

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
**Legislative Journal**

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2023

SESSION OF 2023 207TH OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

No. 40

**SENATE**

WEDNESDAY, September 20, 2023

The Senate met at 11 a.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore (Senator Kim L. Ward) in the Chair.

**PRAYER**

The following prayer was offered by Senator ARTHUR L. HAYWOOD III:

Let us pray.

Almighty One, we first acknowledge that we are on the land of the Native American Tribes. We respect the native peoples of Pennsylvania--past, present, and future--and their continuing presence in their homeland and throughout their diasporas. Almighty, many take this opening prayer to pray for Senate Members: me and my colleagues. Today, this prayer is for the many who work in our Senate, here and in our districts. Almighty, protect our families, friends, and loved ones at home. Travel around the nation and the world. Encourage those who are in the midst of change and challenge. Almighty, protect the hardworking people who clean and maintain this historic Capitol building, who provide security, prepare and serve food, who do the deliveries, and more. Keep safe, O Lord, those who do all the policy, and administration, and technology, and other work for our Senate. Do not allow us to forget our staff and teams who engage our neighbors and constituent services, who attend countless events and meetings and more on our behalf. Lord, protect our staff and teams who do the legislative and campaign work. Bless their families, Almighty. Remind us that all have inherent dignity from You. Almighty, I ask a special condolence for the families and friends of Constance Clayton and JoAnne Epps, tremendous leaders and shining lights of what we can be. Help us to pick up the baton that they have left for us. We owe this to each other. Finally, help us to leave this Senate and this Commonwealth better than it was when we arrived. Amen.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair thanks Senator Haywood.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

(The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those assembled.)

**BILLS INTRODUCED AND REFERRED**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore laid before the Senate the following Senate Bills numbered, entitled, and referred as follows, which were read by the Clerk:

September 19, 2023

Senators MUTH, L. WILLIAMS, TARTAGLIONE, HAYWOOD, HUGHES, KEARNEY, COMMITTA, CAPPELLETTI, KANE, FONTANA, COLLETTI, SANTARSIERO, SCHWANK, COSTA and PHILLIPS-HILL presented to the Chair **SB 924**, entitled:

An Act amending Title 38 (Holidays and Observances) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in veteran recognition, providing for Military Sexual Trauma Awareness Day.

Which was committed to the Committee on VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, September 19, 2023.

Senators MASTRIANO, HUTCHINSON, COLEMAN, PENNYCUICK, ROTHMAN, DiSANTO, DUSH and BROOKS presented to the Chair **SB 927**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of May 1, 1933 (P.L.103, No.69), known as The Second Class Township Code, in contracts, further providing for separate specifications for branches of work.

Which was committed to the Committee on LOCAL GOVERNMENT, September 19, 2023.

**RESOLUTION INTRODUCED AND REFERRED**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore laid before the Senate the following Senate Resolution numbered, entitled, and referred as follows, which was read by the Clerk:

September 19, 2023

Senators MARTIN, VOGEL, BARTOLOTTA, PHILLIPS-HILL, COSTA, HUGHES, FONTANA, HAYWOOD, LANGERHOLC, BROOKS, TARTAGLIONE, BREWSTER, SANTARSIERO, LAUGHLIN, REGAN, DUSH, CAPPELLETTI, SCHWANK, HUTCHINSON, PENNYCUICK, BROWN, MASTRIANO and ROBINSON presented to the Chair **SR 163**, entitled:

A Resolution designating the month of September 2023 as "Childhood Cancer Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

Which was committed to the Committee on RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, September 19, 2023.

**BILLS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE**

Senator MASTRIANO, from the Committee on Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness, reported the following bills:

**SB 792 (Pr. No. 919)**

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

**SB 933 (Pr. No. 1109) (Amended)**

An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Department of Military Affairs, further providing for advisory councils for veterans' homes.

**LEGISLATIVE LEAVES**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Lancaster, Senator Aument.

Senator AUMENT. Madam President, I request temporary Capitol leaves for Senator Brooks, Senator Dush, and Senator Hutchinson, and legislative leaves for Senator Gebhard and Senator Yaw.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Costa.

Senator COSTA. Madam President, I request a legislative leave for Senator Saval.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senator Aument requests temporary Capitol leaves for Senator Brooks, Senator Dush, and Senator Hutchinson, and legislative leaves for Senator Gebhard and Senator Yaw.

Senator Costa requests a legislative leave for Senator Saval. Without objection, the leaves will be granted.

**LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

Senator COSTA asked and obtained leaves of absence for Senator BOSCOLA, Senator HUGHES, and Senator MUTH, for today's Session, for personal reasons.

**JOURNAL APPROVED**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Journal of the Session of June 7, 2023, is now in print.

The Clerk proceeded to read the Journal of the Session of June 7, 2023.

Senator AUMENT. Madam President, I move that further reading of the Journal be dispensed with and that the Journal be approved.

On the question,  
Will the Senate agree to the motion?

The yeas and nays were required by Senator AUMENT and were as follows, viz:

YEA-47

Argall	Culver	Langerholc	Saval
Aument	Dillon	Laughlin	Schwank

Baker	DiSanto	Martin	Stefano
Bartolotta	Dush	Mastriano	Street
Brewster	Farry	Miller	Tartaglione
Brooks	Flynn	Pennycuick	Vogel
Brown	Fontana	Phillips-Hill	Ward, Judy
Cappelletti	Gebhard	Pittman	Ward, Kim
Coleman	Haywood	Regan	Williams, Anthony H.
Collett	Hutchinson	Robinson	Williams, Lindsey
Comitta	Kane	Rothman	Yaw
Costa	Kearney	Santarsiero	

NAY-0

A majority of the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Journal is approved.

**GUESTS OF SENATOR JUDY WARD PRESENTED TO THE SENATE**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Blair, Senator Judy Ward.

Senator J. WARD. Madam President, I rise today to introduce faculty and students visiting from Great Commission School in Blair County. Great Commission School is a K through 12 private Christian school founded in 1997 that seeks to provide every student with a high-quality education and to prepare them to pursue God's plan for their lives. With an enrollment of about 136 students, the school combines a thorough academic curriculum, award-winning athletics, and fine arts classes to ensure that the educational experience that the students receive sets them up for a lifetime of success.

They have been a leader in the Blair County area in providing a first-rate education while reinforcing Christian principles and values, and the school is well-known for their musical performances at the famous Mishler Theatre in downtown Altoona. In the gallery today are David Greenwood, who teaches the senior U.S. government class; Ginger Cover, the school principal; and more than 20 students. I had the pleasure of meeting them earlier today and was impressed by their intelligence, their character, and their curiosity. These students represented their school well and made all the other Great Commission Bears out there proud. Please join me in giving the faculty and students from Great Commission School a warm Senate welcome.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Would the guests of Senator Judy Ward please rise and be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

**ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. For the information of the Members, we are about to consider a condolence resolution. Will the Sergeant-at-Arms see that all doors in the Chamber are closed.

**SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS SENATE RESOLUTION ADOPTED**

Senators LAUGHLIN, PHILLIPS-HILL, FARRY, BROOKS, COLEMAN, DUSH, PENNYCUICK, GEBHARD, FONTANA, BREWSTER, REGAN, VOGEL, COSTA, MASTRIANO, ROBINSON and HUTCHINSON presented to the Chair **Senate Resolution No. 167**, entitled:

A Resolution honoring the life and service of Shawn Giles.

On the question,  
Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Erie, Senator Laughlin.

Senator LAUGHLIN. Madam President, on August 20, 2023, Firefighter Shawn Giles was tragically killed by a speeding motorist while directing traffic at an accident scene. Shawn is the first line-of-duty death the Fuller Hose Company No. 1 in North East has suffered since its inception on December 31, 1885. The unimaginable loss is felt keenly by his family, colleagues, friends, and community. Shawn was a veteran of the United States Army, serving in Germany from 1989 to 1993. He was a member of the American Legion, VFW Post 4789, the Brotherhood of St. Josephs Club, and East Erie Loyal Order of the Moose 593. However, his love was being a member of the Fuller Hose Company No. 1, where he dedicated 13 years of his life as a firefighter and performed fire police duties. Shawn previously served as a volunteer firefighter with Brookside Fire Department in Harborcreek Township. He was always there to lend a hand and help others. Shawn died while selflessly serving the citizens of this Commonwealth, and his sacrifice underscores how our Pennsylvania volunteers put their lives on the line for our safety each and every day. Shawn is survived by his wife, Adele; stepchildren, Alyssa and Alex; and his grandson, Lucas. My deepest condolences to his entire family, friends, and the Fuller Hose Company for their loss, because they were his family as well. I ask for a moment of silence to honor the life and service of Firefighter Shawn Giles.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Before we vote on this condolence resolution, will the Members, as well as all staff and guests, please rise for a moment of silence.

[Whereupon, the Senate en bloc stood in a moment of silence in solemn respect to the memory of Firefighter SHAWN GILES.]

And the question recurring,  
Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

A voice vote having been taken, the question was determined in the affirmative.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The resolution is unanimously adopted.

## CALENDAR

### THIRD CONSIDERATION CALENDAR

#### BILLS OVER IN ORDER

**SB 125** and **SB 149** -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

## LEGISLATIVE LEAVE CANCELLED

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senator Hutchinson has returned, and his temporary Capitol leave is cancelled.

**The PRESIDING OFFICER (Senator Ryan P. Aument) in the Chair.**

## LEGISLATIVE LEAVE CANCELLED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Senator Brooks has returned, and her temporary Capitol leave is cancelled.

## CONSIDERATION OF CALENDAR RESUMED

### THIRD CONSIDERATION CALENDAR RESUMED

#### BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION AND FINAL PASSAGE

**SB 224 (Pr. No. 1097)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of June 3, 1937 (P.L.1333, No.320), known as the Pennsylvania Election Code, in dates of elections and primaries and special elections, further providing for general primary and candidates to be nominated and party officers to be elected; and, in nomination of candidates, further providing for manner of signing nomination petitions and time of circulating and for place and time of filing nomination petitions and filing fees.

Considered the third time and agreed to,  
And the amendments made thereto having been printed as required by the Constitution,

On the question,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Montgomery, Senator Cappelletti.

Senator CAPPELLETTI. Mr. Chair, I stand to recognize the concerns of the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania as well as the election administrators on the date that is in this bill and the compressed time frame that it is set to give us for a 2024 primary date. I recognize those concerns. They are very serious, and I am hopeful that throughout the rest of this legislative process, we can do our best as a legislative body to address those concerns and ensure that we have a primary in 2024 that is fully staffed and has the resources that it needs to move forward properly. But ultimately, we cannot keep the primary date where it is. Our Jewish friends and family in Pennsylvania will not be able to participate, not just in the voting, but actually in the administration of the elections. In my own community, we have many people of Jewish faith who help to administer--who are judge of elections who run the actual process of elections. So, ultimately, I am going to be a "yes" on this bill, but with the hopes that we can make sure, as we continue with the legislative process, that there are appropriate resources, any other shifts that might need to happen in a date or time frame, we can continue to work together to make that happen and ensure that this is done in the best way possible.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Schuylkill, Senator Argall.

Senator ARGALL. Mr. President, this legislation would change the date of the 2024 primary in Pennsylvania to March 19 in order to give Pennsylvanians--for the first time in a long time--a much greater voice during this important process. We have been very deliberative with this legislation. We have crafted it and re-crafted it to ensure that we would avoid Christmas, we would

avoid Passover, we would avoid Easter. As has been previously indicated, everyone agrees that we need to move the current date for next year so that it does not conflict with Passover. We also believe that the March 19 date will prevent issues with churches that serve as polling locations if we were to have it on the 26th of March or April 2. That then becomes a problem because in many of our communities, churches would be providing to get ready for the primary at the same time they would be preparing for Holy Week. We do not believe that that is a good mix.

We also were able to shift the petition period to January so that volunteers and candidates, both challengers and incumbents, would not be required to be knocking on doors between Christmas and New Year's. I recognize the concerns of our county election officials. I will point out that under this legislation they would actually have more time to prepare for an election than they did 2 years ago, and so, I have faith in them. I believe that they can do it, but I do understand the necessity to get this bill to the Governor's desk very soon. If we are having this debate in November or December or January, there is no doubt that the Department of State and the county election officials would not be able to prepare for this important election. And so, given the past bipartisan support that we have seen on this legislation, not only this Session but when similar legislation passed the Senate unanimously in 2021 and 2020, I would again urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Berks, Senator Schwank.

Senator SCHWANK. Mr. President, thank you for the opportunity to speak on this legislation and address my colleagues, and I speak to you wearing two hats: one as a co-chair of the Jewish legislative caucus and the other as a former county commissioner. So, I certainly understand some of the dilemma that we are facing before us. Back in April, actually, I, along with my co-chair of the Jewish legislative caucus, wrote a letter to then-acting Secretary of State Schmidt and talked with him about the conflict that would arise by holding the presidential primary in 2024 on the date that had already been predetermined. And of course, as we have already learned, it conflicts with the Jewish holidays. And just for those of you who want to understand, the holiday actually begins the night before. That is when the first Seder, that first dinner, which many of you are familiar with, actually occurs. But the second full day is the day when many observant Jews would be going to their congregations for services. That is where we face a problem. One, most certainly--and this is a case in my district--one of our synagogues--the home of both Keshar Zion as well as Oheb Shalom--serves as a polling place. So, as my esteemed colleague Senator Cappelletti mentioned, the fact that we have many people of Jewish faith who serve as administrators of the, you know, the elections, they also, you know, this is also a polling place. You cannot have, you just cannot have the two together in one place under these circumstances, and I believe that is probably the case in other communities throughout the Commonwealth as well. So, I want to express my appreciation both to the maker of this bill, Senator Argall, as well as our co-chairs of the Committee on State Government, for taking this issue up and making sure that we have a date that will work in terms of just this election coming forward--as I think is my understanding. I will certainly check on that.

