

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

LEGISLATIVE JOURNAL

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2024

SESSION OF 2024

208TH OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

No. 2

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The House convened at 12 m., e.s.t.

THE SPEAKER (JOANNA E. McCLINTON) PRESIDING

PRAYER

HON. REGINA G. YOUNG, member of the House of Representatives, offered the following prayer:

Lord, thank You for this time to come together one more time to embrace democracy in a way that serves the people, in a way that we should serve, in the way that we could serve, and I pray that You help those of us who are not focused on serving. Help them understand their calling or remove them from this space.

This is a House where we need to make sure that we are focused on defending the lives and improving the lives of the people that are in our districts. And I pray that You help us make the right decisions – mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically. I pray that You protect our hearts so that we can do the right things and I pray that You protect our words so that we can say the right things. I also pray that You protect our movements so that we can do the right things.

In these things I pray. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

(The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by members and visitors.)

The SPEAKER. Members and guests, please take your seats.

Members and guests, I want to first welcome you to what is now the hall of the House of Representatives in this beautiful and grand rotunda for this historic joint session of the General Assembly. With this beautiful backdrop, it is only natural that you will want to take pictures, but please remember, you are currently in the House of Representatives and that the rules of the House prohibit photography or videography during a session of the House, absent specific personal authorization. Once we adjourn session finally, you are free to take any photographs, any video that you would like.

FILMING PERMISSION

The SPEAKER. The Chair grants access to the following to take still photography for the duration of today's session: Doug Gross from the Senate Republican Caucus, Chris Guerrisi from the Senate Republican Caucus, James Robinson from the Senate Democratic Caucus, J.P. Kurish from the Senate Democratic Caucus, and Dan Zampogna from the Commonwealth Media Services.

The Chair grants access to the following to take videography for the duration of today's session: Mark Thompson from the House Democratic Caucus, Jake Heckman from the House Democratic Caucus, and Joseph Ndaro from the Commonwealth Media Services.

The Chair grants access to the following to take still photography for up to 10 minutes today: Matt Rourke with the Associated Press, Dan Gleiter with PennLive, and Tom Galish with the Philadelphia Inquirer.

JOURNAL APPROVAL POSTPONED

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the approval of the Journal of Tuesday, January 2, 2024, will be postponed until printed.

JOURNALS APPROVED

The SPEAKER. The following Journals are in print and, without objection, will be approved:

Wednesday, June 21, 2023;
Thursday, June 22, 2023;
Monday, June 26, 2023;
Tuesday, June 27, 2023;
Wednesday, June 28, 2023;
Thursday, June 29, 2023; and
Friday, June 30, 2023.

BILLS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEES, CONSIDERED FIRST TIME, AND TABLED

HB 335, PN 2576 (Amended)

By Rep. BRIGGS

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

JUDICIARY.

HB 336, PN 2577 (Amended) By Rep. BRIGGS

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

JUDICIARY.

HB 777, PN 2578 (Amended) By Rep. BRIGGS

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

JUDICIARY.

HB 1157, PN 2579 (Amended) By Rep. BRIGGS

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

JUDICIARY.

HB 1190, PN 1252 By Rep. BRIGGS

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

JUDICIARY.

HB 1519, PN 1734 By Rep. SCHWEYER

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

EDUCATION.

HB 1553, PN 1803 By Rep. SCHWEYER

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

EDUCATION.

HB 1665, PN 1969 By Rep. SCHWEYER

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.

EDUCATION.

HOUSE RESOLUTIONS INTRODUCED AND REFERRED

No. 287 By Representatives KENYATTA, SIEGEL, SANCHEZ, McNEILL, MADDEN, KINKEAD, KRAJEWSKI, GREEN and PASHINSKI

A Concurrent Resolution recognizing January 6, 2023, as "Democracy Observance Day for Education, Remembrance and Vigilance" in Pennsylvania.

Referred to Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT, January 9, 2024.

No. 288 By Representatives FRITZ, GREINER, STAMBAUGH, ADAMS, JAMES, KAUFFMAN, PICKETT and CABELL

A Resolution urging the Congress of the United States to uphold and support the critical free access of information provided by A.M. radios in vehicles.

Referred to Committee on CONSUMER PROTECTION, TECHNOLOGY AND UTILITIES, January 31, 2024.

No. 289 By Representatives VENKAT, N. NELSON, SCHLOSSBERG, KINSEY, SANCHEZ, BULLOCK, CEPEDA-FREYITZ, PROBST, HILL-EVANS, D. MILLER, HADDOCK, MALAGARI, KIM, NEILSON, DALEY, KHAN and GREEN

A Resolution recognizing January 21 through 27, 2024, as "Data Privacy Week" in Pennsylvania.

Referred to Committee on CONSUMER PROTECTION, TECHNOLOGY AND UTILITIES, January 31, 2024.

No. 290 By Representatives BURNS, D. MILLER, MUNROE, HARKINS, HADDOCK, PROBST, DONAHUE, MALAGARI, OBERLANDER, BRENNAN, JAMES, DELLOSO, DALEY, PISCIOTTANO, WAXMAN, FRIEL, KENYATTA, BANTA, MADSEN, JOZWIAK, GREINER, GUENST, SAMUELSON, STEHR and MEHAFFIE

A Resolution urging the Congress of the United States to oppose the sale of United States Steel Corporation to Nippon Steel Corporation.

Referred to Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT, January 31, 2024.

No. 291 By Representatives CIRESI, FRIEL, DONAHUE, FREEMAN, PROBST, GUENST, VITALI, KINSEY, SCHLOSSBERG, KHAN, BOROWSKI, SANCHEZ, HADDOCK, JOZWIAK, MENTZER, CEPEDA-FREYITZ, SHUSTERMAN, HILL-EVANS, BOYD, MALAGARI, GREEN, DALEY, O'MARA and CERRATO

A Resolution designating the month of January 2024 as "School Director Recognition Month" in Pennsylvania.

Referred to Committee on EDUCATION, January 31, 2024.

No. 292 By Representatives RAPP, FRANKEL, VENKAT, BONNER, STEHR, TWARDZIK, SCHEMEL, BOROWSKI, PICKETT, FREEMAN, STAATS, KINSEY, VITALI, HANBIDGE, D. WILLIAMS, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, CAUSER, CIRESI, GILLEN, MALAGARI, JOZWIAK, KAUFFMAN, NEILSON, STURLA, DALEY, GREEN and ZIMMERMAN

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

Referred to Committee on HEALTH, January 31, 2024.

No. 293 By Representatives M. MACKENZIE, R. MACKENZIE, BANTA, D'ORSIE, DALEY, GLEIM, GREINER, GUENST, JAMES, JOZWIAK, KAUFFMAN, KRUPA, MARCELL, MENTZER, MOUL, PICKETT, SCHEUREN, STAATS, TWARDZIK, GILLEN and ZIMMERMAN

A Resolution designating October 14, 2024, as "William Penn Day" in Pennsylvania.

Referred to Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT, January 31, 2024.

No. 294 By Representatives CABELL, PICKETT, WARNER, STAATS, HAMM, ECKER, MOUL, KAUFFMAN, KEEFER and R. MACKENZIE

A Resolution urging the United States Congress and relevant Federal agencies to review and strengthen the regulations and procedures governing flights transporting large numbers of undocumented immigrants, ensuring that the review prioritizes the safety, dignity and rights of all individuals involved, including the host communities of aviation facilities, while also addressing national security and effective immigration enforcement needs.

Referred to Committee on TRANSPORTATION, January 31, 2024.

No. 295 By Representatives KINKEAD, WEBSTER, VITALI, VENKAT, SCHLOSSBERG, DONAHUE, HANBIDGE, FREEMAN, SAMUELSON, T. DAVIS, SANCHEZ, KINSEY, KHAN, KAZEEM, GUENST, PROBST, PIELLI, D. MILLER, HILL-EVANS, SMITH-WADE-EL, HADDOCK, CERRATO, HOWARD, MALAGARI, KIM, NEILSON, DALEY, POWELL, SHUSTERMAN, BOROWSKI, KENYATTA, MERSKI, M. JONES, O'MARA, HOHENSTEIN, DELLOSO, GAYDOS and GREEN

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

Referred to Committee on TOURISM AND ECONOMIC AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, January 31, 2024.

No. 296 By Representatives MATZIE, PICKETT, SANCHEZ, GALLAGHER, HILL-EVANS, MALAGARI, HOHENSTEIN, KHAN, NEILSON, DALEY, HADDOCK, O'MARA and CERRATO

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

Referred to Committee on HEALTH, January 31, 2024.

No. 297 By Representatives MATZIE, PICKETT, SANCHEZ, GALLAGHER, GREINER, HILL-EVANS, COOK, BRENNAN, GIRAL, MALAGARI, KHAN, NEILSON, CAUSER, HARKINS, MARSHALL, DALEY, R. MACKENZIE, KAUFFMAN, BERNSTINE, HADDOCK, KAZEEM, HOWARD, O'MARA and CERRATO

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

Referred to Committee on HEALTH, January 31, 2024.

No. 298 By Representatives MATZIE, SANCHEZ, GALLAGHER, HILL-EVANS, GREINER, MALAGARI, KHAN, NEILSON, BOROWSKI, HARKINS, DALEY and HADDOCK

A Resolution designating the week of March 10 through 16, 2024, as "Sunshine Week" in Pennsylvania.

Referred to Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT, January 31, 2024.

No. 299 By Representatives MATZIE, SANCHEZ, GALLAGHER, HILL-EVANS, GREINER, BRENNAN, GIRAL, MALAGARI, KHAN, NEILSON, BOROWSKI, MERSKI, HARKINS, MARSHALL and DALEY

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

Referred to Committee on HEALTH, January 31, 2024.

No. 300 By Representatives MATZIE, MARSHALL, SANCHEZ, GALLAGHER, HILL-EVANS, MALAGARI, KHAN, NEILSON, HARKINS, DALEY, JOZWIAK and HADDOCK

A Resolution designating the month of April 2024 as "Pennsylvania 8-1-1 Safe Digging Month."

Referred to Committee on CONSUMER PROTECTION, TECHNOLOGY AND UTILITIES, January 31, 2024.

No. 301 By Representatives MATZIE, PICKETT, JAMES, SANCHEZ, GALLAGHER, GREINER, HILL-EVANS, MALAGARI, McNEILL, KHAN, NEILSON, HARKINS, CIRESI, DALEY, R. MACKENZIE, JOZWIAK, KAUFFMAN and O'MARA

A Resolution designating March 10, 2024, as "Charter Day" and Pennsylvania's 343rd birthday in Pennsylvania.

Referred to Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT, January 31, 2024.

No. 302 By Representatives GUZMAN, BURGOS, HILL-EVANS, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, KENYATTA, MAYES, KAZEEM, SANCHEZ, GREEN, DALEY and POWELL

A Resolution directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study of medication errors and issue a report to provide recommendations on reduction of errors and improved patient safety.

Referred to Committee on HEALTH, January 31, 2024.

No. 303 By Representatives HILL-EVANS, MADSEN, MERSKI, VENKAT, SCHLOSSBERG, KIM, CERRATO, KHAN, GUENST, PROBST, VITALI, HOWARD, GIRAL, McNEILL, MENTZER, SANCHEZ, MALAGARI, NEILSON, BOROWSKI, KINKEAD, STURLA, SHUSTERMAN, DALEY, JOZWIAK, O'MARA and KINSEY

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

Referred to Committee on TOURISM AND ECONOMIC AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, January 31, 2024.

No. 304 By Representatives HILL-EVANS, VENKAT, KAZEEM, FREEMAN, SANCHEZ, KENYATTA, KINSEY, O'MARA, SCHLOSSBERG, HANBIDGE, CERRATO, HOWARD, BOROWSKI, MALAGARI, BOYD, NEILSON, DALEY, KHAN and GREEN

A Resolution recognizing the month of March 2024 as "National Social Work Month" in Pennsylvania.

Referred to Committee on PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE, January 31, 2024.

No. 305 By Representatives DALEY, O'NEAL, GALLAGHER, R. MACKENZIE, VENKAT, HARKINS, PICKETT, FLICK, BRENNAN, KINSEY, SCHLOSSBERG, DONAHUE, PIELLI, HOHENSTEIN, KAZEEM, SANCHEZ, GUENST, JAMES, JOZWIAK, MALAGARI, HILL-EVANS, CONKLIN, HADDOCK, DELLOSO, HOWARD, HEFFLEY, KHAN and CERRATO

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

Referred to Committee on TOURISM AND ECONOMIC AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, January 31, 2024.

No. 306 By Representatives R. MACKENZIE, GREINER, HILL-EVANS, M. MACKENZIE, MENTZER, ROWE and STAMBAUGH

A Resolution designating April 26, 2024, as "Pretzel Day" in Pennsylvania.

Referred to Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT, January 31, 2024.

No. 307 By Representatives R. MACKENZIE, GILLEN, GUENST, HADDOCK, HAMM, JAMES, M. JONES, JOZWIAK, KAUFFMAN, KAZEEM, KRUPA, LEADBETER, M. MACKENZIE, MALAGARI, MENTZER, MOUL, O'MARA, OBERLANDER, PICKETT, ROWE, SCHMITT, STAATS and STAMBAUGH

A Resolution recognizing March 29, 2024, as "National Vietnam War Veterans Day" in Pennsylvania.

Referred to Committee on VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, January 31, 2024.

No. 308 By Representatives R. MACKENZIE, HILL-EVANS, KAZEEM, M. MACKENZIE, MALAGARI, MENTZER, PICKETT, ROWE and D. WILLIAMS

A Resolution designating the month of March 2024 as "Greek-American Heritage Month" in Pennsylvania and recognizing the constructive role Greek Americans continue to play in the economic and cultural development of our nation and this Commonwealth.

Referred to Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT, January 31, 2024.

