and between school districts, further providing for State reimbursement for health services.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Lisa A. Borowski (D)

**Summary**

(PN 2992) Amends the Public School Code, in school health services, further providing for health services; and, in reimbursements by commonwealth and between school districts, further providing for state reimbursement for health services. Establishes a staffing ratio of one certified school nurse for every 750 students. Increases the non-categorical reimbursement rate to \$12.61 multiplied by the average daily membership (ADM) of each school district. Specifies that reimbursement may not exceed the actual cost to the school district for health services in the school year. Requires the Department of Health, in consultation with the Department of Education, to use up to \$3,000,000 to award grants for feminine hygiene products to school entities to be provided to students at no expense. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

03/12/2026

**Actions**

03/16/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 03/24/2026, 9:30 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room 140, Main Capitol

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03/24/2026 H - Voted Favorably From Committee House Education

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03/24/2026 H - Reported as committed House Education

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03/24/2026 H - First consideration



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03/24/2026 H - Laid on the table

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**HB2307 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in reimbursements by Commonwealth and between school districts, further providing for extraordinary special education program expenses.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Emily Kinkead (D)

**Summary**

(PN 3040) Amends the Public School Code, in reimbursements by commonwealth and between school districts, further providing for extraordinary special education program expenses. Adds a subsection providing for the 2026-2027 school year and each school year thereafter. Directs an equal amount to 2% of the special education appropriation to be distributed to school districts and charter schools for extraordinary expenses incurred in providing a special education program or service under section 1372(8)(vi) to one or more students with disabilities, as approved by the secretary of education, and details what shall apply. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

03/19/2026

**Actions**

03/19/2026 H - Introduced

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03/23/2026 H - Referred to House Education

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**HB2314 - An Act providing for a public education campaign focused on educating the public about artificial intelligence and improving AI consumer literacy.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Joe Ciresi (D)

**Summary**

(PN 3066) The Artificial Intelligence Public Education Campaign Act provides for a public education campaign focused on educating the public about artificial intelligence and improving AI consumer literacy. Provides definitions. Directs the Office of Attorney General (OAG) to conduct a public education campaign to provide information to the general public about artificial intelligence and to improve AI consumer literacy. Stipulates that the campaign will target the general public and populations identified by the office as having lower rates of AI consumer literacy. Provides for the contents of the campaign. Stipulates that the General Assembly may appropriate funding to effectuate the campaign. Directs OAG to submit a report on the campaign within one year of its commencement. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

03/24/2026

**Actions**

03/24/2026 H - Introduced

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03/24/2026 H - Referred to House Communications and Technology

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**HR407 - A Resolution recognizing the week of April 11 through 17, 2026, as "Week of the Young Child" in Pennsylvania.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Carol Hill-Evans (D)

**Summary**

(PN 2816) Resolution recognizing the week of April 11 through 17, 2026, as "Week of the Young Child" in Pennsylvania.

**Intro Date**

01/28/2026

**Actions**

01/28/2026 H - Introduced

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01/28/2026 H - Referred to House Children and Youth

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03/18/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 03/25/2026, 10:30 AM - Voting Meeting (House Children and Youth), Room 515, Irvis Office Building

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03/25/2026 H - Voted Favorably From Committee House Children and Youth

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03/25/2026 H - Reported as committed House Children and Youth

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**HR408 - A Resolution recognizing the month of April 2026 as "Financial Literacy Month" in Pennsylvania.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Carol Hill-Evans (D)

**Summary**

(PN 2817) Resolution recognizing the month of April 2026 as "Financial Literacy Month" in Pennsylvania.

**Intro Date**

01/28/2026

**Actions**

01/28/2026 H - Introduced

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01/28/2026 H - Referred to House Finance

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03/20/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 03/25/2026, 10:00 AM - Voting Meeting (House Finance), Room 523, Irvis Office Building

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03/25/2026 H - Voted Favorably From Committee House Finance

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03/25/2026 H - Reported as committed House Finance

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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**

02/03/2026 H - Discussed during voting meeting House Health

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03/10/2026 H - Voted favorably from committee with request to re-refer to House Children & Youth House Judiciary

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03/19/2026 H - Reported with request to re-refer to the House Children and Youth Committee House Judiciary

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03/19/2026 H - Re-referred to House Children and Youth

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03/25/2026 H - Discussed during voting meeting House Children and Youth