The other thing that I need to talk about is the fact that I am also a former county commissioner, and I know the tension and the stress of administering an election. And I understand quite clearly what election directors and the County Commissioners Association are trying to tell us about how we have to get this right, and we have to get it right soon in order to make sure that they can have adequate time to prepare for the election that is coming up. It is just more work than many of us know. Many of us know, of course, in this body, but among our constituents, they may not be aware of all the effort that has to go and can go into conducting an election that is one that we can be certain is done appropriately and properly according to our Election Code. So, understanding that we will pass this bill today, and I will certainly vote in support of it, not only in my role as co-chair of the Jewish legislative caucus, but also because I believe it is the right thing for us to do in terms of serving a large population, about 350,000 people of Jewish faith here in the Commonwealth. But also, I understand that when this goes over to the State House, they may not agree with us on the date, right? So, if that is the case, I would only stand here to urge my colleagues who will have the responsibility of moving this forward to act with haste. Let us show the public that we can actually get this done, that we can accommodate all of the issues--we can, as Senator Argall mentioned, there are opportunities here to get the work done--but we may not be at the same date. So, I would only urge all of us to ensure that this is one of the first items of business that we take care of when the House is back in Session and we are here as well.

Thank you so much, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Street.

Senator STREET. Mr. President, first, I, too, want to join the many voices of my colleagues by urging a "yes" vote on this legislation today. I do that with some reservations, though. While I believe that this date and this plan is certainly better than us doing nothing and sticking with inaction; as has been stated, it would make Pennsylvania more relevant in the process. As has been stated, it would move us away from the Jewish holidays. That being said, I do not think this is the optimal solution, but I do think it is important that today the Senate take this action, moving the process forward, because the House will begin to deliberate on what we do after we move this forward. The current plan would have petitions start on January 2, which I think is the right time, but I think that the 11-week period is just going to create a number of problems for election administrators. And so, while we are not with an option that has no challenges, I think the option of starting on January 2, continuing with the normal calendar, and ending on April 2 would be better than what we are proposing. But there is an old saying, let not the perfect be the enemy of the good. What we are doing today is better than us doing nothing, and so, I do urge a "yes" vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Costa.

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, very briefly, I want to thank my colleagues for advancing this legislation. I think it is important. My colleague Senator Street said, doing nothing is not an option, and I think we have to make every effort to get this thing through the process. I would be remiss if I did not mention that a number of my colleagues have spoken to me about possibly amending this legislation to address other Election Code matters,

but I think recognizing the sense of urgency with regard to this and the time is of the essence, acquiesced in saying that they are willing to put off those conversations until we have an opportunity to discuss those election matters--some of which may be controversial--at another point in time. I think the point I want to make also with that, this is an important piece of legislation and it needs to leave here clean--which it will--and my hope is that the other side of the building has the opportunity to return back to us, if they do that, or send it to the Governor's desk clean as we go forward. So, I just want to make mention on how important that is to get this measure done.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Westmoreland, Senator Kim Ward.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Mr. President, this bill is so important to Pennsylvanians. Year after year, election night after election night, and during the presidential races, we are waiting for Pennsylvania. We are determining, our Electoral College votes are determining, who is going to be the President. But in the beginning, when we are nominating candidates, our voices are muted. Our primary is so late that so many other States have already voted that we do not matter. So here we are, the fifth most registered voters in the country, not having input into who the candidates are for our parties. This bill gives Pennsylvania citizens a voice at the beginning of the process because it always comes down to us at the end of the process. And I understand it is a challenge for the counties, that they have time and time again, the counties have pulled up their bootstraps and gotten through some really, really tough issues during elections, and I am sure they will do so again. The hope is that the House comes back soon and takes the bill up. I am so pleased to see this moving today. It really is a win for Pennsylvania voters. Thank you.

And the question recurring,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

YEA-45

Argall	Dillon	Laughlin	Saval
Aument	DiSanto	Martin	Schwank
Baker	Dush	Mastriano	Stefano
Bartolotta	Farry	Miller	Street
Brewster	Flynn	Pennycuick	Tartaglione
Brooks	Fontana	Phillips-Hill	Vogel
Brown	Gebhard	Pittman	Ward, Judy
Cappelletti	Haywood	Regan	Ward, Kim
Collett	Kane	Robinson	Williams, Anthony H.
Comitta	Kearney	Rothman	Williams, Lindsey
Costa	Langerholc	Santarsiero	Yaw
Culver			

NAY-2

Coleman	Hutchinson
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A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate present said bill to the House of Representatives for concurrence.

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

**SB 235, SB 282, SB 346, SB 371, HB 623, SB 749 and SB 754** -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVES

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Mr. President, I request a legislative leave for Senator Kim Ward.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Costa.

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I request a temporary Capitol leave for Senator Brewster

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Senator Pittman requests a legislative leave for Senator Kim Ward.

Senator Costa requests a temporary Capitol leave for Senator Brewster.

Without objection, the leaves will be granted.

CONSIDERATION OF CALENDAR RESUMED

THIRD CONSIDERATION CALENDAR RESUMED

BILLS ON THIRD CONSIDERATION  
AND FINAL PASSAGE

**SB 773 (Pr. No. 1105)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of April 17, 2016 (P.L.84, No.16), known as the Medical Marijuana Act, in preliminary provisions, further providing for definitions; in medical marijuana organizations, further providing for limitations on permits and providing for additional dispensary permits authorized, for application and issuance of additional dispensary permits and for limitations on other additional permits or licenses; and, in academic clinical research centers and clinical registrants, further providing for definitions.

Considered the third time and agreed to,

And the amendments made thereto having been printed as required by the Constitution,

On the question,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Mr. President, on behalf of Senator Gebhard, I submit the following comments for the record.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the remarks will be spread upon the record.

*(The following prepared remarks were made part of the record at the request of the gentleman from Indiana, Senator PITTMAN, on behalf of the gentleman from Lebanon, Senator GEBHARD:)*

Mr. President, I rise today to speak to Senate Bill No. 773, which would allow independent grower/processors to become vertically integrated through their own retail outlets. So why are we here today? We are here to right the wrongs created by the Health Department's

mismangement of the Medical Marijuana Program in Pennsylvania. A program once looked to as an example of good government, promoting homegrown jobs and businesses in some of our more economically downtrodden communities, is now a program dominated by out-of-State companies. A program that once required complete absolute separation of manufactures and retail operations is now dominated by companies controlling the supply chain from seed to sale. This is a program that is broken; this is a program that is on a fast track to a monopoly.

Currently, only multi-State operators (MSOs) are vertically integrated, meaning they can grow, process, and sell their own cannabis products through their own wholly owned facilities. This restriction has left independent grower/processors at a disadvantage, as they are unable to compete and survive. I look at this bill not as a cannabis bill, but rather as a fair-trade practices bill. We have basically created a system where only huge multi-State companies can win and left small Pennsylvania businesses to die on the vine. This legislation would allow independent Pennsylvania-based grower/processors to apply to the Department of Health for two dispensary permits and finally put small PA businesses on a level playing field with these large out-of-state operators.

In conclusion, Pennsylvania independent grower/processors deserve the opportunity to become vertically integrated and obtain dispensary permits. This would not only benefit independent businesses financially, but it would also support the growth of the local economy; support thousands of jobs; and ensure that consumers have access to high-quality, safe, and diverse cannabis products. I strongly urge my colleagues to support Senate Bill No. 773.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington, Senator Bartolotta.