No. 310 By Representatives WAXMAN, McNEILL, SANCHEZ, KINSEY, GIRAL, KENYATTA, SCHLOSSBERG, KHAN, MALAGARI, HILL-EVANS, CONKLIN and HOHENSTEIN

A Resolution designating February 28, 2024, as "HIV is Not a Crime Awareness Day" in Pennsylvania.

Referred to Committee on HUMAN SERVICES, January 31, 2024.

No. 311 By Representatives HOGAN, MARCELL, MERCURI, GREEN, LABS, LEADBETER, M. MACKENZIE, R. MACKENZIE, MENTZER, OWLETT, PICKETT, RAPP, ROWE and SCHEUREN

A Resolution designating November 9, 2024, as "Antisemitism Awareness and Education Day" in Pennsylvania.

Referred to Committee on EDUCATION, February 1, 2024.

No. 312 By Representatives SCHLOSSBERG, KINSEY, HILL-EVANS, SANCHEZ, HADDOCK, MALAGARI, NEILSON, DALEY, KHAN and DELLOSO

A Resolution designating the week of May 5 through 11, 2024, as "Tardive Dyskinesia Awareness Week" in Pennsylvania.

Referred to Committee on HEALTH, February 5, 2024.

No. 313 By Representatives WEBSTER, VENKAT, GREINER, HILL-EVANS, SAMUELSON, BOYD, KINSEY, KIM, VITALI, SANCHEZ, MALAGARI, NEILSON, BOROWSKI, CIRESI, DALEY and KHAN

A Resolution recognizing the week of March 8 through 17, 2024, as "National Science and Engineering Week" in Pennsylvania.

Referred to Committee on LABOR AND INDUSTRY, February 5, 2024.

No. 314 By Representatives KHAN, HARRIS, PIELLI, MADSEN, KINSEY, SANCHEZ, SCHLOSSBERG, KAZEEM, PARKER, D. MILLER, HOWARD, BOROWSKI, KENYATTA, MAYES, HANBIDGE and STEELE

A Resolution directing the Joint State Government Commission to study diversion programs and make recommendations for improving existing diversion programs and establishing new diversion programs.

Referred to Committee on JUDICIARY, February 5, 2024.

No. 315 By Representatives SHUSTERMAN, D. MILLER, KHAN, KINSEY, HOHENSTEIN, KAZEEM, SANCHEZ, HILL-EVANS, CONKLIN, HADDOCK and HOWARD

A Resolution directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study on public transportation services for individuals with disabilities, establish a legislative task force and advisory committee and issue a report of findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives.

Referred to Committee on HUMAN SERVICES, February 5, 2024.

HOUSE BILLS INTRODUCED AND REFERRED

No. 1825 By Representatives GUENST, CABELL, KHAN, MADDEN, NEILSON, HILL-EVANS, HOHENSTEIN, DELLOSO, D. WILLIAMS, DONAHUE, LAWRENCE, WAXMAN, ISAACSON, CONKLIN, KAZEEM, DALEY, CIRESI, BERNSTINE, SMITH-WADE-EL, GIRAL, BELLMON, HANBIDGE, CEPEDA-FREYITZ, BRENNAN, STRUZZI, MUSTELLO, O'MARA, HOWARD, BOROWSKI, WEBSTER, PROBST, SHUSTERMAN, TOPPER, KINSEY, CERRATO, TOMLINSON, MALAGARI, RIGBY, JAMES and TWARDZIK

An Act amending the act of May 22, 1951 (P.L.317, No.69), known as The Professional Nursing Law, further providing for title, for definitions, for State Board of Nursing, for dietitian-nutritionist license required, for unauthorized practices and acts not prohibited, for temporary practice permit, for graduates of schools of other states, territories or Dominion of Canada, for persons entitled to practice, for certified registered nurse practitioners and qualifications, for scope of practice for certified registered nurse practitioners, for prescriptive authority for certified registered nurse practitioners, for Drug Review Committee, for professional liability, for reporting of multiple licensure, for continuing nursing education, for punishment for violations, for refusal, suspension or revocation of licenses, for reinstatement of license and for injunction or other process; and providing for the expiration of the State Board of Nursing's power to license certified registered nurse practitioners.

Referred to Committee on PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE, January 31, 2024.

No. 1937 By Representatives BRENNAN, FREEMAN, SANCHEZ, MADDEN, KINSEY, SCHLOSSBERG, HADDOCK, CEPEDA-FREYITZ, DALEY and GREEN

An Act amending Title 25 (Elections) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in voter registration, further providing for residence of electors; and, in uniform military and overseas voters, further providing for definitions.

Referred to Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT, January 2, 2024.

No. 1939 By Representatives WEBSTER, KINSEY, MADDEN, SANCHEZ, PROBST, BURGOS, DELLOSO, BRENNAN, CEPEDA-FREYITZ, HILL-EVANS and CERRATO

An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, in realty transfer tax, providing for deductions.

Referred to Committee on FINANCE, January 3, 2024.

No. 1940 By Representatives WEBSTER, KINSEY, MADDEN, KAZEEM, T. DAVIS, SANCHEZ, PROBST, SIEGEL, MAYES, BURGOS, CIRESI, DELLOSO, CEPEDA-FREYITZ, HILL-EVANS, WARREN, CERRATO and KHAN

An Act amending the act of December 3, 1959 (P.L.1688, No.621), known as the Housing Finance Agency Law, establishing the Housing Construction Loan Program and the Housing Construction Loan Fund; and providing for duties of Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency.

Referred to Committee on HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, January 3, 2024.

No. 1941 By Representatives GREEN, MADDEN, HILL-EVANS, KINSEY, KHAN, GIRAL, FREEMAN, MALAGARI, DONAHUE, KAZEEM, DELLOSO, SANCHEZ, HADDOCK, MAYES, CERRATO, CONKLIN, GILLEN and OTTEN

An Act amending Title 38 (Holidays and Observances) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for cancer survivor recognition.

Referred to Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT, January 3, 2024.

No. 1942 By Representatives MADSEN, HILL-EVANS, SANCHEZ, MADDEN, BULLOCK, CEPEDA-FREYITZ, KHAN, KRAJEWSKI, NEILSON, CERRATO, SCHLOSSBERG, MAYES, DONAHUE, KAZEEM, GERGELY, McNEILL, FLEMING, WAXMAN and OTTEN

An Act providing for independent local dispensaries.

Referred to Committee on HEALTH, January 3, 2024.

No. 1943 By Representatives McNEILL, D. MILLER, HILL-EVANS, MADDEN, WEBSTER, FREEMAN, GALLOWAY, HANBIDGE, KHAN, HOHENSTEIN, DELLOSO, KRAJEWSKI, STURLA, MAYES, SANCHEZ and VITALI

An Act amending Title 58 (Oil and Gas) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in development, further providing for hydraulic fracturing chemical disclosure requirements.

Referred to Committee on ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY, January 3, 2024.

No. 1944 By Representatives CURRY, McNEILL, DONAHUE, FREEMAN, HANBIDGE, KHAN, HILL-EVANS, SANCHEZ, CEPEDA-FREYITZ, PROBST, GIRAL, SCHLOSSBERG, CIRESI, BOROWSKI, MUNROE, MALAGARI, PARKER, BULLOCK, WEBSTER, McCLINTON, DALEY, FIEDLER, GREEN, O'MARA, BOYD, PIELLI, WAXMAN, SHUSTERMAN and OTTEN

An Act amending the act of May 17, 1921 (P.L.682, No.284), known as The Insurance Company Law of 1921, in casualty insurance, further providing for coverage for mammographic examinations and breast imaging.

Referred to Committee on INSURANCE, January 9, 2024.

No. 1945 By Representatives KENYATTA, SANCHEZ, MADDEN, KINKEAD, KRAJEWSKI, GREEN and PASHINSKI

An Act amending the act of May 31, 1893 (P.L.188, No.138), referred to as the Legal Holiday Law, further providing for the designation of legal holidays.

Referred to Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT, January 9, 2024.

No. 1946 By Representatives KENYATTA, SANCHEZ, MADDEN, KINKEAD, KRAJEWSKI, GREEN and PASHINSKI

An Act amending the act of November 30, 1965 (P.L.847, No.356), known as the Banking Code of 1965, in general provisions, further providing for legal holidays.

Referred to Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT, January 9, 2024.

No. 1947 By Representatives MERCURI, SCIALABBA, PICKETT, JAMES, CIRESI, KEEFER, KUTZ, GLEIM, ZIMMERMAN and JOZWIAK

An Act providing for consumer data privacy, for rights of consumers and duties of businesses relating to the collection of personal information and for duties of the Attorney General.

Referred to Committee on CONSUMER PROTECTION, TECHNOLOGY AND UTILITIES, January 9, 2024.

No. 1948 By Representatives KRUPA, MAJOR, KLUNK, SCHEUREN, DIAMOND, FEE, GAYDOS, GILLEN, HAMM, M. JONES, T. JONES, JOZWIAK, M. MACKENZIE, R. MACKENZIE, MARCELL, OBERLANDER, OWLETT, ROAE, SCHMITT, SMITH, STEHR, STENDER, ZIMMERMAN, BENHAM, ISAACSON and BARTON

An Act amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in matters affecting government units, providing for reimbursement for claims of sexual harassment.

Referred to Committee on JUDICIARY, January 9, 2024.

No. 1949 By Representatives HARKINS, MERSKI and MEHAFFIE

An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, in city revitalization and improvement zones, providing for establishment of contracting authority board for city of the third class.

Referred to Committee on FINANCE, January 9, 2024.

No. 1950 By Representatives MARCELL, CERRATO, WARNER, FREEMAN, SANCHEZ, MADDEN, POWELL, D. WILLIAMS, KHAN, OTTEN, CEPEDA-FREYITZ and JOZWIAK

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 School Bus Driver Epinephrine Auto-injector Training and Grant Program; and imposing duties on the Department of Education.

Referred to Committee on EDUCATION, January 9, 2024.

No. 1951 By Representatives BANTA, JOZWIAK, MARSHALL and ZIMMERMAN

An Act designating June 2 of each year as Pennsylvania Indigenous Peoples' Day in this Commonwealth.

Referred to Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT, January 9, 2024.

No. 1952 By Representatives BANTA, KEEFER, MARCELL, PIELLI, JAMES, ROWE, GILLEN, O'NEAL, WENTLING, CIRESI, LEADBETER, SCIALABBA, KRUPA and ROAE

An Act amending Titles 51 (Military Affairs) and 53 (Municipalities Generally) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in professional and occupational licenses, further providing for definitions and providing for a policy for the award of academic credit for military training; and making editorial changes.

Referred to Committee on VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, January 9, 2024.

No. 1953 By Representatives O'MARA, MADDEN, HILL-EVANS, DELLOSO, ISAACSON, SANCHEZ, SCHLOSSBERG, SCOTT, KHAN, KINSEY, GUENST, HANBIDGE, SHUSTERMAN, GREEN, CONKLIN, OTTEN, McANDREW, KAZEEM, PROBST, D. WILLIAMS and MERSKI

An Act requiring notification of employees, the Department of Labor and Industry and municipalities when mass layoffs and business closings occur; and providing for civil penalties and for powers and duties of the Department of Labor and Industry.

Referred to Committee on LABOR AND INDUSTRY, January 9, 2024.

No. 1954 By Representatives O'MARA, KAZEEM, BOROWSKI, MADDEN, ISAACSON, D. WILLIAMS, KHAN, DELLOSO, HOWARD, HANBIDGE, SANCHEZ, PASHINSKI, GREEN, OTTEN, MAYES, SHUSTERMAN, GUENST, DONAHUE and BOYD

An Act establishing a moratorium on for-profit hospital ownership; and directing the Joint State Government Commission to study and issue a report on for-profit hospitals.

Referred to Committee on HEALTH, January 9, 2024.

No. 1955 By Representatives ZIMMERMAN, STAMBAUGH, STAATS, M. MACKENZIE, R. MACKENZIE, LEADBETER, SCHMITT, HAMM, PICKETT, MOUL, BANTA, KAUFFMAN, ROWE, JOZWIAK, MENTZER, JAMES, GILLEN and FINK

An Act amending the act of March 4, 1970 (P.L.128, No.49), entitled "An act granting to the Governor of the Commonwealth the sole authority for regulating the display of the flag of the United States from any public ground or building and from any ground or building of certain other institutions," further providing for display of flag.

Referred to Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT, January 9, 2024.

No. 1956 By Representatives KOSIEROWSKI, JOZWIAK, PROBST, VENKAT, MADDEN, CURRY, DONAHUE, SANCHEZ, DALEY, BOROWSKI, CIRESI, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, SHUSTERMAN, TWARDZIK, GILLEN and ZIMMERMAN

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

Referred to Committee on HEALTH, January 9, 2024.

No. 1957 By Representatives KEPHART, KINSEY, STAATS, JOZWIAK, T. DAVIS, JAMES, SMITH, KAUFFMAN, ROWE, BANTA, GREEN and GILLEN

An Act designating a bridge, identified as Bridge Key 47666, carrying U.S. Route 219 over the West Branch Susquehanna River in Susquehanna Township, Cambria County, as the Staff Sergeant Peter P. Abromovich Memorial Bridge.

Referred to Committee on TRANSPORTATION, January 10, 2024.

No. 1959 By Representatives MALONEY, ADAMS, BANTA, COOK, DAVANZO, GLEIM, GUENST, JAMES, JOZWIAK, SMITH and DALEY

An Act amending Title 34 (Game) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in hunting and furtaking licenses, further providing for residents.

Referred to Committee on GAME AND FISHERIES, January 10, 2024.

No. 1960 By Representatives EMRICK, PROBST, ZIMMERMAN, HOGAN, GILLEN and M. MACKENZIE

An Act amending the act of July 31, 1968 (P.L.805, No.247), known as the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, in general provisions, further providing for definitions; and, in subdivision and land development, providing for local option for high impact warehouses and distribution centers.

Referred to Committee on LOCAL GOVERNMENT, January 31, 2024.

