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WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2023

SESSION OF 2023 207TH OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

No. 53

SENATE

WEDNESDAY, November 15, 2023

The Senate met at 10 a.m., Eastern Standard Time.

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

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Imam AWAIS FAROOQ, of Islamic Society of Chester County, West Chester, offered the following prayer:

(Singing Prayer in Arabic)

Let us pray.

In the name of God, the most compassionate and the most merciful. Our sustainer, our guide, ever present, never unaware, infinitely able, Your servants in Your loving care. Guide us to pure convictions, then inspire in us the courage to match those convictions. We pray for peace, not war; love, not hate; benevolence, not greed; unity, not division; and we commit ourselves to not betraying our prayers with actions that contradict them. Let us be for truth, no matter who or for is against it; and justice, no matter who or for it is against; and hope, no matter what obstacles lie ahead. Let us not be deterred by the hatred that has claimed the lives of innocent worshippers across the world, but emboldened by the love that gathered them together to remember You, and gathered us together to remember them. Let us not be overcome by the darkness of evil, nor the slumber of indifference that turns human beings into hashtags and neighbors into enemies. Let us be the light that we seek from You. Guide the deliberations of our Members of Congress to just decisions, and guide our nation to the abode of reconciliation. May we honor one another, glorify You together, and inspire the world to be better. Amen.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair thanks Imam Farooq, who is the guest today of Senator Comitta.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

BILLS INTRODUCED AND REFERRED

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

November 15, 2023

Senators BROWN, HUTCHINSON, DUSH, KEARNEY and COMITTA presented to the Chair **SB 978**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of May 1, 1933 (P.L.103, No.69), known as The Second Class Township Code, in auditors and accountants, further providing for appointment of accountant.

Which was committed to the Committee on LOCAL GOVERNMENT, November 15, 2023.

Senators DUSH, HUTCHINSON, BROWN, KEARNEY and COMITTA presented to the Chair **SB 982**, 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 letting contracts.

Which was committed to the Committee on LOCAL GOVERNMENT, November 15, 2023.

Senators ROBINSON, KANE, HAYWOOD, DILLON, TARTAGLIONE, CULVER, SANTARSIERO, COMITTA, BOSCOLA, KEARNEY, COSTA, SCHWANK, BREWSTER, PENNYCUICK, BAKER, BARTOLOTTA and LANGERHOLC presented to the Chair **SB 986**, entitled:

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.

Which was committed to the Committee on EDUCATION, November 15, 2023.

RESOLUTIONS INTRODUCED AND REFERRED

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following Senate Resolutions numbered, entitled, and referred as follows, which were read by the Clerk:

November 15, 2023

Senators CAPPELLETTI, COMITTA, CULVER, FONTANA, COSTA, SCHWANK and DUSH presented to the Chair **SR 206**, entitled:

A Resolution recognizing the week of November 11 through 18, 2023, as "Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week" in Pennsylvania.

Which was committed to the Committee on RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, November 15, 2023.

Senators REGAN, PHILLIPS-HILL, MARTIN, HAYWOOD, BROWN, HUGHES, CULVER and COSTA presented to the Chair **SR 207**, entitled:

A Resolution designating the week of November 11 through 18, 2023, as "Kindness Week" in Pennsylvania.

Which was committed to the Committee on RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, November 15, 2023.

Senators KANE, TARTAGLIONE, FONTANA, CAPPELLETTI, BROWN, MARTIN, HAYWOOD, DILLON, HUGHES, BREWSTER, SANTARSIERO, CULVER, COSTA and DUSH presented to the Chair **SR 209**, entitled:

A Resolution designating the month of November 2023 as "Good Samaritan Law Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

Which was committed to the Committee on RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, November 15, 2023.

HOUSE MESSAGE

HOUSE BILL FOR CONCURRENCE

The Clerk of the House of Representatives presented to the Senate the following bill for concurrence, which was referred to the committee indicated:

November 15, 2023

HB 1474 -- Committee on Environmental Resources and Energy.

APPOINTMENTS BY THE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair wishes to announce the President pro tempore has made the following appointments:

Senator Carolyn T. Comitta as a member of the Aggregate Advisory Board.

Senator Jay Costa as a member of the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee with the understanding that Senator Tartaglione will serve as your stead.