Senator BARTOLOTTA. Mr. President, I will be brief. Mr. President, in the last 7 years since the legalization of medicinal cannabis, Pennsylvania has shown that this medicine has been highly effective to provide relief for patients suffering from a multitude of different conditions, including but not limited to: autism, Crohn's disease, epilepsy, glaucoma, HIV/AIDS, Huntington's disease, intractable seizures, multiple sclerosis, opioid dependency, Parkinson's, sickle cell anemia, PTSD, Tourette syndrome, and cancer. It has been remarkably helpful to cancer patients even in remission. So, since 2016, when we passed it, I was a huge advocate for it, I fought very hard to get that passed, I was proud to do so. I really want to thank the maker of this bill, my friend and my colleague Senator Gebhard. Senate Bill No. 773 contains provisions to refine our State law and to make it more user friendly. I fully support everything in this bill. We have been playing whack-a-mole with medicinal cannabis for almost a decade. However, I feel that it does not go far enough to address the access to this legal, highly effective medication. Many medicinal cannabis patients find it difficult and costly to obtain the medication that they need for their conditions. Some have to drive for 2 hours or more to get the medication that they desperately need. And many find that their medication costs two, three, sometimes five times more than it does in surrounding States. That is why I and some other Members of this Chamber have advocated for what is known as homegrown, which would allow patients to legally grow a very small, limited number of plants at their residence, for use in treating their specific, diagnosed medical condition. Again, I want to thank Senator Gebhard for his work on this very important bill. However, today, I will be a "no" vote because I feel so strongly that we need to increase access to this medication for more Pennsylvanians by allowing them the option to grow a few plants at home.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Erie, Senator Laughlin.

Senator LAUGHLIN. Mr. President, I rise in support of this bill for a couple of reasons. I have a grower/processor in my district that, you know, has had issues because of the way the medical program has kind of taken shape over the last few years. But I also believe that this bill could be, at least, a little bit better and a little more patient friendly had we included homegrown in it. You know, that did not happen, and we worked through the process, that did not happen. I know when this goes over to the House, there will certainly be vigorous discussions there on what shape this bill will come back to the Senate in. And, you know, if I could give some friendly advice to my House Members, if this becomes a vehicle for adult use, I doubt that it would pass this Chamber. However, I think if they do add home grow to this bill, it will strengthen the bill, and I believe that we would be able to get it through this Chamber as well. So those are my comments. I appreciate your time. Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Delaware, Senator Kearney.

Senator KEARNEY. Mr. President, I rise in support of Senate Bill No. 773. You know, the fact that we need to resort to legislation to allow independent businesses to sell a product in high demand and high prices just indicates how problematic it can be when markets are consolidated and concentrated. You have just a few corporations that control the vast majority of the retail market. Growers have no independence or freedom. You either sell to the corporate buyers on their terms or you close your shop. When market power is too concentrated in a handful of conglomerates, we get monopolies; small businesses and consumers both lose. It is imperative that we have fair competition in our markets, including medical cannabis. I think, in fact, we need to go further in ensuring that the cannabis economy is benefiting Pennsylvania small businesses and growers, especially as the legislature considers adult use cannabis legislation, we need to prevent the consolidation and concentration that happened in medical cannabis markets from also occurring in future adult use markets. The playing field needs to be fair, and Pennsylvanians, not out-of-State investors, should be the ones to benefit from these economies. I think that Senate Bill No. 773 recognizes this problem with our medical cannabis market. And so, while it is not a perfect solution to the larger problems with market concentration, I will support it at this time.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Costa.

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, very briefly, I, too, want to echo the comments of my colleague from the gentleman from Delaware County. I think he really expressed clearly the intent of this legislation. And I want to applaud the prime sponsor of the amendment, not only in crafting language but also recognizing that it is important that we find language that is appropriate for us to be able to get through this Chamber with 26 votes, and I think that is what we have here today. So, his willingness to work with myself and some of my colleagues through this process, I think it is important and I thank him for that.

But as was indicated, there are a number of things that we need to continue to address in this space, and this medical marijuana industry that we now have here in Pennsylvania. But this effort is trying to address, what I believe, has been a situation that has arisen through no fault of the independent processors that we are

trying to work with and trying to support at this moment in time. I think, unfortunately, for actions of the Department of Health over the course of the period this program has been in existence, has resulted in what was described as a monopoly-type situation without multi-state organizations coming in and to the detriment of these independent grower/processors that we are trying to support here today. So, I thank those who support this measure--ask for support of it--and I think it is something that addresses what needs to be addressed at this moment in time, and gives us the opportunity to continue to work, not only in this space going forward, but also in the recreational marijuana space as well, which I think will require further discussion.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Street.

Senator STREET. Mr. President, as has been mentioned by many others, and I said yesterday during the amendment process, while what we are doing today in protecting some small cannabis providers from large MSOs is the right thing to do--and so, I still support this legislation and urge a "yes" vote--it is unconscionable that we continue to do this without addressing the issue that so many patients are having with cost, and the best way to do that is to allow home grow in small amounts. And so, while it is not a part of what we are doing today, because we did not want to kill this bill, it really should be. We should be addressing--and just as what Senator Gebhard is doing and Senator Costa and others who have worked on this are doing is the right thing for protecting those small business owners, we should be protecting individual patients by allowing home grow. And so, as we move through the legislative process and it moves through the House, I encourage that that is something we should consider. We should be diligent about and recognize there are patients out there who would have great amounts of price relief, who would have greater access to the medicine they need if we were to have added provisions for small amounts of home grow for medical patients. And so, I urge a "yes" on this legislation today, because we are protecting one group of people who are small business owners. We should be protecting patients as well, and the most vulnerable patients need home grow. It is time for us to get it done. The aforementioned notwithstanding, I still urge a "yes" vote.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Costa.

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I request a legislative leave for Senator Collett.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Senator Costa requests a legislative leave for Senator Collett. Without objection, the leave will be granted.

And the question recurring,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

YEA-44

Argall	Culver	Langerholz	Saval
Aument	Dillon	Laughlin	Schwank
Baker	DiSanto	Martin	Stefano
Brewster	Farry	Miller	Street
Brooks	Flynn	Pennycuick	Tartaglione
Brown	Fontana	Phillips-Hill	Vogel
Cappelletti	Gebhard	Pittman	Ward, Judy
Coleman	Haywood	Regan	Ward, Kim
Collett	Hutchinson	Robinson	Williams, Anthony H.
Comitta	Kane	Rothman	Williams, Lindsey
Costa	Kearney	Santarsiero	Yaw

NAY-3

Bartolotta	Dush	Mastriano
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A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate present said bill to the House of Representatives for concurrence.

**HB 797 (Pr. No. 2002)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of June 1, 1945 (P.L.1242, No.428), known as the State Highway Law, in construction, improvement, maintenance and repair of State highways, providing for native vegetation along highways.