No. 1961 By Representatives SANCHEZ, D. MILLER, HANBIDGE, MADDEN, PIELLI, RABB, WEBSTER, KINSEY, BURGOS, DONAHUE, HOWARD, DELLOSO and MALAGARI

An Act amending Title 23 (Domestic Relations) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, adding provisions relating to establishment of parent-child relationship for certain individuals; providing for voluntary acknowledgment of parentage, for registry of paternity, for genetic testing, for proceeding to adjudicate parentage, for assisted reproduction, for surrogacy agreements and for information about donors.

Referred to Committee on JUDICIARY, January 31, 2024.

No. 1962 By Representatives PARKER, HANBIDGE, MADDEN, KINSEY, KHAN, PROBST, PIELLI, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, HILL-EVANS, SANCHEZ, KAZEEM, CERRATO, KRAJEWSKI, MAYES, GREEN and OTTEN

An Act amending Title 23 (Domestic Relations) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in support matters generally, further providing for administration of Title IV-D program, for assistance recipients to seek support, for cooperation required and for enforcement of cooperation requirements.

Referred to Committee on JUDICIARY, January 31, 2024.

No. 1963 By Representatives PIELLI, WEBSTER, D. MILLER, HILL-EVANS, McNEILL, GUENST, SHUSTERMAN, MENTZER, SANCHEZ, VENKAT, CERRATO, PARKER, WATRO, KINSEY, MALAGARI, ROZZI, GALLAGHER, HARKINS, BOYD, PASHINSKI, DONAHUE, DEASY, STEELE, HANBIDGE, KENYATTA, GIRAL, BOROWSKI, STEHR, PROBST, HADDOCK, NEILSON, SCOTT, DALEY, JOZWIAK, KHAN, DELLOSO and GREEN

An Act amending the act of June 29, 1953 (P.L.304, No.66), known as the Vital Statistics Law of 1953, in records, further providing for fees for copies.

Referred to Committee on HEALTH, January 31, 2024.

No. 1964 By Representatives HOHENSTEIN, KHAN, DELLOSO, WAXMAN, SCHLOSSBERG, MADDEN, HARKINS, McNEILL, GIRAL, BRENNAN, KINKEAD, HADDOCK, RABB, SANCHEZ, DONAHUE, CERRATO, CIRESI, MAYES, McANDREW, GILLEN, DALEY, GREEN, KENYATTA, GUENST, KINSEY, FLEMING, BOROWSKI and CEPEDA-FREYTIZ

An Act amending Title 74 (Transportation) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for Public Transit Security Grant Program; establishing the Public Transit Security Grant Program Fund; and imposing duties on the Department of Transportation.

Referred to Committee on TRANSPORTATION, January 31, 2024.

No. 1965 By Representatives JAMES, OBERLANDER, STAMBAUGH and STENDER

An Act amending Title 35 (Health and Safety) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in miscellaneous provisions relating to emergency management services, providing for Right-to-Know Law access.

Referred to Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT, January 31, 2024.

No. 1966 By Representatives MARCELL, KAZEEM, MIHALEK, KINSEY, GALLAGHER, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, GREEN, MENTZER, DALEY and KEEFER

An Act amending the act of May 3, 1933 (P.L.242, No.86), referred to as the Cosmetology Law, further providing for apprentices in cosmetology salons.

Referred to Committee on PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE, January 31, 2024.

No. 1967 By Representatives GLEIM, ROAE, KINSEY, ROSSI, KEPHART, HADDOCK, GUENST, JOZWIAK, KUTZ, KAUFFMAN, PICKETT, MOUL, JAMES, STRUZZI, BANTA, STAATS, DAVANZO and GILLEN

An Act designating a bridge, identified as Bridge Key 13685, carrying Army Heritage Drive over Interstate 81 in Middlesex Township, Cumberland County, as the Major General Harold "Harry" Greene Memorial Bridge.

Referred to Committee on TRANSPORTATION, January 31, 2024.

No. 1968 By Representatives OWLETT, PICKETT, KUTZ, JAMES, GILLEN, DELOZIER, JOZWIAK, ECKER, BRENNAN, RIGBY, RADER, KAUFER, RYNCAVAGE, STENDER, BANTA, WATRO, BENNINGHOFF, MARSHALL and ZIMMERMAN

An Act amending Title 61 (Prisons and Parole) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in miscellaneous provisions, providing for corrections officers.

Referred to Committee on LABOR AND INDUSTRY, January 31, 2024.

No. 1969 By Representatives DIAMOND, SMITH, GREINER, BERNSTINE, LEADBETER, R. MACKENZIE, HAMM, ECKER, JOZWIAK, T. JONES, KAUFFMAN, BANTA, BARTON, CUTLER, LAWRENCE, KEEFER and ZIMMERMAN

An Act amending Title 63 (Professions and Occupations (State Licensed)) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in powers and duties, providing for amnesty for disciplinary actions regarding COVID-19 protocols.

Referred to Committee on PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE, January 31, 2024.

No. 1970 By Representatives DIAMOND, JAMES and STAATS

An Act amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles, further providing for operation by persons under age sixteen.

Referred to Committee on TRANSPORTATION, January 31, 2024.

No. 1971 By Representatives DIAMOND, KRUPA, MOUL, JOZWIAK, GILLEN, BARTON and ZIMMERMAN

An Act amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in liquid fuels and fuels tax, further providing for refunds.

Referred to Committee on TRANSPORTATION, January 31, 2024.

No. 1972 By Representatives MATZIE, PROBST, PISCIOTTANO, STENDER, HADDOCK, ADAMS, DELLOSO, SANCHEZ, BERNSTINE, JAMES, MUSTELLO, CEPEDA-FREYITZ, DALEY and D. MILLER

An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in interscholastic athletics accountability, further providing for council recommendations and standards.

Referred to Committee on EDUCATION, January 31, 2024.

No. 1973 By Representatives KHAN, DAVANZO, GREEN, RYNCAVAGE, SCHLOSSBERG, DONAHUE, FREEMAN, SANCHEZ, KINSEY, WAXMAN, GUENST, DEASY, PROBST, HILL-EVANS, SMITH-WADE-EL, PARKER, KENYATTA, CERRATO, CIRESI, MALAGARI, KRAJEWSKI, POWELL, KINKEAD, KAZEEM, JOZWIAK and DELLOSO

An Act amending Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for Public Facilities Infrastructure Grant Program.

Referred to Committee on LOCAL GOVERNMENT, January 31, 2024.

No. 1974 By Representatives CEPEDA-FREYITZ, BOROWSKI, FLEMING, DONAHUE, BRENNAN, HILL-EVANS, BURGOS, GIRAL, PIELLI, KAZEEM, PROBST, KHAN, CIRESI, GREEN, PARKER, DALEY, SANCHEZ and CERRATO

An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in school safety and security, further providing for school safety and security coordinator.

Referred to Committee on EDUCATION, January 31, 2024.

No. 1975 By Representatives SIEGEL, KHAN, KINSEY, HANBIDGE, MAYES, MADDEN, SANCHEZ, HILL-EVANS, HOHENSTEIN, N. NELSON, PIELLI, GUZMAN, MADSEN, WEBSTER, OTTEN, KRAJEWSKI, GREEN, CEPEDA-FREYITZ, ISAACSON and POWELL

An Act amending the act of July 31, 1968 (P.L.805, No.247), known as the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, in zoning, further providing for classifications.

Referred to Committee on HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, January 31, 2024.

No. 1976 By Representatives SIEGEL, KHAN, KINSEY, HANBIDGE, MAYES, MADDEN, SANCHEZ, HILL-EVANS, SHUSTERMAN, HOHENSTEIN, N. NELSON, PIELLI, GUZMAN, MADSEN, WEBSTER, OTTEN, KRAJEWSKI, GREEN, CEPEDA-FREYITZ, CERRATO, ISAACSON and POWELL

An Act amending the act of July 31, 1968 (P.L.805, No.247), known as the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, in zoning, further providing for ordinance provisions.

Referred to Committee on HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, January 31, 2024.

No. 1977 By Representatives PARKER, GREEN, KHAN, FREEMAN, SANCHEZ, KINSEY, WAXMAN, SCHLOSSBERG, CERRATO, CEPEDA-FREYITZ, CIRESI, GAYDOS, HILL-EVANS, MAYES, NEILSON and DALEY

An Act amending the act of December 17, 1968 (P.L.1224, No.387), known as the Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Law, further providing for definitions and for unlawful acts or practices and exclusions.

Referred to Committee on CONSUMER PROTECTION, TECHNOLOGY AND UTILITIES, January 31, 2024.

No. 1978 By Representatives CAUSER, BANTA, BARTON, GREINER, HAMM, JAMES, JOZWIAK, R. MACKENZIE, MARSHALL, MOUL, OBERLANDER, PICKETT, RAPP, SMITH, STAMBAUGH, TWARDZIK, KEEFER and ZIMMERMAN

An Act providing for the abrogation of regulations relating to the Pennsylvania Heavy-Duty Diesel Emissions Control Program and for the applicability of Federal standards.

Referred to Committee on ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY, January 31, 2024.

No. 1979 By Representatives A. BROWN, KINSEY, GUENST, KRAJEWSKI, SANCHEZ, OTTEN, BULLOCK and GREEN

An Act amending Title 61 (Prisons and Parole) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in medical services, repealing provisions relating to the Medical Services Program and providing for copays and fees prohibited; and abrogating regulations.

Referred to Committee on JUDICIARY, January 31, 2024.

No. 1980 By Representatives CONKLIN, BOROWSKI, BURGOS, CERRATO, HILL-EVANS, KINSEY, MADDEN, SANCHEZ and FLEMING

An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, providing for a disaster hotel stay tax credit.

Referred to Committee on FINANCE, January 31, 2024.

No. 1981 By Representatives CONKLIN, CIRESI, FREEMAN, HILL-EVANS, HOWARD, KENYATTA, KINKEAD, MADDEN, N. NELSON and SANCHEZ

An Act amending the act of August 9, 1955 (P.L.323, No.130), known as The County Code, in special powers and duties of counties, providing for county humane officers.

Referred to Committee on AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS, January 31, 2024.

No. 1982 By Representatives CONKLIN, MADDEN, BURGOS, SANCHEZ, CIRESI, FREEMAN, HILL-EVANS and DEASY

An Act amending Title 23 (Domestic Relations) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in protection from abuse, further providing for relief.

Referred to Committee on JUDICIARY, January 31, 2024.

No. 1983 By Representatives CONKLIN, DELLOSO, FLICK, N. NELSON, PROBST, SANCHEZ, STRUZZI, C. WILLIAMS and HILL-EVANS

An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in interscholastic athletics accountability, providing for playoffs and championships.

Referred to Committee on EDUCATION, January 31, 2024.

No. 1984 By Representatives RADER, HAMM, PROBST, STAATS, JOZWIAK, M. MACKENZIE, R. MACKENZIE, PICKETT, KAZEEM, JAMES, CAUSER, M. JONES, ROWE, BANTA, STENDER, GILLEN and ZIMMERMAN

An Act amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in fees, further providing for exemption of persons, entities and vehicles from fees.

Referred to Committee on TRANSPORTATION, January 31, 2024.

No. 1985 By Representatives GUZMAN, BURGOS, HILL-EVANS, CEPEDA-FREYITZ, KENYATTA, MAYES, SANCHEZ, GREEN, DALEY, POWELL and KAZEEM

An Act amending the act of September 27, 1961 (P.L.1700, No.699), known as the Pharmacy Act, providing for medication error prevention training.

Referred to Committee on HEALTH, January 31, 2024.

No. 1986 By Representatives MARCELL, MERCURI, HOGAN, GILLEN, GREEN, LABS, LEADBETER, M. MACKENZIE, R. MACKENZIE, MENTZER, OWLETT, PICKETT, RAPP and ROWE

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, further providing for Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations instruction.

Referred to Committee on EDUCATION, January 31, 2024.

No. 1987 By Representatives RYNCAVAGE, N. NELSON, KENYATTA and DALEY

An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in preliminary provisions, providing for student data security.

Referred to Committee on EDUCATION, January 31, 2024.

No. 1988 By Representatives SIEGEL, KHAN, KINSEY, HANBIDGE, MAYES, MADDEN, SANCHEZ, HILL-EVANS, HOHENSTEIN, PIELLI, GUZMAN, MADSEN, WEBSTER, FIEDLER, OTTEN, KRAJEWSKI, GREEN and CEPEDA-FREYITZ

An Act amending the act of November 10, 1999 (P.L.491, No.45), known as the Pennsylvania Construction Code Act, in preliminary provisions, further providing for Uniform Construction Code Review and Advisory Council.

Referred to Committee on HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, January 31, 2024.

No. 1989 By Representatives D. MILLER, KINSEY, DONAHUE, SANCHEZ, STEELE, DELLOSO, McANDREW, HILL-EVANS and MALAGARI

An Act amending Title 35 (Health and Safety) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in public safety, providing for testing of fire life safety dampers and smoke control systems; imposing duties on the State Fire Commissioner; and imposing penalties.

Referred to Committee on VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, January 31, 2024.

No. 1990 By Representatives KAZEEM, STEELE, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, BOROWSKI, SANCHEZ, FREEMAN, GUENST, DIAMOND, KINSEY, HILL-EVANS, BRIGGS, HOWARD, MALAGARI, GREEN, O'MARA, DALEY, HARKINS, T. DAVIS, KENYATTA, GIRAL, PROBST, KHAN, DELLOSO and BOYD

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.

Referred to Committee on EDUCATION, January 31, 2024.

No. 1991 By Representatives KAZEEM, SANCHEZ, PROBST, DONAHUE, CERRATO, KINSEY, PIELLI, BRENNAN, O'NEAL, PARKER, MALAGARI, DALEY, KENYATTA, SHUSTERMAN, DELLOSO, BOROWSKI, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, GREEN and BOYD

A Joint Resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, further providing for exemptions and special provisions relating to payment of real property taxes.