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**SB128 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in terms and courses of study, providing for online curriculum availability.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Doug Mastriano (R)

**Summary**

(PN 1527) Amends the Public School Code, in terms and courses of study, providing for online curriculum availability. Requires that beginning with the 2027-2028 school year and each school year thereafter, a school entity shall post an Internet link or title for every textbook used by the school entity, a course syllabus or a written summary of each instructional course and the state academic standards for each instructional course offered by the school entity on its publicly accessible Internet website. Requires the information to be updated no later than 30 business days after each time the list of textbooks, syllabi, course descriptions or state academic standards used by the school entity is revised. Provides the chief school administrator with responsibility for implementation. Specifies that the requirements are not construed for a school entity to violate copyright, trademark or other

intellectual property right of the creator or the owner of the curriculum. Defines “chief school administrator” and “school entity.” Effective in 60 days. (Prior PN: 77)

### **Intro Date**

01/22/2025

### **Actions**

01/22/2025 S - Referred to Senate Education

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03/20/2026 S - Meeting Scheduled - 03/23/2026, 12:00 PM - Voting Meeting (Senate Education), Room 8E-A, East Wing

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03/23/2026 S - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended Senate Education

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03/23/2026 S - Reported as amended Senate Education

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03/23/2026 S - First consideration

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**SB375 - 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, repealing provisions relating to CPR instruction; in school safety and security, further providing for School Safety and Security Grant Program; and, in school health services, further providing for definitions, repealing provisions relating to automatic external defibrillators, providing for AED and CPR instruction and procedure, establishing the Automated External Defibrillator Program and providing for availability and specifications of automated external defibrillators.**

### **Sponsor**

Sen. Rosemary M. Brown (R)

### **Summary**

(PN 1539) Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, repealing provisions relating to CPR instruction; in school safety and security, further providing for School Safety and Security Grant Program; and, in school health services, further providing for definitions, repealing provisions relating to automatic external defibrillators (AEDs), providing for AED and CPR instruction and procedure, establishing the Automated External Defibrillator Program and providing for availability and specifications of automated external defibrillators. Asserts that the School Safety and Security Fund may only be used for the grant programs authorized under this article, and no money in the fund may be transferred or diverted to any other purpose by administrative actions. Establishes exceptions. Includes the purchase of AEDs and training in the specific purposes for which the committee shall provide grants to school entities. Defines “automated external defibrillator.” Requires each school entity and nonpublic school to make available instructions on CPR and AED usage to its employees and volunteers on school property at least once every two years, detailing what applies. Revises what applies to AED instruction and outlines requirements for AED locations and training. Provides continuing education requirements. Requires completion of training under this section to be documented and provides for the documentation. Specifies what applies to a cardiac emergency response plan. Asserts that the school safety and security committee established under section 1302-b shall award grants to nonpublic schools to satisfy the training requirements under subsections (a) and (c) and that this subsection shall expire three years from the effective date of this subsection. Adds and revises definitions. Provides a procedure for a biennial bid for the cost of AEDs, other equipment, and necessary supplies. Permits the General Assembly to appropriate funds to carry out the provisions of this section. Provides requirements of eligibility to obtain, purchase or loan AEDs under the program. Asserts that the provisions of 42 Pa.C.S. § 8331.2 apply to school entities and nonpublic school employees who render care with an AED. Allows the Department of Education to offer discounts or loans for AEDs as necessary. Permits a school entity or nonpublic school to accept donations for use in providing instruction to students, school employees and volunteers in the principles and techniques of CPR and operating an AED. Further provides for resources. Outlines and revises content requirements for reports to be published on PDE’s publicly accessible website no later than Dec. 31, 2027. Allows PDE to adopt other guidelines as necessary to implement this section. Adds more definitions. Requires school entities and nonpublic schools that participate in interscholastic athletics to have an AED readily accessible. Prohibits this section from being construed as establishing any liability against a school entity or nonpublic school or its officers, volunteers or employees. Requires school entities and nonpublic schools to ensure each AED is properly tested and maintained. Adds definitions. Specifies that school entities and nonpublic schools shall

comply, as applicable, with the addition of sections 1423.1 and 1423.3 of the act no later than three years after the effective date of this section. Effective immediately. (Prior PN: 912, 934, 1427, 1538)