Considered the third time and agreed to,  
And the amendments made thereto having been printed as required by the Constitution,

On the question,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

YEA-45

Argall	Culver	Langerholz	Saval
Aument	Dillon	Laughlin	Schwank
Baker	DiSanto	Martin	Stefano
Bartolotta	Dush	Miller	Street
Brewster	Farry	Pennycuick	Tartaglione
Brooks	Flynn	Phillips-Hill	Vogel
Brown	Fontana	Pittman	Ward, Judy
Cappelletti	Gebhard	Regan	Ward, Kim
Coleman	Haywood	Robinson	Williams, Anthony H.
Collett	Kane	Rothman	Williams, Lindsey
Comitta	Kearney	Santarsiero	Yaw
Costa			

NAY-2

Hutchinson	Mastriano
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A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate return said bill to the House of Representatives with information that the Senate has passed the same with amendments in which concurrence of the House is requested.

BILL OVER IN ORDER

HB 804 -- Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION AND FINAL PASSAGE

HB 1171 (Pr. No. 1236) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of February 11, 1998 (P.L.58, No.15), known as the Combustible and Flammable Liquids Act, further providing for regulations.

Considered the third time and agreed to,

On the question, Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

YEA-47

Table with 4 columns of names: Argall, Aument, Baker, Bartolotta, Brewster, Brooks, Brown, Cappelletti, Coleman, Collett, Comitta, Costa, Culver, Dillon, DiSanto, Dush, Farry, Flynn, Fontana, Gebhard, Haywood, Hutchinson, Kane, Kearney, Langerholc, Laughlin, Martin, Mastriano, Miller, Pennycuick, Phillips-Hill, Pittman, Regan, Robinson, Rothman, Santarsiero, Saval, Schwank, Stefano, Street, Tartaglione, Vogel, Ward, Judy, Ward, Kim, Williams, Anthony H., Williams, Lindsey, Yaw

NAY-0

A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate return said bill to the House of Representatives with information that the Senate has passed the same without amendments.

SECOND CONSIDERATION CALENDAR

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

SB 22 and SB 210 -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

BILL OVER IN ORDER AND LAID ON THE TABLE

SB 286 (Pr. No. 260) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of June 22, 1937 (P.L.1987, No.394), known as The Clean Streams Law, in other pollutions and potential pollution, providing for notice of discharge endangering public health or environment.

Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

Pursuant to Senate Rule 9, the bill was laid on the table.

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

SB 340, SB 365, SB 375 and SB 399 -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION AND REREFERRED

SB 473 (Pr. No. 509) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 74 (Transportation) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in turnpike, providing for State intercept for unpaid tolls.

Considered the second time and agreed to, Ordered, To be printed on the Calendar for third consideration.

Upon motion of Senator PITTMAN, and agreed to by voice vote, the bill just considered was rereferred to the Committee on Appropriations.

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

SB 597, HB 689, SB 723, SB 739 and SB 745 -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

BILLS ON SECOND CONSIDERATION AND REREFERRED

SB 799 (Pr. No. 1102) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in supplemental funding for municipal highway maintenance, further providing for supplemental funding for municipal highway maintenance.

Considered the second time and agreed to, Ordered, To be printed on the Calendar for third consideration.

Upon motion of Senator PITTMAN, and agreed to by voice vote, the bill just considered was rereferred to the Committee on Appropriations.

SB 824 (Pr. No. 1100) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of December 22, 2005 (P.L.474, No.94), known as the Breach of Personal Information Notification Act, further providing for definitions, for notification of the breach of the security of the system and for notification of consumer reporting agencies; and providing for credit reporting and monitoring.

Considered the second time and agreed to, Ordered, To be printed on the Calendar for third consideration.



Upon motion of Senator PITTMAN, and agreed to by voice vote, the bill just considered was rereferred to the Committee on Appropriations.

#### BILL OVER IN ORDER AND LAID ON THE TABLE

**SB 831 (Pr. No. 921)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act providing for the injection of carbon dioxide into an underground reservoir for the purpose of carbon sequestration, for the ownership of pore space in strata below surface lands and waters of the Commonwealth, for conveyance of the surface ownership of real property; imposing duties on the Department of Environmental Protection; and establishing the Carbon Dioxide Storage Facility Fund.

Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

Pursuant to Senate Rule 9, the bill was laid on the table.

#### BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION AND REREFERRED

**SB 897 (Pr. No. 1095)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in licensing of drivers, further providing for schedule of convictions and points; in rules of the road in general, further providing for meeting or overtaking school bus; and imposing penalties.

Considered the second time and agreed to,

Ordered, To be printed on the Calendar for third consideration.

Upon motion of Senator PITTMAN, and agreed to by voice vote, the bill just considered was rereferred to the Committee on Appropriations.

#### BILL OVER IN ORDER

**SB 934** -- Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

#### BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION AND REREFERRED

**HB 1058 (Pr. No. 1471)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in juvenile matters, further providing for definitions and for notice and hearing.

Considered the second time and agreed to,

Ordered, To be printed on the Calendar for third consideration.

Upon motion of Senator PITTMAN, and agreed to by voice vote, the bill just considered was rereferred to the Committee on Appropriations.

#### RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Mr. President, I request a recess of the Senate for purposes of a meeting of the Committee on Appropriations, to be followed by a meeting of the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations, both to be held in the Rules room immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. For purposes of a meeting of the Committee on Appropriations, followed by a meeting of the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations, to be held off the floor in the Rules room immediately, without objection, the Senate stands in recess.

#### AFTER RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of recess having expired, the Senate will come to order.

#### LEGISLATIVE LEAVE CANCELLED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Senator Dush has returned, and his temporary Capitol leave is cancelled.

#### LEGISLATIVE LEAVE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Mr. President, I request a legislative leave for Senator Mastriano.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Senator Pittman requests a legislative leave for Senator Mastriano. Without objection, the leave will be granted.

#### BILLS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE

Senator MARTIN, from the Committee on Appropriations, reported the following bills:

##### **SB 851 (Pr. No. 960)** (Rereported)

An Act amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in rules of the road in general, further providing for enforcement of failure to stop for school bus with flashing red lights.

##### **HB 27 (Pr. No. 2004)** (Rereported)

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, further providing for special provisions applicable to limited school years; in intermediate units, further providing for school safety and security enhancements; in certification of teachers, further providing for substitute teaching permit for prospective teachers, for locally issued temporary certification for substitute teachers and for permit for classroom monitors; in safe schools, further providing for definitions and for Office for Safe Schools, repealing provisions relating to regulations and to reporting, further providing for policy relating to bullying and for maintenance of records, repealing provisions relating to safe schools advocate in school districts of the first class, to standing, to enforcement and to construction of article and other laws; in school safety and security, further providing for definitions and for School Safety and Security Committee, providing for duties of committee, further providing for School Safety and Security Grant Program, providing for Targeted School Safety Grants for Nonpublic Schools Program, for standardized protocols, for county safe schools' collaborative and for school mental health grants for 2023-2024 school year, further providing for school safety and security coordinator training and providing for reporting and memorandum of understanding, for safe schools advocate in school districts of the first class and for enforcement; in school security, further providing for definitions,

for school police officers, for annual report and for school security guards; and making an editorial change.

**SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS  
SUPPLEMENTAL CALENDAR No. 1**

BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION  
AND FINAL PASSAGE

**HB 27 (Pr. No. 2004)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

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, further providing for special provisions applicable to limited school years; in intermediate units, further providing for school safety and security enhancements; in certification of teachers, further providing for substitute teaching permit for prospective teachers, for locally issued temporary certification for substitute teachers and for permit for classroom monitors; in safe schools, further providing for definitions and for Office for Safe Schools, repealing provisions relating to regulations and to reporting, further providing for policy relating to bullying and for maintenance of records, repealing provisions relating to safe schools advocate in school districts of the first class, to standing, to enforcement and to construction of article and other laws; in school safety and security, further providing for definitions and for School Safety and Security Committee, providing for duties of committee, further providing for School Safety and Security Grant Program, providing for Targeted School Safety Grants for Nonpublic Schools Program, for standardized protocols, for county safe schools' collaborative and for school mental health grants for 2023-2024 school year, further providing for school safety and security coordinator training and providing for reporting and memorandum of understanding, for safe schools advocate in school districts of the first class and for enforcement; in school security, further providing for definitions, for school police officers, for annual report and for school security guards; and making an editorial change.

Considered the third time and agreed to,  
And the amendments made thereto having been printed as required by the Constitution,

On the question,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Montgomery, Senator Haywood.

Senator HAYWOOD. Mr. President, during the Committee on Appropriations, I raised some serious concerns about this legislation, particularly with respect to the funding of the mental health portion. However, this legislation has many aspects beyond those provisions and the provisions with respect to the anti-violence spending and support of PCCD, the legislation with respect to substitute teachers, all very critical parts of this legislation. In fact, the student mental health provisions are a very important piece of this legislation, and it is for those reasons I am very glad to support the underlying legislation. Just like any piece of legislation we pass in this Chamber, there are concerns about what could be better or worse, and I voiced those concerns in the Committee on Appropriations, but I am very pleased to support this legislation on final passage.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Mr. President, I rise to support this legislation, as well, and ask my colleagues to do the same. Mr.

President, what we have before us is a demonstration of what we can do, what we can do when we work together in a bipartisan fashion to demonstrate that divided government is not dysfunctional government. And what we have before us, Mr. President, is legislation that seeks to protect our most precious resource: our children. We have legislation in front of us that will take school safety initiatives, streamline them, make them more efficient, and allow for our students to ultimately have a more safe and secure environment to learn and grow. Mr. President, we also have in here, in a bipartisan fashion, funding for mental health services, an important aspect of our educational institutions that we need to work to address. I am pleased that we have come together on this legislation as we send this important legislation on its voyage to the House of Representatives. I certainly hope our friends and colleagues in the House of Representatives will return to Session quickly, act on this piece of legislation, which has the support of our Governor, and send it to his desk for a prompt signature.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Costa.

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I, too, rise in support of House Bill No. 27 and echo the comments of my colleague, the Majority Leader, Senator Pittman, with respect to our opportunity and ability to work together to fashion language that gets 26 votes in this Chamber and moves across to the other side of the building and enjoys the support of the Governor, which I think is extremely important, obviously. At the end of the day, my colleague Senator Haywood raised a very important point with respect to distribution of some of the mental health resources. I think these are conversations that we continue to need to have going forward. But at the end of the day, I support the comments of the gentleman saying what we can get done in a bipartisan way here. This is an example of that that is going to benefit, particularly as it relates to the mental health portion for our school students, as we know today, desperately need those resources and the distribution into them before not too long. My hope is the House comes back and ratifies what we do here. I will submit the balance of my comments for the record.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the remarks will be spread upon the record.

*(The following prepared remarks were made part of the record at the request of the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator COSTA:)*

Mr. President, House Bill No. 27 is now a cooperative work product that has a number of important aspects. First and foremost, we are distributing \$100 million in appropriated funds for mental health programs, including \$100 million for five categories of funding: \$5 million for the school-based Mental Health Internship Program run by PHEAA; \$5 million for the Department of Education for training of school-based mental health professionals and to establish pathways to certifications for school-based mental health professionals; and the remaining \$90 [million] for school-based mental health programs. One hundred thousand dollars for school entities, \$70,000 for intermediate units, and the remainder being distributed based on school average daily membership.

The bill also clarifies language on the community violence program so that can also be distributed. The bill also streamlines school safety programs by requiring the Department of Education to work in collaboration with the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency for collecting important data and development programs to support students, reduce student delinquency, and promote better learning environments. Lastly, the underlying bill provides for the extension of an important

waiver program that allowed for flexibility for schools to use additional personnel for filling substitute teacher and paraprofessional positions.

And the question recurring,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

YEA-47

Argall	Culver	Langerholc	Saval
Aument	Dillon	Laughlin	Schwank
Baker	DiSanto	Martin	Stefano
Bartolotta	Dush	Mastriano	Street
Brewster	Farry	Miller	Tartaglione
Brooks	Flynn	Pennycuick	Vogel
Brown	Fontana	Phillips-Hill	Ward, Judy
Cappelletti	Gebhard	Pittman	Ward, Kim
Coleman	Haywood	Regan	Williams, Anthony H.
Collett	Hutchinson	Robinson	Williams, Lindsey
Comitta	Kane	Rothman	Yaw
Costa	Kearney	Santarsiero	

NAY-0

A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate return said bill to the House of Representatives with information that the Senate has passed the same with amendments in which concurrence of the House is requested.

**COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE GOVERNOR REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS**

Senator BARTOLOTTA, from the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations, reported communications from His Excellency, the Governor of the Commonwealth, recalling the following nominations, which were read by the Clerk as follows:

MEMBER OF THE PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL ON AGING

September 13, 2023

To the Honorable, the Senate  
of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

In accordance with the power and authority vested in me as Governor of the Commonwealth, I do hereby recall my nomination dated July 26, 2023, of Aaron H. Danks, 1801 North Second Street #2, Harrisburg 17102, Dauphin County, Fifteenth Senatorial District, for appointment as a member of the Pennsylvania Council on Aging, to serve until October 8, 2024, and until the successor is appointed and qualified, vice Samuel Trychin, Erie, resigned.

JOSH SHAPIRO  
Governor

MEMBER OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEARING BOARD

September 5, 2023

To the Honorable, the Senate  
of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

In accordance with the power and authority vested in me as Governor of the Commonwealth, I do hereby recall my nomination dated May 4, 2023, of Rodney R. Akers, Esquire, 4307 Dakota Street, Pittsburgh 15213, Allegheny County, Forty-third Senatorial District, for appointment as a member of the Environmental Hearing Board, to serve for a term of six years, and until the successor is appointed and qualified, vice Thomas Renwand, Esquire, Pittsburgh, resigned.

JOSH SHAPIRO  
Governor

MEMBER OF THE STATE BOARD OF SOCIAL WORKERS, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS AND PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

September 5, 2023

To the Honorable, the Senate  
of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

In accordance with the power and authority vested in me as Governor of the Commonwealth, I do hereby recall my nomination dated May 4, 2023, of Aaron H. Danks (Public Member), 1801 North Second Street #2, Harrisburg 17102, Dauphin County, Fifteenth Senatorial District, for appointment as a member of the State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors, to serve until November 16, 2024, and until the successor is appointed and qualified, but not longer than six months beyond that period, vice Marilyn Painter, Pittsburgh, resigned.