Referred to Committee on FINANCE, January 31, 2024.

No. 1992 By Representatives SCOTT, GUENST, KINKEAD, SANCHEZ, HILL-EVANS, PARKER, MADDEN, FRANKEL, FLEMING, OTTEN, CERRATO, GREEN and KHAN

An Act amending the act of July 9, 1976 (P.L.817, No.143), known as the Mental Health Procedures Act, in general provisions, further providing for mental health review officer.

Referred to Committee on JUDICIARY, January 31, 2024.

No. 1994 By Representatives BRIGGS, MADDEN, GREINER, McNEILL, KINSEY, BIZZARRO, KAZEEM, SANCHEZ, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, HILL-EVANS, WARREN, D. WILLIAMS, GREEN, MAYES, BOROWSKI, MUNROE, D'ORSIE, WATRO, DIAMOND, JOZWIAK, MERCURI, ROWE, FRITZ, GROVE, PICKETT and RADER

An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, in procedure and administration, further providing for definitions and for review by board and providing for settlement conference process.

Referred to Committee on FINANCE, January 31, 2024.

No. 1997 By Representatives GUENST, HOHENSTEIN, SMITH-WADE-EL, TAKAC, KHAN, HILL-EVANS, MADDEN, BOROWSKI, SCHLOSSBERG, SANCHEZ, STURLA, OTTEN, DELLOSO, BRIGGS, FIEDLER, WEBSTER, T. DAVIS, McNEILL, BOYD, KRAJEWSKI, CERRATO, WAXMAN and GREEN

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 nondiscrimination awareness and prevention policy.

Referred to Committee on EDUCATION, January 31, 2024.

No. 1998 By Representatives HOHENSTEIN, GUENST, SMITH-WADE-EL, TAKAC, HILL-EVANS, MADDEN, BOROWSKI, SCHLOSSBERG, SANCHEZ, STURLA, OTTEN, DELLOSO, BRIGGS, FIEDLER, WEBSTER, T. DAVIS, KHAN, KRAJEWSKI, CERRATO, WAXMAN and GREEN

An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, providing for Diversity Inclusive Curriculum Pilot Program.

Referred to Committee on EDUCATION, January 31, 2024.

No. 1999 By Representatives TAKAC, HOHENSTEIN, GUENST, SMITH-WADE-EL, KHAN, HILL-EVANS, MADDEN, BOROWSKI, SCHLOSSBERG, McANDREW, SANCHEZ, STURLA, OTTEN, DELLOSO, BRIGGS, FIEDLER, WEBSTER, T. DAVIS, BOYD, KRAJEWSKI, CERRATO, WAXMAN and GREEN

An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in safe schools, providing for policy against gender-based bullying.

Referred to Committee on EDUCATION, January 31, 2024.

No. 2000 By Representatives R. MACKENZIE, EMRICK, KAZEEM, M. MACKENZIE and MARCELL

An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, in tax credit and tax benefit administration, further providing for definitions; providing for paid family and medical leave tax credit; and establishing the Family and Medical Leave Tax Credit Program.

Referred to Committee on FINANCE, January 31, 2024.

No. 2001 By Representatives MERCURI, MARCELL, HOGAN, GREEN, LABS, LEADBETER, M. MACKENZIE, R. MACKENZIE, MENTZER, OWLETT, PICKETT, RAPP and SCHEUREN

An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in miscellaneous provisions relating to institutions of higher education, providing for public institution of higher education policy on antisemitism.

Referred to Committee on EDUCATION, February 1, 2024.

No. 2002 By Representatives HOWARD, SANCHEZ, MADDEN, M. MACKENZIE, KHAN, MAYES, DELLOSO, KINSEY, DALEY and GREEN

An Act prohibiting certain employee name tags; and providing for penalties.

Referred to Committee on LABOR AND INDUSTRY, February 1, 2024.

No. 2003 By Representatives KAUFER, GREINER, ADAMS, NEILSON and BRENNAN

An Act amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.343, No.176), known as The Fiscal Code, in Treasury Department, further providing for investment of moneys.

Referred to Committee on FINANCE, February 1, 2024.

No. 2004 By Representatives ZIMMERMAN, GREINER, PICKETT, KEEFER, T. JONES, ROWE and LEADBETER

An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in general provisions, further providing for definitions.

Referred to Committee on JUDICIARY, February 1, 2024.

No. 2005 By Representatives GREEN, KAZEEM, PROBST, KINSEY, PARKER, SANCHEZ, STEELE, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ and DALEY

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 mental health check-ins.

Referred to Committee on EDUCATION, February 1, 2024.

No. 2006 By Representatives GREEN, KINSEY, D. MILLER, HOHENSTEIN, HILL-EVANS, SANCHEZ, OTTEN and DALEY

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 mindfulness techniques.

Referred to Committee on EDUCATION, February 1, 2024.

No. 2007 By Representatives FRIEL, PIELLI, JAMES, PROBST, HILL-EVANS, OTTEN, SANCHEZ, GLEIM, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, GREEN and DALEY

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 requiring students to take academic assessments online.

Referred to Committee on EDUCATION, February 5, 2024.

No. 2008 By Representatives KUTZ, PICKETT, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ and ROWE

An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, in personal income tax, further providing for classes of income.

Referred to Committee on FINANCE, February 5, 2024.

No. 2009 By Representatives KAZEEM, McNEILL, MARCELL, KINSEY, SANCHEZ, KHAN, PROBST, PIELLI, PARKER, DELLOSO, MENTZER, FREEMAN, BOROWSKI, HILL-EVANS, HADDOCK, CERRATO, MAYES, KENYATTA, SMITH-WADE-EL, HANBIDGE and STEELE

An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in veterans' temporary assistance, further providing for amounts of assistance.

Referred to Committee on VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, February 5, 2024.

No. 2010 By Representatives WEBSTER, HOHENSTEIN, HILL-EVANS, PIELLI, SCHLOSSBERG, DONAHUE, McNEILL, SANCHEZ, GUENST, PARKER, HARKINS, MENTZER, CERRATO, PROBST, HADDOCK, MALAGARI, VENKAT, SCOTT, DALEY and DELLOSO

An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in State Veterans' Commission and Deputy Adjutant General for Veterans' Affairs, further providing for Veterans' Trust Fund.

Referred to Committee on VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, February 5, 2024.

No. 2011 By Representatives GREEN, KHAN, ORTITAY, MAJOR, HADDOCK, HOGAN, DONAHUE, HILL-EVANS, MADDEN, KENYATTA, SCHLOSSBERG, HANBIDGE, JAMES, PROBST, McNEILL, MIHALEK, BOYD, MALAGARI, STEELE, MENTZER, SANCHEZ, PARKER, CERRATO, CIRESI, MAYES, TOMLINSON, OTTEN, DALEY, O'MARA, KRAJEWSKI and SHUSTERMAN

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 certified point-of-use filter required; establishing the Safe Schools Drinking Water Fund; and making an interfund transfer.

Referred to Committee on EDUCATION, February 5, 2024.

No. 2012 By Representatives PISCIOTTANO, VENKAT, ISAACSON, MADDEN, SANCHEZ, SCHLOSSBERG, KHAN, DELLOSO, HOWARD, MERSKI, N. NELSON, BOYD, KRAJEWSKI, GREEN and CERRATO

An Act providing for cause of action for antitrust conduct, for indirect purchaser recovery under State antitrust laws and for premerger notice of health care mergers and transactions; and imposing penalties.

Referred to Committee on JUDICIARY, February 5, 2024.

No. 2013 By Representatives BURNS, SANCHEZ, STURLA, R. MACKENZIE, GILLEN, PISCIOTTANO, GALLAGHER, CERRATO, MADSEN, HOHENSTEIN, DONAHUE, KIM, MALAGARI, DALEY and NEILSON

An Act amending the act of December 10, 1974 (P.L.852, No.287), referred to as the Underground Utility Line Protection Law, requiring the use of steel products produced in the United States.

Referred to Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT, February 5, 2024.

No. 2014 By Representatives BURNS, SANCHEZ, STURLA, R. MACKENZIE, PISCIOTTANO, GALLAGHER, CERRATO, MADSEN, HOHENSTEIN, DONAHUE, KIM, MALAGARI, DALEY and NEILSON

An Act amending the act of March 3, 1978 (P.L.6, No.3), known as the Steel Products Procurement Act, further providing for contracts for public works to use or supply steel products and for restrictions on payments by public agencies under certain circumstances.

Referred to Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT,
February 5, 2024.

No. 2015 By Representatives BURNS, SANCHEZ, STURLA,
R. MACKENZIE, PISCIOTTANO, GALLAGHER,
CERRATO, CIRESI, MADSEN, HOHENSTEIN, DONAHUE,
KIM, MALAGARI, DALEY and NEILSON

An Act amending Title 62 (Procurement) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in general provisions relating to general procurement provisions, providing for preference for bid or proposal.

Referred to Committee on STATE GOVERNMENT,
February 5, 2024.

COMMUNICATIONS

The SPEAKER. The Chair is in receipt of the following reports, which the clerk will now read.

The following communications were read:

An audit report, per Act 42 of 2019, from the Pennsylvania Insurance Department regarding the Pennsylvania Reinsurance Program Financial Statements Year Ended June 30, 2023.

An annual report, per Act 165 of 1990, from the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Council regarding the Pennsylvania Hazardous Material Emergency Planning and Response 2022.

A report, per Act 31 of 2007, from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection regarding the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Radiation Protection Act.

A report, per Act 31 of 2007, from the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency regarding the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Radiation Protection Act.

An annual report for the requirements of section 509-A of the act of April 9, 1929, known as the Administrative Code of 1929, from the Office of State Inspector General regarding the Office of State Inspector General's 2022-2023 Annual Report.

A report in fulfillment of the requirements set forth by the 2020 Fiscal Code, HB 2536, from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources regarding the Report to General Assembly on the Northcentral ATV Regional Trail Connector Pilot.

An annual report, per the requirements of the 1996 Job Enhancement Act, Act 113, section 2706, from the Department of Community and Economic Development regarding the 2023 Year End Allocation Report.

An annual report, pursuant to Act 24 of 1989, from the Pennsylvania Insurance Department regarding Catastrophic Loss Benefits Continuation Fund Status of Fund and Outstanding Liability Report Projected as of June 30, 2024.

A report in fulfillment of the requirements set forth by the Greater Father Involvement Act of November 3, 2022, from the Joint State Government Commission regarding the Report of the Advisory Committee on Pennsylvania Greater Father Involvement January 2024.

(Copies of communications are on file with the Journal clerk.)

SUBCOMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

The SPEAKER. The Chair is in receipt of a report of the Committee on Committees, which the clerk will now read.

The following report was read:

February 6, 2024
Committee On Committees
Supplemental Report

Rep. Joe McAndrew appointed chair of the House Transportation Committee, Subcommittee on Public Transportation.

Rep. Melissa Shusterman elected to the House Transportation Committee, Subcommittee on Public Transportation.

Rep. Mark Rozzi elected to the House Transportation Committee, Subcommittee on Transportation Safety.

Rep. Brandon Markosek elected to the House Transportation Committee, Subcommittee on Ports.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Hill-Evans, Chairwoman
Committee on Committees

SENATE MESSAGE

RECESS RESOLUTION FOR CONCURRENCE

The clerk of the Senate, being introduced, presented the following extract from the Journal of the Senate, which was read as follows:

In the Senate,
February 5, 2024

RESOLVED, (the House of Representatives concurring), Pursuant to Article II, Section 14 of the Pennsylvania Constitution, that when the Senate recesses this week, it reconvene the week of Monday, March 18, 2024, unless sooner recalled by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate; and be it further

RESOLVED, Pursuant to Article II, Section 14 of the Pennsylvania Constitution, that when the House of Representatives recesses this week, it reconvene the week of Monday, March 18, 2024, unless sooner recalled by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Ordered, That the clerk present the same to the House of Representatives for its concurrence.

On the question,
Will the House concur in the resolution of the Senate?
Resolution was concurred in.

Ordered, That the clerk inform the Senate accordingly.

SENATE MESSAGE**JOINT SESSION**

The clerk of the Senate, being introduced, presented the following extract from the Journal of the Senate, which was read as follows:

In the Senate
February 5, 2024

RESOLVED, (the House of Representatives concurring), That the Senate and House of Representatives meet in a Joint Session tomorrow, February 6, 2024, at 12:30 P.M. in the Capitol Rotunda for the purpose of hearing an address by His Excellency, Governor Josh Shapiro; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a committee of three, on the part of the Senate, be appointed to act with a similar committee on the part of the House of Representatives, to escort His Excellency, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, to the Capitol Rotunda.

Ordered, That the clerk present the same to the House of Representatives for its concurrence.

On the question,
Will the House concur in the resolution of the Senate?
Resolution was concurred in.
Ordered, That the clerk inform the Senate accordingly.

SENATE MESSAGE**HOUSE RESOLUTION
CONCURRED IN BY SENATE**

The clerk of the Senate, being introduced, informed that the Senate has concurred in **HR 279, PN 2440**.

**CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
SIGNED BY SPEAKER**

Resolution numbered and entitled, the same being correct, the title was publicly read as follows:

HR 279, PN 2440

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

Whereupon, the Speaker, in the presence of the House, signed the same.

GUESTS INTRODUCED

The SPEAKER. Members, on this auspicious occasion of the Governor's 2024-2025 budget address, we are thrilled to be joined by so many distinguished guests. I do not have every name in front of me, so please pardon me if I do not call yours.

But starting right here at home, we are grateful to have Harrisburg Mayor Wanda Williams. Welcome to the floor of the House.

All the way from Philadelphia, we have the 4th district councilman, Curtis Jones. Welcome to the floor of the House.

FORMER MEMBERS WELCOMED

The SPEAKER. We have several former colleagues who flew the coop for bigger, brighter, allegedly better paths, but we are always glad to welcome them back home.