Senator Arthur L. Haywood III as a member of the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee.

Ms. Rachel Athena Karp as a member of the Board of Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania.

Mr. Robert S. Taylor as a member of the Board of Trustees of Temple University.

GUESTS OF SENATOR KRISTIN PHILLIPS-HILL PRESENTED TO THE SENATE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from York, Senator Phillips-Hill.

Senator PHILLIPS-HILL. Mr. President, I rise to introduce two amazing sisters who have made York County so very proud at the 2023 Miss Agriculture USA Pageant this past June. Please welcome Macie and BrookeAnna Rogers from York Township. These sisters live and breathe agriculture. As the fifth generation to live on their family's commercial sheep farm, Macie and BrookeAnna truly understand the importance and value of farming. Participating in junior livestock sales and serving as

members of several 4-H clubs, these sisters continue to support their agricultural community by using their platform to celebrate and promote farming and agriculture. I have read all of their livestock letters over the years, and it is inspiring to see the amount of hard work and dedication they put into their show animals. They are role models and advocates for agriculture all across our Commonwealth.

It is so very fitting that Macie and BrookeAnna won national titles. Their mom, Tabitha, was the 2022 National Elite Ms. Agriculture USA, and as they say, like mother, like daughters. Macie was crowned the 2023 National Junior Miss Agriculture USA and BrookeAnna was crowned the 2023 National Petite Miss Agriculture USA. They would not be where they are today if it was not for the support of their family. Seated on the floor with them is their mom, Tabitha; their dad, Bobby; and their brother, Connor. Would my colleagues please join me in giving Macie and BrookeAnna a warm Senate welcome.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Would the guests of Senator Phillips-Hill please rise to be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

GUESTS OF SENATOR WAYNE LANGERHOLC PRESENTED TO THE SENATE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Cambria, Senator Langerholc.

Senator LANGERHOLC. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce an impressive group of young students joining us today on the floor of the Senate. Earlier this year, these students competed at the Technology Student Association National Conference held in Louisville, Kentucky. Students from Cambria Heights Middle School Technology Student Association Team placed first in the Inventions and Innovations event. Team members on the floor include Luke Holtz, Logan Ivory, and Brock Wharton; as well as their advisors, Rachel Manack and Michele Schirf.

Students from Northern Cambria Middle School Technology Student Team placed first in the Junior Solar Sprint event. Team members on the floor include Ava Kirsch, Maya Friedman, Emmy McCachren; and their advisors, Matthew and Sarah Kline. Also joining us in the gallery are friends and family of this award-winning team--actually, they are joining us here on the floor--including Brandt Huzel, Christine Friedman, Bobbi Bailey, and Jim McCachren.

Also, students from the Westmont Hilltop Junior-Senior High School Technology Student Association Team placed first in the Virtual Reality Visualization event. Team members on the floor include Matthew Kindja, Gayath Karunaratne, Micah Jones, Chanith Jayasooriya; and advisors, Garrett and Brenda Sidor. Also joining us are friends and family of this team, including Stacy and Lewis Kindja, Dana Jones, Chandana Jayasooriya, and Malika and Maddu Karunaratne.

I want to congratulate all of these dedicated students for their personal and academic success and wish them well in future events. As we will be here in June--hopefully working on completing a budget--these students are aiming to compete at the 2024 National TSA Conference in Orlando, Florida. These students have made their school, friends, family, advisors, and this Senator very proud. Again, Mr. President, I wish to introduce the national champion TSA teams from Cambria Heights, Northern

Cambria, and Westmont Hilltop as my guests for the day and ask for our traditional warm Senate welcome.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Would the guests of Senator Langerholc please rise to be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

GUESTS OF SENATOR CAROLYN T. COMITTA PRESENTED TO THE SENATE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Chester, Senator Comitta.

Senator COMITTA. Mr. President, I rise today to welcome my friend and our guest Chaplain, Awais Farooq, Imam at the Islamic Society of Chester County; and I welcome his mother, Shakila Farooq; and his sister, Aamina Farooq, who is a fellow Golden Ram at West Chester University. The 19th Senatorial District, which I am proud to represent, is home to a strong and welcoming interfaith community based on the values of inclusion, compassion, civility, and respect for all people. One of the reasons is that we have religious leaders like Imam Farooq, who are committed to fostering understanding and unity. Imam Farooq serves as a rotational speaker at the mosque. In his professional career, he is a senior vice president of strategy and transformation at Crawford & Company, where he uses data and technology to help insurance companies improve employee and robot productivity and utilization.