JOSH SHAPIRO  
Governor

MEMBER OF THE STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT BOARD

September 19, 2023

To the Honorable, the Senate  
of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

In accordance with the power and authority vested in me as Governor of the Commonwealth, I do hereby recall my nomination dated April 25, 2023, of Bob Mensch, 3494 Finland Road, Pennsburg 18073, Montgomery County, Twenty-fourth Senatorial District, for appointment as a member of the State Employees' Retirement Board, to serve for a term of four years, and until the successor is appointed and qualified, vice Glenn E. Becker, Exton, whose term expired.

JOSH SHAPIRO  
Governor

MEMBER OF THE STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT BOARD

September 19, 2023

To the Honorable, the Senate  
of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

In accordance with the power and authority vested in me as Governor of the Commonwealth, I do hereby recall my nomination dated April 25, 2023, of Wendell Young IV, 2810 Oak Ridge Circle, Eagleville 19403, Montgomery County, Forty Forth [sic] Senatorial District, for appointment as a member of the State Employees' Retirement Board, to serve for a term of four years, and until the successor is appointed and qualified, vice David R. Fillman, Hummelstown, whose term expired.

JOSH SHAPIRO  
Governor

**NOMINATIONS RETURNED TO THE GOVERNOR**

Senator BARTOLOTTA. Mr. President, I move that the nominations just read by the Clerk be returned to His Excellency, the Governor.

A voice vote having been taken, the question was determined in the affirmative.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The nominations will be returned to the Governor.

**REPORT FROM COMMITTEE ON RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS**

Senator BARTOLOTTA, from the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations, reported the following nominations made by His Excellency, the Governor of the Commonwealth, which were read by the Clerk as follows:

MEMBER OF THE APPALACHIAN STATES  
LOW-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE COMMISSION

July 14, 2023

To the Honorable, the Senate  
of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

In conformity with law, I have the honor hereby to nominate for the advice and consent of the Senate, Dwight Shearer (Alternate), 150 Jackson Street, Ligonier 15658, Westmoreland County, Forty-first Senatorial District, for appointment as a member of the Appalachian States Low-level Radioactive Waste Commission, to serve at the pleasure of the Governor, vice David Allard, Elizabethtown, resigned.

JOSH SHAPIRO  
Governor

MEMBER OF THE CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND BOARD

July 20, 2023

To the Honorable, the Senate  
of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

In conformity with law, I have the honor hereby to nominate for the advice and consent of the Senate, Nacole Hough, 222 Fern Street, Pittsburgh 15224, Allegheny County, Thirty-eighth Senatorial District, for appointment as a member of the Children's Trust Fund Board, to serve for a term of three years, and until the successor is appointed and qualified, vice Shawn Wagner, Gettysburg, whose term expired.

JOSH SHAPIRO  
Governor

MEMBER OF THE CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND BOARD

July 20, 2023

To the Honorable, the Senate  
of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

In conformity with law, I have the honor hereby to nominate for the advice and consent of the Senate, Cathleen Palm, 13 Brad Drive, Bernville 19506, Berks County, Forty-eighth Senatorial District, for appointment as a member of the Children's Trust Fund Board, to serve for

a term of three years, and until the successor is appointed and qualified, vice Maria DiGiorgio McColgan, Philadelphia, whose term expired.

JOSH SHAPIRO  
Governor

**NOMINATIONS LAID ON THE TABLE**

Senator BARTOLOTTA. Mr. President, I move that the nominations just read by the Clerk be laid on the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The nominations will be laid on the table.

**EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Motion was made by Senator BARTOLOTTA,  
That the Senate do now resolve itself into Executive Session for the purpose of considering nominations made by the Governor.

Which was agreed to by voice vote.

**NOMINATIONS TAKEN FROM THE TABLE**

Senator BARTOLOTTA. Mr. President, I call from the table certain nominations and ask for their consideration.

The Clerk read the nominations as follows:

MEMBER OF THE APPALACHIAN STATES  
LOW-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE COMMISSION

July 14, 2023

To the Honorable, the Senate  
of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

In conformity with law, I have the honor hereby to nominate for the advice and consent of the Senate, Dwight Shearer (Alternate), 150 Jackson Street, Ligonier 15658, Westmoreland County, Forty-first Senatorial District, for appointment as a member of the Appalachian States Low-level Radioactive Waste Commission, to serve at the pleasure of the Governor, vice David Allard, Elizabethtown, resigned.

JOSH SHAPIRO  
Governor

MEMBER OF THE CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND BOARD

July 20, 2023

To the Honorable, the Senate  
of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

In conformity with law, I have the honor hereby to nominate for the advice and consent of the Senate, Nacole Hough, 222 Fern Street, Pittsburgh 15224, Allegheny County, Thirty-eighth Senatorial District, for appointment as a member of the Children's Trust Fund Board, to serve for a term of three years, and until the successor is appointed and qualified, vice Shawn Wagner, Gettysburg, whose term expired.

JOSH SHAPIRO  
Governor

MEMBER OF THE CHILDREN'S TRUST FUND BOARD

July 20, 2023

To the Honorable, the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

In conformity with law, I have the honor hereby to nominate for the advice and consent of the Senate, Cathleen Palm, 13 Brad Drive, Bernville 19506, Berks County, Forty-eighth Senatorial District, for appointment as a member of the Children's Trust Fund Board, to serve for a term of three years, and until the successor is appointed and qualified, vice Maria DiGiorgio McColgan, Philadelphia, whose term expired.

JOSH SHAPIRO Governor

On the question, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nominations?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

YEA-47

Table with 4 columns of names: Argall, Aument, Baker, Bartolotta, Brewster, Brooks, Brown, Cappelletti, Coleman, Collett, Comitta, Costa, Culver, Dillon, DiSanto, Dush, Farry, Flynn, Fontana, Gebhard, Haywood, Hutchinson, Kane, Kearney, Langerholc, Laughlin, Martin, Mastriano, Miller, Pennycuick, Phillips-Hill, Pittman, Regan, Robinson, Rothman, Santarsiero, Saval, Schwank, Stefano, Street, Tartaglione, Vogel, Ward, Judy, Ward, Kim, Williams, Anthony H., Williams, Lindsey, Yaw.

NAY-0

A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative. Ordered, That the Governor be informed accordingly.

EXECUTIVE SESSION RISES

Senator BARTOLOTTA. Mr. President, I move that the Executive Session do now rise. The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Senator Wayne Langerholc, Jr.) in the Chair.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS BILLS ON FIRST CONSIDERATION

Senator BROOKS. Mr. President, I move that the Senate do now proceed to consideration of all bills reported from committee for the first time at today's Session.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote. The bills were as follows:

SB 792 and SB 933.