I will start in my community, southwest Philadelphia. We have the 2d district councilman and the president of Philadelphia City Council, former member Kenyatta Johnson. Welcome.

We are going to get on 76 and head west, where the gentlelady has made history in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Let us make some noise and welcome Allegheny County Executive Sara Innamorato.

Also from Philadelphia County and previously in the House of Representatives, we are thrilled to have another gentlelady who made history, but you do have to get on 76 and head east to the City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection, where our mayor is Her Honor, Mayor Cherrille L. Parker. Welcome to the floor of the House.

We are going to get back on the turnpike and head the other direction, where our brother, the mayor in the city of Pittsburgh, is Ed Gainey. He is here on the floor of the House. Welcome. We are so glad to have you, Mayor.

COMMUNICATION FROM GOVERNOR**REQUEST FOR JOINT SESSION**

The Speaker laid before the House the following communication in writing from the office of His Excellency, the Governor of the Commonwealth:

Governor Josh Shapiro

January 12, 2024

The Honorable Kim Ward President Pro Tempore Senate of Pennsylvania	The Honorable Joanna McClinton Speaker Pennsylvania House of Representatives
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Dear President Pro Tempore Ward and Speaker McClinton:

If it meets with the approval of the General Assembly, I am respectfully requesting a Joint Session of the General Assembly on Tuesday, February 6, 2024. The purpose of this session would be to address the members of the House and Senate for the annual budget address, at a time that is convenient to the General Assembly.

All the best,
Governor Josh Shapiro

RESOLUTION**COMMITTEE TO ESCORT GOVERNOR**

Mr. BRADFORD offered the following resolution, which was read, considered, and adopted:

In the House of Representatives
February 6, 2024

RESOLVED, That the Speaker appoint a committee of three to escort the Governor to the Hall of the House for the purpose of attending a Joint session of the General Assembly.

COMMITTEE APPOINTED

The SPEAKER. The Chair appoints, as a committee to wait upon the Governor, Representative Powell, Representative Khan, and Representative Emrick. The committee will proceed with the performance of its duties.

GUESTS INTRODUCED

The SPEAKER. We are also very glad to welcome back to the floor of the House two of our statewide elected officials. This morning we are joined by the Pennsylvania Auditor General. Please rise, Tim DeFoor. Thank you, Auditor. Also is Pennsylvania Treasurer Stacy Garrity; welcome back to the floor of the House.

The House will be at ease as we await the arrival of the Pennsylvania Senate.

The House will come to order.

ARRIVAL OF SENATE

The SPEAKER. The Senate is now entering the hall of the House. Members and guests, please rise.

The Chair recognizes the Sergeant at Arms of the House.

The SERGEANT AT ARMS. Madam Speaker, the Senate is now present in the hall of the House.

GUEST INTRODUCED

The SPEAKER. Colleagues, can you please join me in welcoming to the floor of the House Lancaster Mayor Danene Sorace. Welcome, Mayor. Thank you for being here.

The Speaker requests that the Lieutenant Governor, the Honorable Austin Davis, preside over the proceedings of the joint session of the General Assembly. The President pro tem of the Senate, the Honorable Kim Ward, is invited to be seated on the rostrum.

The members of the House and the Senate will please be seated.

**JOINT SESSION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY****THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
(AUSTIN A. DAVIS) PRESIDING**

The LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR. This being the day and hour agreed upon by the concurrent resolution of the Senate and the House of Representatives to hear an address by His Excellency, the Governor, the Honorable Josh Shapiro, this joint session will please come to order.

**REPORT OF COMMITTEE
ESCORTING GOVERNOR**

The LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR. The General Assembly will be at ease while it awaits the arrival of the Governor.

The General Assembly will come to order. The Governor is entering the rotunda. Members and guests will please rise.

Mr. LAUGHLIN. Mr. President, Madam Speaker, members of the General Assembly, as chair of the committee to escort the Governor, I wish to report that His Excellency, the Governor, is present and is prepared to address this joint session. Thank you.

The LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR. The Chair thanks Chairman Laughlin and the committee.

Members of the General Assembly, I now have the honor and the privilege of presenting you His Excellency, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Honorable Josh Shapiro, who will now address this joint session.

**FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025
BUDGET ADDRESS OF
GOV. JOSH SHAPIRO**

The GOVERNOR. Thank you very much.

Lieutenant Governor Davis, Madam Speaker McClinton, Madam President Pro Tem Ward, Leader Pittman, Leader Costa, Leader Bradford, and Leader Cutler:

Thank you for convening this special session and giving me the honor of addressing you today.

While I am grateful to see the House and the Senate gathered here today, I am also mindful that one of our colleagues is not able to be with us. Representative Joe Kerwin from Upper Paxton Township is currently 7,000 miles away on deployment with the Pennsylvania National Guard. To Representative Kerwin and every member of the Pennsylvania National Guard at home and abroad, thank you for your service to our Commonwealth and our country. You are the very best of us.

We are joined today by the love of my life, my best friend since the ninth grade, my wife and Pennsylvania's First Lady, Lori Shapiro. I love you. They are standing for you. I just want you all to know she is going to kill me for that.

I am privileged to work alongside an incredible senior staff and Cabinet, led by Dana Fritz, who collectively represent one of the most impressive groups of public servants ever assembled in Pennsylvania.

And finally, I want to recognize the hardworking folks from DGS (Department of General Services) and CMS (Commonwealth Media Services) who made this unique address possible.

You see, today we gather for an historic address. In the 118 years since President Theodore Roosevelt stood right there and dedicated this grand Capitol, the Pennsylvania General Assembly has never held a joint session in this rotunda, and the Governor has never delivered a budget address here – until today. I want to thank Madam Speaker McClinton for deciding to convene this session here and inviting me to deliver these remarks.

Like many of you, I have walked through this building many times over the past two decades, and when I am under this dome, I try to slow down and look up. It feels like something new catches my attention.

You know, if you look up right now, you can see the blue words circling the walls. Those words are a quote from our Founder, William Penn, written before he ever stepped foot in what would be Pennsylvania. At a time when he was in prison for his religious beliefs, Penn wrote of his dream of a place where people of all religions, all backgrounds could live together in peace. "There may be room there for such a holy experiment," he said, speaking of North America, "for the nations want a precedent. And my God will make it the seed of a nation. That an example may be set up to the nations. That we may do the thing that is truly wise and just."

Above those words, there is a mural painted by Philadelphia native Edwin Austin Abbey. Abbey's mural, "The Spirit of Religious Liberty," shows Penn's ships leaving England in search of freedom and a new home.

You see, Penn had a vision of a place that would be an example to the nations – a place of tolerance and peace and prosperity, where leaders would make wise and just decisions in service to all people. Penn's vision was a Commonwealth that would welcome people from all backgrounds. A Commonwealth where everyone would have the freedom to chart their own course and the opportunity to succeed. A Commonwealth where the government is responsive to the needs of the people – and works together to get stuff done.

I am mindful that we are all part of that lineage, a long tradition that stretches back nearly 343 years of Governors and leaders of this Commonwealth and General Assembly who have all worked together to make progress and build a more just, inclusive society.

A century after that mural was painted, Penn's promise still rings true in these hallways, and it is on all of us to carry this forward.

My own faith teaches me that no one is required to complete the task, but neither are we free to refrain from it. That means each of us has a responsibility to get off the sidelines, to get in the game, and to do our part. And that – doing our part – is what I want to talk to you about today.

Although this is a unique setting for a budget address, it is not the only thing unique about the group that is assembled here today. You see, Pennsylvania is the only State in the nation with a divided legislature. And in these hyperpolarized times, we are the only State where one chamber is led by Democrats and the other controlled by Republicans. That means nothing gets done unless it has the support of members of both parties. We need to compromise and we need to give a little to get anything done.

And so while we have had some challenging moments, I think we have all learned from them – myself included. We have learned how to work together to get stuff done to deliver the kind of commonsense solutions that I talked about last year.

Just look at what we have been able to do. Together.

Because we worked together, children are now learning on full bellies, there are more cops on the beat, and we trained an additional 6,000 apprentices last year. Because we worked together, poultry farmers were able to get back up on their feet and businesses are now looking at Pennsylvania as a place of great opportunity. Because we worked together, we cut costs for seniors and working families; we put more money back in their pockets at a time when they are worried about high prices.

Here in Pennsylvania, we get stuff done. Together.

And when we do accomplish something together here in Harrisburg, when we move that ball down the field, when we put points on the board, let us celebrate that, and let us focus on the progress we are making – not on the fact that someone did not get 100 percent of what they were asking for. So let us build on that progress.

One year after taking office, I can report that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is on strong financial footing. Thanks to sound fiscal management in our first year, all three major credit rating agencies improved our outlook or gave us an upgrade. And as a result of that good stewardship, those ratings improvements, taxpayers are now saving nearly \$100 million that otherwise would have gone to big banks and investment firms as a result of higher interest rates.

Those savings are on top of the nearly \$14 billion surplus available to us at the end of this fiscal year.

Last year we cut taxes, and this budget continues that. It does not call for a tax increase. But now? Now is the time to invest some of that \$14 billion surplus squirreled away here in Harrisburg.

Hear me on this: It is not a badge of honor, nor is it something to be politically proud of for some lawmakers out there to say, I took more money from the good people of Pennsylvania than I needed, and then I bragged about how I just kept it in some bank account here in the Capitol.

Of course, of course we need— It is true. It is true.

And look, of course we need to prepare for an emergency and a rainy day, and my budget does just that. In fact, even those ratings agencies have said there is too much money sitting in surpluses around the country – instead of being driven out into our communities.

I do not want to take any more from the people of Pennsylvania than we need to. Instead, I want to invest in them. I want to help our Commonwealth overcome the challenges that we face.

We need to build a more competitive Pennsylvania, that starts in our classrooms, runs through our union halls and small businesses, through our farmlands and our high-rises, our college campuses, and leads to a lifetime of opportunity and retirement with dignity.

We need to keep people safe, make sure they have access to the medical treatments and care they need, and build communities where they see a future of opportunity.

So with a competitive spirit, a fervent belief in our fellow Pennsylvanians, and excitement about our future, I present to you my budget.

Let us start with our kids, because real opportunity begins in our classrooms. This body has already shown a commitment to investing in our students, our teachers, and in our future. Last year we made, together, the largest single-year increase in basic education funding in Pennsylvania history, but we did not stop there.

Together we delivered universal free breakfast for 1.7 million students so our kids can start the day with a full belly, ready to learn. We delivered \$100 million to put more mental health resources in our schools so our kids can get the help that they need. We delivered \$175 million for repairs in school buildings so we can replace lead pipes, remove dangerous asbestos, and fund commonsense repairs to make sure our classrooms are air-conditioned in August and heated in January. And we have begun to address the teacher shortage by making sure those who are just getting started in the profession get paid for their hard work.

All of those investments were new last year – all because we worked together. And that was an excellent first step.

But look, we all know – and the court has ruled – that we need a constitutional, comprehensive solution to guarantee every student the thorough and efficient education they are entitled to under Article III, section 14, of our State Constitution. So let us build on the work we have already done together. That same court that held our system of funding unconstitutional directed us to get around the table and come up with a better system. It should be noted that everyone here – legislators from both parties and both chambers – accepted the remedy the court put forth by virtue of your decision not to appeal the ruling. With that decision, Republican leaders agreed to come to the table and fix the way we fund education. And so we began that work together.

The Basic Education Funding Commission heard from folks across the Commonwealth and traveled to communities big and small: rural, urban, and suburban alike. Members of the General Assembly and their staff, alongside members of my administration, worked hard over the past year, meeting with advocates, parents, teachers, and administrators to prepare their report. And last month, they delivered that report and outlined a path forward to deliver a comprehensive solution on K-to-12 education in Pennsylvania.

And now, following the general contours of that report, my budget invests \$1.1 billion in new funding this year for our schools – that is right – and it makes sure, it makes sure that no school gets less than what they did last year as we drive these dollars out in a more equitable manner.

Nearly \$900 million of that will be sent to support our schoolchildren under a new adequacy formula to ensure every school has the appropriate level of resources they need to serve their students. On top of that, my budget increases special ed funding by another \$50 million, because we recognize some students need more resources and more support. It invests another \$30 million in pre-K programs to help recruit and retain teachers who get our kids off to a great start.

And while we make these new investments, my budget also builds on the progress we made last year, addressing some of the big challenges in our schools. We are continuing to fund universal free breakfast during the school year, but we are also making sure no kid goes hungry during the summer by funding the Summer Food Service Program. That is something we should be proud of together. We should. Think about it. Think about this: At a time when some Governors are eschewing Federal funding that would ensure kids are well-fed over the summer, we have already shown – Pennsylvania Republicans and Democrats alike – that we care about kids and that we are willing to come together to feed them.

This budget also includes more for student mental health. Our students are quite literally calling out for help and support, and we need to be there for them.

And it builds on the down payment we made last year to fund school repairs. Consider this: The Scranton School District alone has identified more than \$300 million in necessary repairs – everything from installing new fire sprinklers to removing lead paint. The Sto-Rox School District in McKees Rocks has at least \$14 million worth of work that is needed. All three of their school buildings need urgent roof repairs to prevent leaks when it rains. And the Panther Valley School District in Schuylkill and Carbon Counties told the Basic Education Funding Commission that kindergartners are forced to learn in rooms without air-conditioning because they cannot afford the upgrades.

Look, I could go on and on. You get my point. We need to invest a lot more to help these districts maintain safe and healthy learning environments for students. So my budget builds on the progress we made, setting aside \$1 1/2 billion – including \$300 million this year alone – to make our schools healthy and safe.

This is something impacting students and parents all across Pennsylvania. And you know what? It has impacted one of your colleagues as well. A couple months ago I had a meeting with Representative Fiedler in my office. I was a little surprised when she showed up with two of her kids, who were in tow that day because their school was closed after asbestos was detected. And look, I was happy to see Representative Fiedler's kids, and I am sure they enjoyed their time in the Capitol, but listen, there are a lot of other families out there who would have had to miss part of a paycheck, miss a day's work because we did not do our part to make sure their schools could stay open and safe.