**Intro Date**

06/06/2025

**Actions**

03/24/2026 H - Laid out for discussion

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03/24/2026 H - Second consideration, with amendments

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03/24/2026 H - Re-referred to House Appropriations

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03/25/2026 H - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended House Appropriations

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03/25/2026 H - Re-reported as amended House Appropriations

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**SB378 - An Act amending Title 24 (Education) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in preliminary provisions, providing for student data privacy and protection; conferring powers and imposing duties on the Department of Education; and imposing penalties.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Kristin Phillips-Hill (R)

**Summary**

(PN 1528) Amends Title 24 (Education), in preliminary provisions, providing for student data privacy and protection; conferring powers and imposing duties on the Department of Education; and imposing penalties. Provides legislative intent to protect student data privacy. Provides for findings that educational entities are custodians of large amounts of personally identifiable information and the state lacks guarantees for their protection. Defines “educational entity” as a public school district, charter school, regional charter school, cyber charter school, intermediate unit or area career and technical school. Directs the secretary of education to designate an individual to serve as the chief data privacy officer to ensure that student data is contained within the state data system, provide support, evaluate legislative and regulatory proposals and provide reports. Directs the department to develop forms for the notice of disclosure and promulgate rules and regulations. Requires educational entities to adopt and implement reasonable security policies and procedures, designate an individual to act as student data manager, establish a review process for data requests and prepare an annual report. Provides that a student is the owner of the student’s data, as well as any work or intellectual product. Requires an educational entity to provide an annual written notice outlining the conditions under which the student’s data may be disclosed. Provides for the maintenance of each signed acknowledgment. Provides for conditions of disclosure. Provides for the limited use of information by third parties. Requires educational entities to notify the chief data privacy officer of a data breach, as well as students. Prohibits public funding from being provided to an education entity if that entity does not allow a student or student’s legal guardian to inspect, review or correct the student’s record. Imposing civil and administrative penalties. Effective in 180 days. (Prior PN: 240)

**Intro Date**

02/26/2025

**Actions**

02/26/2025 S - Referred to Senate Education

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03/20/2026 S - Meeting Scheduled - 03/23/2026, 12:00 PM - Voting Meeting (Senate Education), Room 8E-A, East Wing

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03/23/2026 S - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended Senate Education

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03/23/2026 S - Reported as amended Senate Education

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**SB402 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, providing for administration of emergency anti-seizure medication.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. David G. Argall (R)

**Summary**

(PN 1529) Amends the Public School Code, adding Article XIV-C to provide for administration of emergency anti-seizure medication. Provides General Assembly declarations. Provides several definitions. Permits emergency anti-seizure medication to be administered by a school nurse who has been trained in anti-seizure medication administration. Permits administration by nonmedical employees. Provides an exception. Allows parental or guardian requests. Requires training. Stipulates that an employee who volunteers as specified under this section may not be required to provide emergency medical assistance until completion of the training program adopted by the school district or charter school, and documentation of completion is recorded in the employee's personnel file. Declares if a school district or charter school elects to participate as specified under subsection (b), the school district or charter school shall be immune from liability for the good faith conduct of an employee acting under this section and shall ensure that each employee who volunteers shall be provided defense and indemnification by the school district or charter school for any and all civil liability. Requires this information to be reduced to writing, provided to the volunteer and retained in the volunteer's personnel file. Mandates an accommodations notice. Requires program creation and lists the contents of the program. Provides compensation. Requires development of guidelines and best practices. Mandates reporting and recordkeeping. Requires the student's parent or guardian to provide all materials necessary to provide emergency medical assistance. Stipulates that a school or charter school may not be responsible for providing the necessary materials. Makes a technical adjustment, changing the year from 2025 to 2026. Effective immediately. (Prior PN: 349)

**Intro Date**

03/06/2025

**Actions**

03/06/2025 S - Referred to Senate Education

03/20/2026 S - Meeting Scheduled - 03/23/2026, 12:00 PM - Voting Meeting (Senate Education), Room 8E-A, East Wing

03/23/2026 S - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended Senate Education

03/23/2026 S - Reported as amended Senate Education

03/23/2026 S - First consideration

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**SB835 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in grounds and buildings, further providing for display of United States flag and development of patriotism.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Tracy Pennycuick (R)

**Summary**

(PN 928) Amends the Public School Code, in grounds and buildings, further providing for display of United States flag and development of patriotism. Requires that when the U.S. flag is displayed, the official POW/MIA flag must also be displayed where it can be reasonably accommodated. Effective in 180 days.