And said bills having been considered for the first time, Ordered, To be printed on the Calendar for second consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY

The following announcements were read by the Secretary of the Senate:

SENATE OF PENNSYLVANIA COMMITTEE MEETINGS

MONDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2023

- 10:00 A.M. COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (public hearing on gaming in the Commonwealth) Hearing Room 1 North Office (LIVE STREAMED)
Off the Floor APPROPRIATIONS (to consider Senate Bills No. 69, 423, 531, 799 and 824) Rules Committee Conference Room

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2023

- 10:00 A.M. CONSUMER PROTECTION AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE (public hearing on the reauthorization of Chapter 14 (Responsible Utility Customer Protection)) Hearing Room 1 North Office (LIVE STREAMED)
10:30 A.M. VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS (to consider House Bill No. 404; and House Resolution No. 197) Room 8E-B East Wing (LIVE STREAMED)
11:00 A.M. HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (public hearing on barriers to addiction treatment; and a voting meeting to consider Senate Bills No. 721 and 941; and House Bill No. 1351) Room 8E-A East Wing (LIVE STREAMED)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2023

- 10:00 A.M. LABOR AND INDUSTRY (to consider Senate Bill No. 577; and House Bill No. 1354) Room 8E-A East Wing (LIVE STREAMED)
10:30 A.M. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (to consider Senate Bills No. 867, 887 and 945) Room 8E-B East Wing (LIVE STREAMED)

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2023

- 9:30 A.M. INTERGOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS (public hearing on data sharing practices between PennDOT, Department of State and third parties) Hearing Room 1 North Office (LIVE STREAMED)

PETITIONS AND REMONSTRANCES

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Lancaster, Senator Aument.

Senator AUMENT. Mr. President, I rise to bring awareness to a medical condition that has personally touched our Senate family. Chiari malformation, a serious neurological condition, is frequently misdiagnosed and misunderstood even by many in the medical community. Improving awareness is an important step in ensuring that those who suffer from this condition receive prompt and adequate treatment. In patients with Chiari malformation, the cerebellum descends out of the skull and crowds the spinal cord, putting pressure on both the brain and spine and restricting the flow of spinal fluid. This compression can cause severe health consequences, including extreme headaches, nerve damage, loss of certain motor functions, dizziness, weakness, vision loss, heart

palpitations, balance issues, cognitive issues, sleep apnea, and depression. Many who suffer from this disease without a proper diagnosis end up bedridden or in a wheelchair due to neurological damage. Chiari malformation affects 1 in 1,000 people and is nearly as prevalent as multiple sclerosis but not nearly as well known. There is a great need for physician education with regard to the treatment and ongoing care for people afflicted with this complex and debilitating disorder. It is imperative to improve education for the safety and betterment in the quality of life for the hundreds of thousands of suffering Chiari patients. This condition is especially close to the Senate. Christina Thompson, wife of our colleague Jason Thompson, communications director for Senator Martin, was diagnosed with Chiari malformation in March of 2013, and recently, Norah Smith, the 5-year-old granddaughter of our Chief Clerk, Donetta D'Innocenzo, was diagnosed with this condition. Please join me in bringing much-needed attention and awareness to this serious condition by declaring September 23, 2023, Chiari Malformation Awareness Month in Pennsylvania.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes, for a second time, the gentleman from Lancaster, Senator Aument.

Senator AUMENT. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on an important issue facing the people of this Commonwealth and the United States. Nearly 32 million Americans cannot read or write, and roughly 1.9 million working-age Pennsylvanians struggle with the most basic of literacy skills. For these individuals, employment is scarce, and tasks such as reading the mail, completing tax forms, or even voting can be nearly impossible. Students who struggle to read in school are four times less likely to graduate. And in Pennsylvania alone, more than 646,000 working-age adults do not have a high school degree. While we work to improve literacy rates for our young students, we must improve the literacy rate of adults as well. Perhaps most heartbreaking is a long-term effect that low literacy in adults has on children, children who never hear a bedtime story or receive help with their homework because their parent cannot read. A vibrant Pennsylvania economy that is well-positioned in the global economy depends on having a skilled population proficient in language, numeracy, health, finance, and digital literacy. Adult and family literacy education can provide the opportunity for upward economic mobility for the 21 percent of Pennsylvania adults who need basic skills education. Without these basic skills, these adults remain trapped in low-wage jobs and struggle to support their families. Please join me in supporting the educators and students enrolled in adult education and family literacy programs throughout the Commonwealth, and our continuing efforts to ensure everyone has the necessary literacy skills to succeed at home, at work, and in society by declaring September 17 through 23 as Adult Education and Family Literacy Week in Pennsylvania.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Philadelphia, Senator Tartaglione.

Senator TARTAGLIONE. Mr. President, I rise because today marks 6,282 days since our Commonwealth's legislature last passed an increase in our minimum wage. After more than 17 years of inaction, I am looking for any allies I can find in the fight to raise the minimum wage. It is not often I come onto the Senate floor and praise Republican Senators in the United States Senate,

but when we start fighting for the same things, I think it is important to highlight their efforts. To quote Senator Mitt Romney, "Despite rising costs of living, the Federal minimum wage has not been increased in more than a decade, which has left millions of Americans struggling to make ends meet." I could not agree more with Senator Romney. Americans are struggling to make ends meet. I welcome any Federal increase and the immediate benefits it would provide to Pennsylvanians due to this body's inaction.

In the Second Senatorial District, I am constantly meeting and talking with constituents struggling to make ends meet—working 2 or 3 jobs; 50, 60, or 70 hours a week, just to keep a roof over their heads and food on the table. It is not right, Mr. President. Just up I-95 in Connecticut, our neighbors to the north will see their minimum wage rise to \$15.69. In 2019, Connecticut—just like I want to do in Pennsylvania with Senate Bill No. 12—put their minimum wage on a path to \$15 an hour and tied its future increases to inflation and the economy. It is possible, Mr. President. We can and must support our low-wage earners and provide relief by raising our minimum wage and ensuring all workers in Pennsylvania earn a dignified, livable wage. We should not have to wait for Congress to act. Right now, Senate Bill No. 12 is sitting in committee, waiting for a vote. I am optimistic, if given a chance, Senate Bill No. 12 will pass out of committee and on the Senate floor. Our workers deserve better, Mr. President. Our workers deserve Senate Bill No. 12.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Robinson.

Senator ROBINSON. Mr. President, I rise today to offer Senate Resolution No. 158, designating the month of September 2023 as Prostate Cancer Awareness Month in Pennsylvania. Prostate cancer is the most common cancer among men in Pennsylvania and the second-leading cause of cancer deaths in American men. One in 9 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in his lifetime, and a man passes away from it every 20 minutes. African American men are 60 percent more likely than Caucasian men to be diagnosed with the cancer and twice as likely to die from it. Men whose fathers or brothers have prostate cancer are twice as likely to develop the disease. These are not just numbers, but the grim reality. Although the medical field has made great strides in cancer research, there is still much work to be done. Education and understanding one's own family health history are vital to preventing prostate cancer. Most men do not realize that they are at risk of developing prostate cancer, which is why I am offering this resolution to raise more awareness.

Thank you, Mr. President.

## RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Mr. President, I move that the Senate do now recess until Monday, October 2, 2023, at 1 p.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time, unless sooner recalled by the President pro tempore.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

The Senate recessed at 12:40 p.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time.