And while we repair these broken pipes in our schools, we also need to repair the pipeline of professionals who go in to teach, because right now the Department of Education here in Pennsylvania reports that there are about 5500 teacher vacancies across Pennsylvania. That is in large part because fewer people are choosing to become teachers. Ten years ago Pennsylvania certified nearly 20,000 new teachers every year. Last year we certified only 5,000 because so few applied. We have taken some steps as a Commonwealth to improve this. We sped up the time it takes to get new teacher certifications done, from 12 weeks to just under 3. We are giving stipends to student teachers for the first time. But here is the thing: rebuilding that pipeline takes time, and we need to do more. That is why my budget proposes an additional investment in student teachers and talent recruitment so we can expose more young people to the joys of teaching and nurturing our kids.

Two months ago I was in Hershey, where I got to present the "Teacher of the Year" award to Miss Ashlie Crosson of Mifflin County. Man, it was awesome to see so many teachers together in one room. They talked to me about how rewarding their profession is, but also how they need more help and support. That is why we are putting more mental health resources in our schools and we are working to help our kids improve their reading ability and their STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) skills.

I also heard from those teachers about how they are confronting misinformation kids are finding online and then bringing into the classroom. I think we need to address that too. I am especially mindful of that during this Black History Month. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., wrote, "Education must...train one for quick, resolute and effective thinking. To think incisively and to think for oneself is...difficult. We are prone to let our mental life become invaded by legions of half-truths, prejudices, and propaganda...." King wrote.

Look, our children are being fed half-truths, prejudices, and propaganda nearly every single day on their phones and on social media. We give them devices with access to the entire world at a young age, but we never actually teach them how to use them. Lori and I see this as parents. And listen, I want to be clear. I do not care whether our kids take a left position or a right position on an issue, but I do care that they are able to discern fact from fiction. That is why I have directed the Department of Education to develop a tool kit for teachers and parents on digital literacy and critical thinking. This is important, and it follows on the good work we did together last year when you passed, and I signed into law, a bill that requires schools to teach financial literacy. We need to ensure together that our young people are prepared for the world that they are living in.

We also need to update antiquated State laws that cost our school districts too much money. Let me give you just one example. When the Charter School Law was first adopted back in 1997, the idea of going to a cyber school was new and relatively few parents sent their kids there, but today nearly 60,000 Pennsylvania students go to cyber charters. However, we have never gone back and reevaluated how we fund these schools. Cyber charters get the same amount per student as brick-and-mortar schools do, and it varies district by district. In practice, that means one district might pay \$7,000 to a cyber charter while another has to pay \$10,000 to the exact same school. And while cyber charters certainly need adequate funding to operate, logic would dictate that two students going to the same school, getting the same education, would pay the same rate. Logic would also dictate that they need less than a brick-and-mortar charter school simply because they do not have the same physical infrastructure.

I know – and I see it by your hands – I know there is bipartisan consensus that these antiquated laws need to be updated. So let us come up with a uniform rate that actually reflects what it costs to send a kid to a cyber charter school. Let us say, for example, we set a rate of \$8,000 per student. That is the amount that was set by a bill that passed the House of Representatives last year in a bipartisan manner. If we do that, we will level the playing field, and as a result, we will be able to return – get this – \$262 million back to our public schools.

Great. It gets better. Stay standing. Because if you combine those savings with the new money I am proposing for our 500 school districts, that would mean nearly \$2 billion more for public schools next year. That is right. And look, this is ambitious, none of it is easy, and all of it will require us to work together, to stay at the table, to keep having important conversations.

And look, one of those conversations will need to be about scholarships that let poor families in struggling school districts put their kids in the best position for them to succeed – whether that is paying for extra tutoring, books, and computers, or yes, going to another school. The Senate passed a proposal last year that included important elements of that, and it is something I support and consider to be unfinished business. I am grateful to the House Democratic leadership, who is committed to examine and seriously consider this proposal to address the needs of our most at-risk learners. So we have left room for the House and Senate to find common ground on this.

Look, let us not shy away from the many difficult conversations around education. Let us stay at it. Our challenges around education are not going to be solved in one budget cycle, but we can make real progress toward a lasting and equitable

solution. We have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to do right by our kids. Let us seize this moment. If we do this right, we will not only set our young people up for individual success, but we will lift up the entire Commonwealth in the process.

And once those kids graduate from high school, we need to make sure they have the freedom to chart their own course and determine for themselves the next step in life. Listen, I am sick and tired of hearing someone say to a high school student, "Well, college might not be right for you. Maybe you should consider becoming a welder." Hear me on this. That elitist attitude is wrong and it hurts our Commonwealth. If you are in the tenth or eleventh grade and you are excited about being a welder or a plumber, we should celebrate that. And we should treat that career path with the same level of respect as someone who chooses to go to college.

We have shown that kind of respect in my administration. On my first day as Governor, I signed an Executive order announcing that 92 percent of Commonwealth jobs do not require a college degree, and as a result, 1 year later, nearly 60 percent of our Commonwealth's new hires do not have a college degree, but do have the necessary skills to help our fellow Pennsylvanians.

Together we have made record investments in vo-tech, apprenticeship programs, and on-the-job training. Last year I signed an Executive order creating a first-in-the-nation initiative to train as many as 10,000 new workers here in Pennsylvania over the next 5 years. So when the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority needs to replace lead service lines in a neighborhood like Esplen, where I visited last summer, well, we are going to fund their new workers – workers who, hopefully, went through our school districts, went into an apprenticeship program and fell in love with the trades and can go out and use their skills to deliver clean drinking water to our families.

I am coming back to you today and including these investments in my budget once again because what we did last year together is working. Since then – get this – my administration has registered 33 new apprenticeship programs and enrolled nearly 6,000 new apprentices statewide. We should be proud of that. Thanks to our collective work, more Pennsylvanians are training to become steelworkers in York County and machinists in Elk County. We are training more apprentices in dairy herd management, water system operations, and in cybersecurity. We are giving Pennsylvanians the freedom to chart their own course and the opportunity to succeed.

So let us keep at it. That is one of the reasons why I want to create a new Career Connect program to connect employers with talented young people and create thousands of internships over the next 10 years, because remember, there are many paths to success after high school. Some of our young people will go in the military, some will go straight to the workforce, some will enter a union apprenticeship program, and some will go to college. And we need to respect all paths equally, and we need to invest in them.

So now let us talk about how we are going to help those who choose the path of college. In my budget address last year, I proclaimed our higher ed system broken and I called for a new blueprint. You may recall that was one of the moments where both sides stood up and applauded, because we all recognized the need to come together and to do something. And let us be honest, what we are doing now is not working.

After 30 years of disinvestment, too many of our colleges and universities are running on empty, and not enough students have affordable pathways to college and then into good jobs. Think

about this: Pennsylvania now ranks 49th for State investment in higher education, and 48th in higher ed affordability. And by the way, gang, you want to be 1, not 50, on that chart.

Over the past decade, enrollment in our State System of Higher Education has dropped 30 percent, and enrollment in our community colleges has plummeted 37 percent. The faculty, staff, and administrators of these schools, they are working really hard, but they have been dealt a lousy hand. Because of the legislature's disinvestment, colleges are being forced to duplicate degree programs, drive up costs, and actually reduce access, and so for the better part of the last decade, conversations around higher ed in this building have been about subtraction: subtracting resources, subtracting services, and subtracting access.

Pennsylvanians deserve better than that. We need to play a game of addition, not subtraction, and focus on building a world-class system of higher education – one that keeps our young people here in our Commonwealth, helps our students gain the skills that they need, and provides businesses with the workforce they require to grow and be successful. A system that is focused on competitiveness, grounded in access and affordability.

Last year I promised you I would come back with a plan, and after a year of gathering feedback from higher ed leaders from across the Commonwealth, I am proud to present to you my blueprint for higher education, a blueprint that has earned the support of higher ed leaders from every sector – from our community colleges to PASSHE (Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education) schools to our HBCUs (historically Black colleges and universities) and our State-related universities. This plan has earned the support of students, workers, CEOs (chief executive officers), county commissioners, and mayors – and a number of folks in this room. A bold, forward-looking vision that I believe we can make happen. Together.

So let me walk you through my three-part plan.

First, we will build a new system for higher education that unites our PASSHE schools with our 15 community colleges. This new system will preserve local leadership while ensuring we are all rowing in the same direction. Together our public colleges and universities will create pathways to affordable credentials and degrees, while opening up the doors of opportunity and meeting the Commonwealth's workforce needs.

Last year we invested just under \$850 million in our PASSHE universities and community colleges combined. This year I am proposing that we invest \$975 million – a 15-percent increase – to support this new system.

Second, we need to fix the way we fund our State-relateds: Pitt, Penn State, and Temple – along with the nation's oldest degree-granting HBCU, Lincoln University. For too long we have underfunded them, and let us be clear, we have subjected them to political games. At the same time, I know some Pennsylvanians wonder what they are getting by investing in these institutions if they or a loved one do not go there. I am proposing that we fund these schools through the Department of Education with a simple majority vote – and that we no longer write them a blank check.

We should begin this new approach and increase their funding by 5 percent this year, and Pennsylvanians should know that we are going to pay for outcomes and performance. Let me explain what that means.

Working together with members of the General Assembly and higher ed leaders, we will create a predictable, transparent, outcome-based funding system that will apply to schools in this new system and our State-relateds. And that funding will incentivize outcomes that benefit all Pennsylvanians, like increasing the number of first-generation college students enrolled, ensuring more students stay here after graduation, that they go into the fields we need, like agriculture, education, and nursing. All while ensuring there is transparency and increasing accountability for our tax dollars.

In the past our State-relateds had to get a two-thirds vote just to get a dollar. Under my plan, it will be a simple majority – and that dollar could turn into \$1.10, \$1.20, if they meet the metrics that we all agree upon.

And as we pay for performance, we also need to make sure higher ed is affordable for every student, whether they attend one of our schools in our new system, a State-related, or one of our independent colleges and universities.

And so that is the third part of my plan. Next year, after this new system is in place, I will come back to you and ask you to invest another \$279 million directly to offsetting costs for our students. Under my plan, no student or family making the median income or below will have to pay more than \$1,000 per semester for tuition and fees in our new system. And to help students at every school, we will increase PHEAA (Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency) grants for students by \$1,000.

Now, if we pass my plan and make the investments that I lay out in my budget, we would jump from 49th in the nation today to 22d in just 5 years. It is time to build this new blueprint for higher education in Pennsylvania and leave a lasting legacy on this Commonwealth. Because if we can ensure that Pennsylvanians receive a great education, from pre-K through an apprenticeship program all the way up to college graduation; if we can give Pennsylvanians the freedom to chart their own course and the opportunity to succeed – then economic opportunity will follow.

It is on top of that foundation of educational excellence that we will build an economy that is a leader in economic development, innovation, and job creation. I have made it clear: Pennsylvania is open for business. We hit the ground running with a bunch of wins. As a result of our direct engagement, we secured more than \$1.2 billion in new private-sector investment. EMD Electronics, a global semiconductor manufacturing company, is putting \$300 million into Schuylkill County and building the largest specialty gas facility in the world. Purolite is investing \$190 million in Chester County to create the first U.S.-based manufacturing line for biotech and pharmaceutical products. And we convinced Excelitas, a leader in photonics technology, to relocate from Massachusetts to the Strip District in Pittsburgh. As a guy who absolutely hates the Boston Celtics, it gives me great pleasure to take this company out of Beantown and welcome them to Pennsylvania.

Here in Pennsylvania, investment is up and unemployment is down. We have sped up government, cut down processing times, eliminated backlogs, and we have slashed red tape. Last year Pennsylvania issued 249,000 of the same type of business license, for companies big and small. The day I took office, it took 8 weeks to get one of those licenses. Today it takes less than 3 days. We are moving at the speed of business.

But gang, we cannot stop here, because I want us to be the best. That is why, last week, I announced that Pennsylvania now has a comprehensive economic development strategy for the first time in nearly two decades. This plan focuses our attention and our resources on five sectors where we are poised to compete and win: agriculture, energy, life sciences, manufacturing, and robotics and technology. We have got a strategy to deploy different tools and approaches to lift up each one of them.

But in order to execute this plan, in order to compete, we need to invest. Consider this. Over the last 5 years, our neighbors Ohio, New York, and New Jersey all committed more resources to economic development than Pennsylvania did. Ohio has 1 1/2 million fewer people than Pennsylvania, yet they invested over seven times more in economic development than we have. And you know what – let us be frank – their investment is paying off. And I am sick and tired of losing to friggin' Ohio. We need to catch up right now.

Last year my administration invited a group of leading site selectors from across the country to our State capital for 2 days, and we asked them for their honest feedback. These are the people that help decide where companies are going to relocate or expand. They were bullish on our highly skilled workforce, our world-class universities, and the way we have reformed government to make it move more quickly. They liked the fact that we are less than a day's drive from 40 percent of our nation's population. But they told us it is nearly impossible to sell a company on this Commonwealth because we do not have sites ready to go. Other States literally have pads that are shovel-ready; permits are done, electrical hookups are good to go. It is time we catch up, and it is important we start this work now, because it takes years to get some of these sites ready.

That is why, thanks to the investment you made last year, we launched a pilot program for site development through DCED (Department of Community and Economic Development). We asked for applications and made \$10 million in grants available so developers and companies could begin the process. But over the course of just a few weeks, we received over 100 applications totaling more than \$235 million for site development. The demand is there, the business community is ready, and other States are already doing it. It is time we catch up.

That is why I am proposing a major new investment where we will bond \$1/2 billion to develop sites. And when it works, we will use the added revenues we get from the companies that move to these sites to pay back that bond. There is power in these pads.