**Intro Date**

06/09/2025

**Actions**

06/09/2025 S - Referred to Senate Education

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03/20/2026 S - Meeting Scheduled - 03/23/2026, 12:00 PM - Voting Meeting (Senate Education), Room 8E-A, East Wing

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03/23/2026 S - Voted Favorably From Committee Senate Education

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03/23/2026 S - Reported as committed Senate Education

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03/23/2026 S - First consideration

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**SB1234 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in school health services, providing for scoliosis screening and examination; and abrogating a regulation.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Michele Brooks (R)

**Summary**

(PN 1526) Amends the Public School Code, in school health services, providing for scoliosis screening and examination; and abrogating a regulation. Requires screening for scoliosis to be included in school health programs. Stipulates that the scoliosis screening test is to be administered to students in grades five, six, seven and nine and to age-appropriate students in ungraded classes. Directs the screenings to be in accordance with administrative and professional guidelines by personnel who meet the qualifications standards adopted by the secretary of health and the secretary of education. Provides that students who are under observation or care for scoliosis by a physician, or students whose parents object in writing to the screening, need not be tested. Requires the Department of Health (DOH) to issue administrative guidelines to schools to ensure compliance with this section. Stipulates that the results of the screening shall become part of the pupil's school health record. Abrogates the provisions of 28 Pa. Code § 23.10 (relating to scoliosis screening). Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

03/20/2026

**Actions**

03/20/2026 S - Introduced

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03/20/2026 S - Referred to Senate Education

## Higher Ed Bill Actions

**HB2163 - An Act amending the act of May 1, 1933 (P.L.216, No.76), known as The Dental Law, further providing for definitions, for general powers of the State Board of Dentistry, for penalties and for restricted faculty license.**

### Sponsor

Rep. Maureen E. Madden (D)

### Summary

(PN 2800) Amends the Dental Law, further providing for definitions, for general powers of the State Board of Dentistry, for penalties and for restricted faculty license. Revises definitions. Stipulates that in assessing the moral character of an individual with a criminal conviction, the board shall conduct an individualized assessment in accordance with 63 Pa.C.S. § 3113 (relating to consideration of criminal convictions) for certifications in dentistry, dental hygienists and dental assistants. Changes language in the provision for penalties to assert that it is unlawful for any restricted faculty licensee to practice dentistry outside the facilities owned or operated by a dental school, an affiliated academic health care center or a dental school-owned faculty practice in this commonwealth at which the individual is licensed to teach. Stipulates that in assessing the moral character of an individual with a criminal conviction, the board shall conduct an individualized assessment in accordance with 63 Pa.C.S. § 3113 (relating to consideration of criminal convictions) for a certification for a restricted faculty license. Revises training requirements. Effective in 60 days.

### Intro Date

01/28/2026

### Actions

03/24/2026 H - Re-committed to House Appropriations

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03/25/2026 H - Voted Favorably From Committee House Appropriations

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03/25/2026 H - Re-reported as committed House Appropriations

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03/25/2026 H - Laid out for discussion

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03/25/2026 H - Third consideration and final passage

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**HB2237 - An Act amending the act of June 23, 1999 (P.L.159, No.22), known as the New Economy Technology Scholarship Act, further providing for annual report.**

### Sponsor

Rep. Mary Isaacson (D)

### Summary

(PN 2930) Amends the New Economy Technology Scholarship Act, further providing for annual report. Establishes that the report will be published by September 1, following the end of the fiscal year, when funds have been allocated for the program. Effective in 60 days.

### Intro Date

02/20/2026

### Actions

03/16/2026 H - Meeting Scheduled - 03/24/2026, 9:30 AM - Voting Meeting (House Education), Room 140, Main Capitol

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03/24/2026 H - Voted Favorably From Committee House Education



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03/24/2026 H - Reported as committed House Education

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03/24/2026 H - First consideration

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03/24/2026 H - Laid on the table

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**HB2308 - An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in institutions of higher education, establishing the PA WORKS Scholarship Grant Program and the trade career-incentive tax credit.**

**Sponsor**

Rep. Bryan Cutler (R)