Imam Farooq also serves as a sought-after mentor for young people and teens who are approaching adulthood. Imam Farooq, thank you so much for your beautiful prayer this morning and for opening this Senate Session. Many thanks for your leadership and service to our community. And again, I want to emphasize how proud I am that Chester County is a place where we can all talk, come together, work together, and live together in peace, in safety, and in prosperity. Please join me in welcoming Imam Awais Farooq to the Pennsylvania Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Would the guests of Senator Comitta please rise to be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes, for a second time, the gentlewoman from Chester, Senator Comitta.

Senator COMITTA. Mr. President, I rise today to welcome my constituents, Donna and Matt Imbierowicz of Highland Township, Chester County, in the 19th Senatorial District. Following the tragic loss of their beautiful daughter, Carly, to carbon monoxide poisoning in 2014, Donna and Matt have turned their grief into action. For nearly a decade, they have worked to protect our communities from the dangers of carbon monoxide through the Carly Imbierowicz Foundation. The foundation does the following important work: it shares information and raises awareness of the dangers of carbon monoxide, especially among young people and new drivers; donating more than 1,000 carbon monoxide detectors to the Cochranville Fire Company to be distributed to neighbors in need. This foundation is doing very, very important work to educate and save lives.

As we approach winter and the temperatures dip, many of us are again turning on our heaters, stoves, or fireplaces. That is why November is Carbon Monoxide Awareness Month. Please, educate yourselves on the dangers of this colorless, odorless, deadly gas. You can do the following to help protect yourself and your families: have heaters and gas-burning appliances regularly

inspected to make sure that they are safe; you can install carbon monoxide detectors on each floor of a home and near any gas-burning appliance; you can make sure that your vehicle's exhaust pipe is free of snow, mud, leaves, or debris; and you can know the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning, which are nausea, headaches, confusion, and drowsiness. Did you know that each year, 95,000 people experience carbon monoxide poisoning in the United States? Carbon monoxide poisoning accounts for 50,000 ER visits and 1,200 tragic deaths each year. Children can be especially vulnerable to carbon monoxide poisoning. If you feel that you are experiencing carbon monoxide poisoning, be sure to get to fresh air immediately.

I also want to note that I am introducing a resolution designating November as Carbon Monoxide Awareness Month in Pennsylvania. The Capitol will be lit up yellow from November 20 to 26 for Carbon Monoxide Awareness Month. Lastly, thank you, Donna and Matt, for having the courage to share your family's story and to raise awareness and to save lives. Thank you for your work and for carrying on Carly's name in this all-important endeavor. Please join me in welcoming Donna and Matt Imbierowicz to the Pennsylvania Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Would the guests of Senator Comitta please rise to be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE PRESIDING OFFICER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. For the information of the Members, we are going to return momentarily to the introduction of guests after first taking care of some business.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVES

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

Senator PITTMAN. Mr. President, I request temporary Capitol leaves for Senator Robinson, Senator Gebhard, Senator Regan, and Senator Kim Ward, and legislative leaves for Senator Baker, Senator Vogel, Senator DiSanto, and Senator Coleman.

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

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, no leaves.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Senator Pittman requests temporary Capitol leaves for Senator Robinson, Senator Gebhard, Senator Regan, and Senator Kim Ward, and legislative leaves for Senator Baker, Senator Vogel, Senator DiSanto, and Senator Coleman. Without objection, the leaves will be granted.

JOURNALS APPROVED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Journals of the Sessions of September 19, 2023, and September 20, 2023, are now in print.

The Clerk proceeded to read the Journals of the Sessions of September 19, 2023, and September 20, 2023.

Senator PITTMAN. Mr. President, I move that further reading of the Journals be dispensed with and that the Journals be approved.

On the question,

Will the Senate agree to the motion?

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

YEA-50

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

NAY-0

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Journals are approved.