Last May, Pro Tem Ward and Leader Pittman joined me to announce the redevelopment of an old Alcoa site in New Kensington, to turn it into a center of high-tech manufacturing – and create 300 new jobs in a community that has oftentimes been overlooked. That is just one site, and that project is going to change the face of that community. Once it is up and running, the old factory that used to make aluminum will embrace innovation, producing parts for aircraft and batteries to support our clean energy sector.

You will see in my budget a new direct investment in our innovation economy. One that helps our start-ups grow, supports the dreams of our entrepreneurs and inventors, and gives them the resources they need to go after the next big discovery and then commercialize it, right here in Pennsylvania.

These sites and our investments in innovation are key to growing our economy, rebuilding our communities, and combating climate change. I know there are bills to pass and work to do to combat climate change, but one of the most important

things we can do right now is invest in our clean energy economy and the jobs it supports. My economic development plan will do that – and it will help businesses succeed here in Pennsylvania.

And when those businesses set up shop, we want to make sure their new employees have great communities to live in, where Main Street is lined with shops and small businesses and housing is affordable. That is why I am proposing \$25 million for our new Main Street Matters initiative, building off the Keystone Communities Program to support small businesses, downtowns, and Main Streets all across Pennsylvania.

At the same time, we will launch the Pennsylvania Regional Competitiveness Challenge to incentivize regional planning so local communities can work together to leverage the resources available to them.

The L.G. (Lieutenant Governor) and I have met with local elected leaders to see how our investments can support their vision. This is exactly the kind of thing mayors and county commissioners from both parties have been asking for.

And as we build strong, thriving communities, we also need to make sure folks can get around safely and affordably. Last year we finally started completely decoupling police funding and infrastructure, which put them both on stronger financial footing. That made an additional \$125 million available for road and bridge repairs. My administration leveraged that State funding to get even more matching Federal dollars, and as a result, we repaired over 7,000 miles of Pennsylvania roadways – 600 more miles than we had the year before. This year my budget makes another \$125 million available so we can do even more to ensure our roads are safe and well-maintained.

But not everybody drives to work or school on our roadways. Nearly 1 million Pennsylvanians rely on public transit every single day. Major employers count on trains, buses, and trolleys to get their employees to and from the office. And our seniors depend on shared ride services for 2.1 million trips a year – especially in our rural communities. Public transit provides freedom and opportunity. It makes us competitive, and it helps sell our Commonwealth to others.

From the companies I talked about earlier, to the organizers and fans of the FIFA (Federation Internationale de Football Association) World Cup and the MLB (Major League Baseball) All-Star Game coming right here in 2026 – they all want clean, safe, and on-time public transit. And that is what Pennsylvanians deserve, and it is what our economy needs. That is why I am proposing the first major new investment in public transit in more than a decade. Under my plan, transit systems across Pennsylvania will receive \$1.5 billion over the next 5 years. That would mean nearly \$40 million more for PRT (Pittsburgh Regional Transit) in Allegheny County this year alone, \$6 million more for LANTA (Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority) in Lehigh and Northampton Counties, and millions more for other systems across the State.

I know this is especially important in southeastern Pennsylvania. That is why my administration has been working with SEPTA (Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority) for months to address their unique challenges and come up with a solution. I insisted that they address concerns about cleanliness and safety, and I asked the local counties whose residents benefit from that system to meet this moment with additional support. I can now report that SEPTA has presented plans to address cleanliness and safety, and county officials have entertained a willingness to increase their financial support.

While SEPTA has work to do to make good on those plans – especially on safety – in partnership with the city of Philadelphia and Mayor Parker's administration, I am now prepared to increase our investment in SEPTA by \$161 million, bringing the total State funding to \$1 billion. This investment will trigger an automatic match of 15 percent from local counties, raising another \$24 million for the system this year.

And based on our discussions with SEPTA, if you adopt my proposal, they will not cut service or raise fares, and they will have a concrete plan for a cleaner, safer public transit system that creates economic opportunity in southeastern Pennsylvania.

My administration is focused on creating economic opportunity in every community – rural, urban, and suburban alike. Something you may have noticed is that for the first time, our economic development strategy is not limited in its focus to our high-rises or our suburban office parks. We understand that our economic success is dependent on our rural communities and our farmlands.

Last spring I spent time on Silver Valley Farm, a ninth-generation family farm in Lancaster County. I do not see that farm as just part of our heritage. I see it as a critical part of our economic success going forward. Pennsylvania is home to 53,000 farms. Nearly 600,000 of our fellow Pennsylvanians work in agriculture, and ag contributes \$132 billion to our State's economy.

To ignore that is not only disrespectful to our farmers; it does not make sense economically. In the same sentence when we talk about life sciences, manufacturing, and robotics, we should be talking about investing in our farms and in our farmers. That is why my economic development strategy places a special emphasis on ag. As an example, I want to help more farmers upgrade their equipment and take advantage of the latest technology through our Ag Innovation Fund. There is real innovation happening all across our Commonwealth, especially on our farms.

Over the summer, I visited Reinford dairy farm in Juniata County, and I met Brett Reinford and his beautiful family, and he joins us here today. He showed me their methane digester that turns waste into electricity, not just for their farm, but for the neighborhood nearby. Brett is helping our environment and his business. That is the ingenuity of Pennsylvania farmers at work. The Commonwealth invested in that digester, and we need to do more of that on our farms across Pennsylvania.

This budget also invests in animal health and disease prevention by funding a new State animal testing laboratory in western Pennsylvania. You see, right now we have a State animal testing lab in central and eastern Pennsylvania, but not in the western part of our State. That is a big oversight, and my budget closes that gap to protect our herds, flocks, and farms.

This is a statewide economic development strategy. It runs from our skyscrapers to our farmlands, on our roads and on our rails. It also gives everyone a shot at economic opportunity – no matter what you look like or where you come from. I have talked to so many small business owners who just want that shot, like at Cocoapreneur in Pittsburgh, an incubator for Black-owned businesses, providing them with office space and access to capital. We need to do more of that.

And we need to make sure that there is opportunity for all to participate in our economy and for all to build generational wealth. That is why we devoted new funding specifically to support historically disadvantaged businesses in our last budget. For the first time, the Commonwealth is directly putting State

dollars towards creating opportunity for folks who have for too long been shut out. I have heard from small and small diverse businesses how hard it is to compete for State contracts, despite doing exactly the sort of work that we are looking for.

The largest purchaser of goods and services in Pennsylvania is our Commonwealth. That is why I signed an Executive order to help those small businesses work with us, and we are already making progress. DGS put into place a prompt pay policy that requires some prime contractors to pay their subs within 10 days of receiving payment. We raised the revenue cap so more small and small diverse businesses could qualify. And we reduced the time it takes to certify a small business to work with the Commonwealth by 33 percent.

Look, I am not just doing this because it is the right thing to do – and it is. I am doing it because it is the smart thing to do. When we open up these opportunities to more businesses, we can deliver better services at better prices for the good people of Pennsylvania. I am not looking to give a handout. I want to give a hand up – and create opportunity here in our economy that gives everyone a shot.

In order to create that kind of opportunity, Pennsylvanians need to earn a decent wage, and come on. Come on. Come on. You all should be for decent wages. Come on, man, let us be real. Our minimum wage has been stuck at \$7.25 an hour for 15 years; 15 years. Do you know what that is? That is a Shanda. And if you do not know what that means, go ask the Budget Secretary later. It is time we raise our minimum wage to \$15 an hour here in Pennsylvania. That is right.

And you know what? We are falling behind. We are falling behind. It is anticompetitive and it is hurting our workers. And as we have remained at a flat \$7.25, every single one of our neighboring States has raised their minimum wage, as have 30 other States across the country.

We have seen proof that Pennsylvania workers living in border counties would rather drive into another State for work so they can earn a higher wage than take a job at home in Pennsylvania. Up along our Northern Tier, some workers in the hospitality sector go to work in New York and leave employers here in the Pennsylvania Wilds struggling to find help. Raising the minimum wage is going to make us more competitive, and it is going to create economic opportunity. The House passed a bill to raise our minimum wage to \$15 an hour, and I am encouraged to see the comments of the leaders in the Senate who have shown a willingness to engage on this issue. So let us finally get this done. Together.

You know, wages are not the only place where we are falling behind other States. Do you remember when I talked about losing to Ohio? Well, last year 57 percent of voters in Ohio supported an initiative to legalize recreational marijuana. And now, Ohio, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland – practically all of our neighbors – have legalized marijuana. We are losing out on an industry that, once fully implemented, would bring in more than \$250 million in annual revenue. And our failure to legalize and regulate this only fuels the black market and drains much-needed resources for law enforcement. It is time to catch up. I ask you to come together and send a bill to my desk that legalizes marijuana.

Now, that bill should ensure that the industry is regulated and taxed responsibly, that we create jobs and build wealth here in Pennsylvania, especially in communities that have been disproportionately harmed by criminalization. And that bill should also contain a provision for those who have been

convicted for nonviolent possession of small amounts of marijuana to have their records expunged. Let us stop hamstringing ourselves and start competing again in Pennsylvania.

And listen, while we take steps to be more competitive, we have got to be mindful that we have got to cut costs for folks. As I have traveled all across this Commonwealth, I have heard firsthand from Pennsylvanians who are struggling. They have told me how it seems like the price of everything – from rent to child care to groceries – is making it harder for people to make ends meet. Relief is on the way, because we took two giant steps forward last year to cut costs. Together we put money back in the pockets of working families by expanding the child-care tax credit. This year 210,000 families will get hundreds more dollars back to help pay for child care.

On top of that, we delivered the largest targeted tax cut for seniors in nearly two decades by expanding the Property Tax/Rent Rebate. That program had not been updated since 2006. Lawmakers had complained about it for a while – but together, we got it done. And now 175,000 more seniors qualify for relief – and for those who already qualified, many will see their rebates nearly double. And we have tied the income limit to the cost of living so no one, no seniors can be priced out in the future.

Pennsylvanians have to work extra hard to pay their bills. We should work as hard for them as they do for themselves. So let us work harder together to cut costs more. We can do that by helping Pennsylvanians stay in, and take care of, their homes. Almost 60 percent of all homes in Pennsylvania were built before 1970, and many of them are in dire need of repairs. But a lot of homeowners just cannot afford the cost of those repairs.

Take Inge Shomo in Cambria County, for example. Her furnace gave out at the age of 72; she could not afford a replacement. Instead, she used space heaters, and even her oven, to heat her home. Imagine that was your mother or your grandmother, living alone, turning the oven on overnight and leaving the door open just to stay warm. We cannot accept that. But fortunately, this body came together and created the Whole-Home Repairs Program. Inge was one of the first recipients of this new initiative and received a \$10,000 grant to replace her furnace and fix two drafty doors in her house.

We have distributed all of the initial money allocated for that program. Demand was so strong that there is a waitlist in most counties, especially in our rural counties. In Potter County, for example, as of last month, they have allocated all of their funding, but there are eight times more people sitting on a waitlist. Indiana County has enough funding for around 25 projects, but received more than 75 applications. We cannot leave struggling homeowners out to dry. Let us support them by investing another \$50 million in the Whole-Home Repairs Program. This is a smart investment. We know it works, and demand is high.

We also need to make housing more affordable. One of the most effective tools we have for that is the Housing Trust Fund. For 14 years that fund has subsidized the construction and rehabilitation of more affordable housing, but it has not gotten enough support. My budget will increase the cap of that fund to \$100 million over the next 4 years. Helping folks repair their homes and building more affordable homes will help cut costs for Pennsylvanians. We have lowered costs for seniors. We have lowered costs for families with children. We have a plan to lower costs for homeowners and renters.

Do you know what else is taking too much money out of people's pockets? The cost of health care. Folks are getting hurt by the high cost of health insurance. Consider this. There are folks in this Commonwealth who are working really hard. They have a job. They are supporting themselves. And they make just enough money that they do not get government assistance for health insurance, but they still do not make enough to afford the price of private health insurance premiums. There are 100,000 of our fellow Pennsylvanians who fall into that category. These are people who are doing everything right. They just need a little bit of extra help. So let us be there for them. My budget invests \$50 million to allow them to keep on working in our economy and purchase health insurance.

At the same time, this investment will also help lower the premiums for an additional 400,000 Pennsylvanians. Because, look, if we do nothing here, these folks will be priced out of health insurance, and when we have folks who are uninsured, it only drives up the cost of health care for all of us. So we can invest this funding now and save us all money later. Or we can do nothing and subject ourselves to higher costs down the road. Again, this is commonsense stuff.

Folks are also getting screwed by the high cost of prescription drugs. Drug companies keep raising prices, and oftentimes we do not know why, because the middlemen negotiating these drug prices between your health insurance company and the drug manufacturers, they do not have to report enough information to the Insurance Department. Those middlemen, they are called pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMs, and they have made record profits on the backs of Pennsylvanians. It is time to reform the operation of PBMs here. We are doing our part in the Insurance Department, but we need legislation to go further.

We also need to help Pennsylvanians who are being crushed by medical debt. Consider this: 1 million Pennsylvanians carry some kind of medical debt, and this issue disproportionately impacts our rural communities. In fact – hear me on this – the counties with the highest share of medical debt are Warren, Greene, Bradford, Franklin, and McKean. In Warren County alone, 20 percent of residents carry medical debt that is affecting their credit. Combine that with higher prices at the stores, this debt is an anchor holding families and communities back, and when you cannot afford to pay it off, your credit score suffers and makes it harder to reach financial stability. Because hospitals then sell off this debt to collection agencies for, really, pennies on the dollar, with an investment of just \$4 million in my budget, we can start wiping out medical debt for Pennsylvanians and give them the chance they need to succeed financially.

Now, listen, listen: This is an issue that disproportionately impacts our rural communities – at the same time as we face a crisis in rural health care. In the past 20 years, 33 rural hospitals in Pennsylvania have either reduced services or closed completely. My administration has been working closely with elected officials from both parties, as well as health-care and community leaders, to put our rural health-care providers on stable footing moving forward. I expect to come back to you in the next several months with a plan to address this crisis; because as we cut the cost of health care, we need to make sure it is available and accessible for everyone.