**Summary**

(PN 3041) Amends the Public School Code, in institutions of higher education, adding a subarticle to establish the PA WORKS Scholarship Grant Program and the trade career-incentive tax credit. Provides definitions. Establishes the program within the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) to award grants beginning in the 2026-2027 school year and outlines the duties of PHEAA. Asserts that a grant shall be for a maximum of four academic years or the completion of a bachelor's degree, whichever occurs first. Provides for grant priority. Limits the number of grants to the money appropriated to PHEAA for the program. Details termination, including notification and return of money, as well as construction. Prohibits money reimbursed and returned under certain sections from being used to provide additional grants. Does not consider a grant received by a student as taxable income for the purposes of Article III of the Tax Reform Code. Specifies that nothing in this subarticle shall be construed to disqualify an institution of higher education from receipt of money under the Institutional Assistance Grants Act. Establishes a trade career-incentive tax credit to supplement existing federal and state funding appropriated for grants awarded under the program. Provides for applying to claim a trade career-incentive tax credit, for Department of Revenue approval of the application and for a trade career-incentive tax credit certificate. Mandates public outreach. Requires PHEAA to prepare and submit an annual report to the governor, the general assembly and the secretary of education detailing the operation of the program each year and outlines the report at a minimum. Effective in 60 days.

**Intro Date**

03/20/2026

**Actions**

03/20/2026 H - Introduced

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03/23/2026 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**

02/03/2026 H - Discussed during voting meeting House Health

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03/10/2026 H - Voted favorably from committee with request to re-refer to House Children & Youth House Judiciary

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03/19/2026 H - Reported with request to re-refer to the House Children and Youth Committee House Judiciary

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03/19/2026 H - Re-referred to House Children and Youth

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03/25/2026 H - Discussed during voting meeting House Children and Youth

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**SB375 - 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, repealing provisions relating to CPR instruction; in school safety and security, further providing for School Safety and Security Grant Program; and, in school health services, further providing for definitions, repealing provisions relating to automatic external defibrillators, providing for AED and CPR instruction and procedure, establishing the Automated External Defibrillator Program and providing for availability and specifications of automated external defibrillators.**

### **Sponsor**

Sen. Rosemary M. Brown (R)

### **Summary**

(PN 1539) Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, repealing provisions relating to CPR instruction; in school safety and security, further providing for School Safety and Security Grant Program; and, in school health services, further providing for definitions, repealing provisions relating to automatic external defibrillators (AEDs), providing for AED and CPR instruction and procedure, establishing the Automated External Defibrillator Program and providing for availability and specifications of automated external defibrillators. Asserts that the School Safety and Security Fund may only be used for the grant programs authorized under this article, and no money in the fund may be transferred or diverted to any other purpose by administrative actions. Establishes exceptions. Includes the purchase of AEDs and training in the specific purposes for which the committee shall provide grants to school entities. Defines "automated external defibrillator." Requires each school entity and nonpublic school to make available instructions on CPR and AED usage to its employees and volunteers on school property at least once every two years, detailing what applies. Revises what applies to AED instruction and outlines requirements for AED locations and training. Provides continuing education requirements. Requires completion of training under this section to be documented and provides for the documentation. Specifies what applies to a cardiac emergency response plan. Asserts that the school safety and security committee established under section 1302-b shall award grants to nonpublic schools to satisfy the training requirements under subsections (a) and (c) and that this subsection shall expire three years from the effective date of this subsection. Adds and revises definitions. Provides a procedure for a biennial bid for the cost of AEDs, other equipment, and necessary supplies. Permits the General Assembly to appropriate funds to carry out the provisions of this section. Provides requirements of eligibility to obtain, purchase or loan AEDs under the program. Asserts that the provisions of 42 Pa.C.S. § 8331.2 apply to school entities and nonpublic school employees who render care with an AED. Allows the Department of Education to offer discounts or loans for AEDs as necessary. Permits a school entity or nonpublic school to accept donations for use in providing instruction to students, school employees and volunteers in the

principles and techniques of CPR and operating an AED. Further provides for resources. Outlines and revises content requirements for reports to be published on PDE's publicly accessible website no later than Dec. 31, 2027. Allows PDE to adopt other guidelines as necessary to implement this section. Adds more definitions. Requires school entities and nonpublic schools that participate in interscholastic athletics to have an AED readily accessible. Prohibits this section from being construed as establishing any liability against a school entity or nonpublic school or its officers, volunteers or employees. Requires school entities and nonpublic schools to ensure each AED is properly tested and maintained. Adds definitions. Specifies that school entities and nonpublic schools shall comply, as applicable, with the addition of sections 1423.1 and 1423.3 of the act no later than three years after the effective date of this section. Effective immediately. (Prior PN: 912, 934, 1427, 1538)