CALENDAR

THIRD CONSIDERATION CALENDAR

HB 1556 CALLED UP OUT OF ORDER

HB 1556 (Pr. No. 1817) -- Without objection, the bill was called up out of order, from page 4 of the Third Consideration Calendar, by Senator PITTMAN, as a Special Order of Business.

BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION AND FINAL PASSAGE

HB 1556 (Pr. No. 1817) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of February 14, 2008 (P.L.6, No.3), known as the Right-to-Know Law, in State-related institutions, further providing for reporting, for contents of report and for copies and posting and providing for contracts.

Considered the third time and agreed to,

On the question,
Shall the bill pass finally?

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 Pennycuick.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Senator Pittman requests a legislative leave for Senator Pennycuick. 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-50

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

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.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVE CANCELLED

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will be at ease.
[The Senate was at ease.]

LEGISLATIVE LEAVE CANCELLED

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

GUESTS OF SENATOR FRANK FARRY PRESENTED TO THE SENATE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Bucks, Senator Farry.

Senator FARRY. Mr. President, I am pleased to introduce Amanda Grace Krier, who is a Levittown native and a 2016 graduate of Neshaminy High School. She received her associate degree in behavioral health in 2020 from Philadelphia Community College, and she is currently a student at Millersville University studying social work. Amanda is employed by Youth MOVE National as a youth program specialist and serves as a national content expert in supporting the implementation of youth peer support services in both Maine and Alabama. In her free time, she actually serves the Commonwealth as Miss Red Rose City 2023 and actually placed in the top 10 in this year's Miss Pennsylvania competition. Amanda's goal is to help empower the next generation of youth and help them to learn how to advocate for themselves. She is joined today by her parents, Theresa and Curtis, and we thank them for joining us here today, and can we give them a warm Senate welcome.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Would the guests of Senator Farry please rise to be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

GUESTS OF SENATOR MARIA COLLETT PRESENTED TO THE SENATE

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

Senator COLLETT. Mr. President, I rise today to welcome very special guests to the Senate, a delegation of Ukrainian American community leaders. These dedicated leaders reached out to my office to ensure that we were aware of the 90th anniversary of the Ukrainian genocide, Holodomor, of 1932 to 1933. They asked me, along with Senator Haywood and Senator Pennycuik, to introduce a resolution designating the month of November 2023 as Ukrainian Holodomor-Genocide Remembrance Month. Through this resolution, we highlight the cruelties that occurred 90 years ago when Soviet leader Joseph Stalin and his totalitarian regime committed an act of genocide through the implementation of an engineered famine. He confiscated food supplies from the Ukrainian people, resulting in the deaths of 7 to 10 million innocent men, women, and children. We must acknowledge and learn from these heinous acts to prevent future atrocities. That is why I am grateful for the opportunity to partner with these leaders. It is because of their committed advocacy that we can enhance awareness about this tragic crime against humanity and highlight this important milestone. This is truly an admirable group, and I applaud them for their efforts. Mr. President, I would really like for us to extend our usual warm Senate welcome to these guests.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Would the guests of Senator Collett please rise to be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

GUESTS OF SENATOR DAVID G. ARGALL PRESENTED TO THE SENATE

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

Senator ARGALL. Mr. President, Senator Lynda Schlegel Culver and I have four very special guests in the gallery this morning. Mike and Pat O'Connor are visiting us from Frackville in Schuylkill County, leaders in the legal, new housing, and church community. And the two of them have probably known me longer than they would be willing to admit. Also, from Northumberland County in Senator Culver's District, Jeff and George Specht, they are the leaders of the Lehigh Anthracite company in my hometown of Tamaqua. If any of you ever want to go to see where the Industrial Revolution began, I would suggest you go to see where they work. They are all here to observe our work on a very interesting day, and I thank them for joining us.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Would the guests of Senator Argall please rise and be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

CONSIDERATION OF CALENDAR RESUMED THIRD CONSIDERATION CALENDAR RESUMED

NONPREFERRED APPROPRIATION BILL OVER IN ORDER TEMPORARILY

HB 1461 -- Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order temporarily at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