But unfortunately, that is not the case for everyone. Imagine you are among the 1 million Pennsylvanians with medical debt and you have got a furnace on the fritz. You are 60 years old, caring for your adult child with disabilities, and not getting any

support to offset your costs. I have listened to those families. I have seen the exhaustion and the desperation in the eyes of parents and caregivers who are doing everything right, but they still cannot get their kids the services they need. It is heartbreaking.

One of those parents – and her son – joins us today. Cindy and her adult son, Matthew, live in Lititz, in Lancaster County. They visited me back in my office in June. Matthew requires 24/7 support, something that Cindy has not been able to find because our State does not pay direct support professionals enough. So instead, Cindy, a 60-year-old single mom who has battled her own health challenges that have limited her ability to care for Matthew, is forced to provide care herself – along with Matthew's grandma, Judy. Listen, you have all heard from people like Cindy, Judy, and Matthew. They have walked these halls. They have rolled their wheelchairs into your offices year after year to ask you to step up and help them. And yet nothing has changed.

The biggest reason why people cannot access care is because there are not enough caregivers, and the reason why there are not enough caregivers is because they are not getting paid enough. We are asking a professional to do this incredibly difficult, skilled, labor-intensive work, and the State rate that helps determine their paycheck yields about 12 bucks an hour. So consequently, these caregivers – who, remember, got into this field because they want to help people – they go find work elsewhere because they just do not get paid enough. My budget invests \$216 million – which allows us to draw down another \$266 million in Federal dollars – to provide more resources than ever before for home- and community-based service providers, so in turn, they can pay competitive rates to attract and retain staff to provide these life-changing services.

Imagine if this was your kid. Seriously, imagine if this was your kid, if you could not find the services that they need and found out the only reason why a caregiver is not available is because they are not getting paid a decent wage because the State refused to raise our rate. I know some members here do not have to imagine – they are living it. So let us make this the year we get it done for Cindy, Judy, and Matthew, and the thousands of others like them across Pennsylvania. Let us do this work. Together.

And let us also show that this budget is not just a bunch of numbers on some spreadsheet. It is a statement of our values, of our principles, of our commitment to our fellow Pennsylvanians, especially when it shows how we care for our most vulnerable. It is why this budget invests in early intervention and child care, because our kids deserve the support they need to grow and develop before they enter school. It raises the minimum SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefit for low-income families, because every Pennsylvanian deserves a healthy meal on the table at dinnertime.

And this budget addresses a challenge for so many girls who lack access to feminine hygiene products at school and at home. Look, look, this is something, this is something we do not often talk about; it is something we do not often talk about. But the First Lady has spent time this year meeting with these young women and hearing their stories. Lori has spoken to girls who have literally missed school days because they got their period and had to run home in the middle of the day – because nothing was available to them at school. This budget makes feminine hygiene products available at no cost in our schools, because girls deserve to have peace of mind so they can focus on learning. That is right.

This budget also increases support for health-care providers that provide high-quality family planning tools and reproductive health-care services, because women and girls deserve to make their own choices about their own bodies.

We ought to double down on our work to prevent maternal mortality, especially among Black mothers, and this budget does that, fulfilling a commitment I made to the Black Maternal Health Caucus, and a priority of our Commonwealth's Second Lady – and a new mom, by the way – Blayre Holmes Davis. We are going to do this. Together.

This budget invests more in the very capable hands of our triple A's (area agencies on aging) to develop and deliver more services. It gives caregivers more tools to support an aging loved one. And for the first time ever, establishes an Alzheimer's disease division at the Department of Aging to support families dealing with that terrible disease.

And all of these investments are being made as we get ready to implement the first-ever master plan on aging, because our seniors deserve support so they can live out their golden years with dignity. Today nearly one in four Pennsylvanians are seniors, and by 2030 it will be one in three. Now is the time to plan for that.

A budget is a statement of our values, and as we think about our values, let us remember that what happens between your ears is just as important as what happens to the rest of your body. We have already done meaningful work to address this, investing \$100 million in student mental health and \$20 million more for county mental health support. This budget matches those investments and goes even further by increasing support for county-level mental health services, investing to keep the 988 crisis hotline in operation and supporting walk-in mental health crisis centers.

And as we think about our values, we also need to think about those who have been abused or left unprotected by the law. We need to finally do right by the survivors of sexual abuse and give them a chance to confront their abusers in court after decades of injustice. Decades. Look, come on, gang. Gang, you all have passed this before. You have passed it. And hear me: it should not need to be part of some political deal with some strings attached. We should do it because it is right. It is right, and it is time.

We should recognize the dignity of every Pennsylvanian, and we should be proud of what Penn set in motion here: a place that would be welcoming to all; a place where there are no second-class citizens.

Back in 1974, right here in Harrisburg, Governor Milton Shapp – working alongside my friend, Mark Segal, who joins us today – became the first Governor in the nation to meet with the LGBTQ community, and 1 year later, he became the first to ban discrimination against LGBTQ State employees. That is a history we should be proud of.

We were leading the nation when it came to LGBTQ rights, and now we are falling behind. It is ridiculous that here in Pennsylvania, two women can get married on a Sunday and then fired from their job on a Monday, just because they are in love. That their landlord can legally throw them out of their apartment just because he is bigoted. The House passed the Fairness Act to fix this. The Senate should honor our legacy of tolerance, pass that bill, and put it on my desk.

I got a lot of bipartisan claps for that.

We should all work together to implement commonsense reforms that make our system more fair and more just for everyone. We began that work together last year, passing Clean Slate and probation reform. Let us continue that work. Every Pennsylvanian who enters the criminal justice system has a constitutional right to adequate legal defense. Before I was elected your Governor, Pennsylvania was one of only two States in the whole nation that did not provide any State funding for public defenders. Last year we came together to lose that shameful distinction and delivered \$7 1/2 million for poor defendants. But that is just a down payment. We need to do more, because the need is great. My budget invests another \$10 million in our public defenders.

But understand, criminal defendants are not the only ones in need of legal help. The Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network provides pro bono legal services to help seniors, families, and Pennsylvanians with disabilities, and my budget increases their funding by 50 percent. And for the first time ever, this budget ensures Pennsylvanians facing eviction will have access to legal counsel. You know, Philadelphia has done exceptional work with its own Eviction Diversion Program, a nationally recognized initiative started during the pandemic; now we should expand that work statewide.

And as we continue to make our legal system more fair and just, we have to think about the victims of crime, and those communities that are impacted by gun violence. Let me tell you about one of those victims, Nicolas Elizalde. Nicolas was a wonderful ninth grade kid from Roxborough. He actually volunteered on my campaign because he cared about his community. He had a bright future ahead of him, until a gunman killed him after a football game. I have talked to his mom, Meredith, several times. In fact, many of you have heard from her too. Since Nicolas's death, she has been a powerful advocate and testified before the House Judiciary Committee for laws that might have saved her son's life – and could save more lives in the future. We are honored to have Nicolas's mom here with us today.

With gun violence at unacceptable levels in our communities, it is long past time for us to take real action. Lieutenant Governor Davis knows this well. He has been leading on this issue since his time as a kid in McKeesport, when he saw someone get shot on his block. Now, thanks to his leadership at PCCD (Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency), for the first time ever, we are going to fund a statewide office of gun violence. And I am proposing that we invest another \$100 million to address gun violence all across Pennsylvania.

We will also increase nonprofit security grants for places like mosques and churches and synagogues. And we will give our local law enforcement agencies and district attorneys' offices more resources to investigate and prosecute gun-related crimes.

But we cannot stop there. You see, this year we have an opportunity to pass the first significant gun reform legislation in two decades. Why the hell are we okay with loopholes on background checks that allow criminals to get their hands on guns? Just close the loopholes. You know, close the loopholes. Some of you all, some of you all, you all crack me up. You like to talk a big game about law and order. So let us strengthen our laws and bring about more order in Pennsylvania and save lives. The House passed a package of bills to do that in a bipartisan manner. The Senate should do the same.

The community is crying out for us to act. Law enforcement is on the side of the community, not the inaction in this building, and you all should be too. You know, our police officers do a

dangerous job in dangerous conditions, and we need to have their backs. Last year we provided funding to help local police departments recruit more officers. We also made a massive investment in the Pennsylvania State Police, creating four new State trooper cadet classes, which PSP is already hiring for. But the need is great, and it is clear we need an additional four cadet classes. And now is the time to do it, because PSP has seen a 258-percent increase last year in the number of applicants taking the test to become a State trooper. I think we should be supporting those who take up that call to service and invest in them. We owe it to them to make sure they have got the equipment, resources, and funding they need to do their jobs safely as possible.

And it is not just the cops who need more resources, equipment, and technology; it is our first responders too. Last year we took a step forward when we helped fire companies invest in better equipment and more training to prepare to fight dangerous wildfires, and expand efforts to recruit and retain more firefighters.

After the Norfolk Southern train derailment near our western border – a year ago this past Saturday – we made sure the railroad paid to replace all the firefighting equipment used up or contaminated as a result of their crash.

This year my budget expands on that work by doubling our investment in the State Fire Commissioner's Fire and EMS (emergency medical services) Grant Program. Just a few weeks ago, just a few weeks ago I was in Johnstown, at the West End Ambulance Service, where they told me about how they need help. I have heard similar things from professional firefighters, who need a lot of help – especially rebuilding run-down firehouses, and dealing with their colleagues' mental health. We have to ensure our first responders are well-staffed, well-funded, and well-equipped, and that is exactly what this budget will do.

Look, this year we have a real chance to build safer communities, become more competitive, and invest in our students and their success. I have just laid out a comprehensive and aggressive budget focused on doing just that. Where each piece builds on the other. Where that young girl gets a great quality education no matter her ZIP (Zoning Improvement Plan) Code. She has access and options for her future no matter what path she chooses, whether that is going straight into the workforce, into an apprenticeship program, or college – a college that she can afford. Where there are good jobs in her community because we reinvested in it. Where, as she grows up, she has got a health-care system that is not working against her, but working with her. Where she gets to age with dignity. And of course, where she gets to live in a Commonwealth that respects her for who she is.

I know that is a bold vision, and some will reflexively just be opposed, saying, "We cannot afford that." Well, I would argue we cannot afford not to invest right now. Think about it. We have got a \$14 billion surplus. We are facing real challenges in education and with our workforce that will hold us back in the future if we do not take action right now. Remember when I said one in four Pennsylvanians is over the age of 60, and by 2030 it is going to be one in three? That means we need to invest now, not only so we can care for an increasing population of older adults, but we can attract more young people, more businesses, and more prosperity to Pennsylvania.

No one here – I do not care what party you are in – should be okay with an unconstitutional education system for our kids. No one here. No one here should be okay with the status quo on higher ed, where we rank 49th in the nation. We cannot afford to

let our neighboring States invest several times more than we do in economic development. We need to step up for those who are most vulnerable in our system and show them that we give a damn. We need to get more stuff done together for Pennsylvanians.

Now, to be clear, my budget is balanced. It does not raise taxes; in fact, it cuts them. And consider this for a moment. Even if we fund every single one of the initiatives that I talked about today and is contained in my budget, we would still have an \$11 billion surplus at the end of June 2025 – \$11 billion. So while I expect you will carefully analyze my proposals and seek your own in the final budget, your analysis should not be used as an excuse for paralysis. It is time to solve these pressing problems, to meet this moment responsibly and with bipartisan compromise.

Let us take inspiration from this grand rotunda. I mentioned the murals of Penn's ships earlier, depicting our founding of our Commonwealth. But there is another mural next to it, on the north side of the rotunda, the Spirit of Vulcan, which shows the Roman god of the forge working a blast furnace in honor of our Commonwealth's mastery of iron and steel. That mural, painted at the height of Pennsylvania's industrial wealth and prominence, it reminds us of that history. It reminds us of an era where our Commonwealth fueled the industrial revolution – lifting people up out of poverty, powering the middle class, and creating the American labor movement. It reminds us that when fascism threatened freedom overseas, it was our Commonwealth that was home to the arsenal of democracy and the most powerful manufacturing base in the world.

You know, our kids read about those things in our history books, and they are depicted on these murals. But I do not want our children just to be inspired by our past. I want them to be hopeful for their future.

Just last week I visited a vestige of the old Pennsylvania, a place where Pennsylvania workers felt that spirit of Vulcan as they produced the steel that helped us win World War II and built our skylines and our bridges. Today Mill 19 is once again a driving force of prosperity and progress, progress growing out of unique partnerships and building the next big thing in robotics and biotech that will shape our future and change lives.

So when I walk these halls and I see these depictions of our past, I cannot help but feel optimistic about our future – a future we will build together, staying true to the words and the creed of Penn as we work to do what is truly wise and just.

Thank you all. Now let us get to work. Together.

Thank you.

JOINT SESSION ADJOURNED

The LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR. The Chair asks the members of the House and visitors to please remain seated for just a moment while the members of the Senate leave the hall of the House and the House adjourns their session.

The business for which the joint session has been assembled having been transacted, the joint session is now adjourned.

THE SPEAKER (JOANNA E. McCLINTON) PRESIDING

MOTION TO PRINT PROCEEDINGS OF JOINT SESSION

The SPEAKER. The Speaker recognizes the majority leader, who moves that the proceedings of the joint session of the Senate and the House of Representatives this day, the 6th day of February 2024, will be printed in full in this day's Legislative Journal.

On the question,
Will the House agree to the motion?
Motion was agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER. Representative Bradford moves that the House do now adjourn until Monday, March 18, 2024, at 12 m., e.d.t., or unless sooner recalled by the Speaker.

On the question,
Will the House agree to the motion?
Motion was agreed to, and at 2:10 p.m., e.s.t., the House adjourned.