**Intro Date**

06/06/2025

**Actions**

03/24/2026 H - Laid out for discussion

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03/24/2026 H - Second consideration, with amendments

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03/24/2026 H - Re-referred to House Appropriations

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03/25/2026 H - Voted Favorably From Committee as Amended House Appropriations

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03/25/2026 H - Re-reported as amended House Appropriations

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**SB1210 - An Act amending the act of May 17, 1921 (P.L.789, No.285), known as The Insurance Department Act of 1921, in insurance producers, further providing for powers and duties of department.**

**Sponsor**

Sen. Chris Gebhard (R)

**Summary**

(PN 1498) Amends the Insurance Department Act, in insurance producers, further providing for powers and duties of department. Requires the Insurance Department (PID) to approve or contract to approve any program or course of study that prepares candidates for an insurance producer licensing exam. Effective immediately.

**Intro Date**

03/12/2026

**Actions**

03/20/2026 S - Meeting Scheduled - 03/23/2026 - Voting Meeting (Senate Appropriations), Rules Committee Conference Room

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03/23/2026 S - Voted Favorably From Committee Senate Appropriations

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03/23/2026 S - Re-reported as committed Senate Appropriations

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03/23/2026 S - Third consideration and final passage

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03/24/2026 H - Referred to House Insurance

## Upcoming Events

### **MONDAY – 04/13/2026**

**12:00 PM, PA Student Day of Action**

*Press Conference, Main Capitol Steps*

### **TUESDAY – 04/14/2026**

**12:00 PM, AICUP Day on the Hill**

*Press Conference, Main Capitol Rotunda*

**1:00 PM, [Charter School Appeal Board](#)**

*Committee Meeting, Virtual*

**2:30 PM, Penn State Day**

*Press Conference, Main Capitol Rotunda*

### **WEDNESDAY – 04/15/2026**

**10:00 AM, Educator Diversity**

*Press Conference, Main Capitol Rotunda*

### **THURSDAY – 04/16/2026**

**1:00 PM, State Board of Higher Education**

*Committee Meeting, Virtual*

## In the News

[03/23/2026 - Schuylkill Chamber to Host National Civics Bee Regional Competition Featuring Top Student Finalists](#)

[03/23/2026 - Phillips-Hill Measure Aimed at Curbing Student Data Risks Amid Rise in School Cyberattacks Clears Committee](#)

[03/23/2026 - DOH: Shapiro Administration Invests \\$6 Million Over Two Years to Provide Free Period Products for Pennsylvania Students, Proposes Another \\$3 Million in 2026-27 Budget](#)

[03/23/2026 - DCED: Pennsylvania Scores Big: NCAA March Madness Builds on Economic Momentum in the Commonwealth](#)

[03/23/2026 - LBFC: Barriers to Career and Technical Education - Report Highlights](#)

[03/23/2026 - LBFC: Barriers to Career and Technical Education](#)

[03/23/2026 - Neilson applauds literacy advocates working to endorse literacy programs across the state](#)

[03/23/2026 - Senate Education Committee Approves Pennycuik Measure to Require Public Schools to Display the POW/MIA Flag](#)

[03/24/2026 - PSEA: Pa. House committee advances legislation to modernize school health and counseling services](#)

[03/25/2026 - Senate Education Committee Advances Four Bills During Voting Meeting](#)

[03/25/2026 - LBFC: A Study Pursuant to HR318: Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association - Report Highlights](#)

[03/25/2026 - LBFC: A Study Pursuant to HR318: Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association](#)

[03/25/2026 - Lt. Gov. Austin Davis Encourages Dauphin County Technical School Students to Chart Their Own Course](#)

[03/25/2026 - L&I: In Lancaster, Shapiro Administration Visits Job Placement Program Helping Students with Disabilities Prepare for College and Careers](#)

[03/26/2026 - April Consumer Financial Protection Events Announced, Governor Shapiro Proclaims April as Financial Literacy Month in Pennsylvania](#)

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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