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

BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION AND FINAL PASSAGE

HB 301 (Pr. No. 2311) -- 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 duties and powers of board of school directors, further providing for additional schools and departments; in grounds and buildings, further providing for limitation on new applications for Department of Education approval of public school building projects; in school directors' associations and county boards of school directors, further providing for powers and duties; in intermediate units, further providing for visual services and for school safety and security enhancements; in certification of teachers, further providing for substitute teaching permit for prospective teachers and for locally issued temporary certification for substitute teachers, repealing provisions relating to permit for classroom monitors and providing for permit for classroom monitors; providing for the Educator Pipeline Support Grant Program; in pupils and attendance, further providing for compulsory education of physical defectives, for school lunch and breakfast reimbursement, for dependent children, for actual cost of tuition and maintenance of certain exceptional children in the four chartered schools for education of the deaf and the blind, for payment of cost of tuition and maintenance of certain exceptional children, for transfer of funds for transferal programs and for children under six with defective hearing and parent or guardian advised of schools, etc.; 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 and 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 and School Entities 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; in character education program, further providing for character education program; in community colleges, further providing for financial program and reimbursement of payments; in educational tax credits, further providing for definitions, for qualification and application by organizations and for limitations; in school districts of the first class, further providing for qualifications of principals and teachers; in funding for public libraries, providing for State aid for fiscal year 2023-2024; in reimbursements by Commonwealth and between school districts, further providing for definitions and for payments on account of pupils enrolled in career and technical curriculums, for payments on account of courses for exceptional children, for payments on intermediate units, for assistance to school districts declared to be in financial recovery status or identified for financial watch status, for payments, for payments on account of pupil transportation, for Ready-to-Learn Block Grant and for payment of required contribution for public school employees' Social Security; in construction and renovation of buildings by school entities, further providing for applicability; providing for School Environmental Repairs Program; 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 PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Northampton, Senator Boscola.

Senator BOSCOLA. Madam President, I want to get this on the record. I am going to support this bill, but House Bill No. 301, this proposed omnibus, Education Code bill does nothing, nothing to help address the most significant issue facing my constituency in the Lehigh Valley: our inequitable, unfair, and unconstitutional education funding system. For decades, Harrisburg has shortchanged homeowners. My largest school district receives \$63 million less than what the State's basic ed formula requires. In total, the school districts I represent receive approximately \$74.5 million less than they should be through the fair funding formula. So, what happens is, my school boards turn to property tax homeowners time, and time, and time, and time again, asking them to dig deeper into their pockets to pay because Harrisburg fails to act. Madam President, I have introduced numerous bills, held numerous hearings, and have spoken on this floor about the unfairness of our current funding system and how it impacts homeowners across the Commonwealth, and nothing happens. Even now, even now, a court decision declaring our funding system unconstitutional cannot compel this body to act, and that is a shame. Sadly, the last two budgets have made this situation even worse for homeowners. In June 2022, the General Assembly voted to remove \$130 million of table game revenue from property tax relief fund and placed it in the general fund. Money that was promised for our property taxes to reduce them, give them some relief, and you stole it. This body stole their money. You promised it, and you stole it.

Madam President, this proposal fails to include the one program, the one program, Level Up, that actually helps the most underfunded school districts catch up, just catch up a little bit, from several decades of being shortchanged in Harrisburg. So, this year, the Bethlehem Area School District will have \$1.6 million--a hole in their budget--because Level Up was not funded. And now the property tax homeowners in the Lehigh Valley will have to make up that difference because this body, again, failed. It is no wonder--and I have said this time and time again--it is no wonder so many Pennsylvanians have lost faith in State government.

So, I will vote in favor of this bill today because it does address critical school safety, substitute teacher flexibility, and important community college funding. However, I want to get this on a record, and it is going to be continuous because this body does not know how to act. You cannot do anything big in this Chamber anymore. We need to start seriously addressing the things that I have talked about. It is frustrating. Not only do we not--we kick the can down the road, but what is worse is we are missing the can completely. Let us get this straight. I believe in this body, to some extent, we can get this done, but it is going to mean bipartisan support and a legislature that is willing to compromise and work together. I do believe in that, even though some people in this body do not, because they are purists.

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

Senator COSTA. Madam President, I rise to indicate my support for this measure as we go forward here in this budget

process. I think it is important--while I take notice of the comments made by my colleague, and I will speak to them as well, but I think it is important that we recognize some of the measures that are included in this omnibus School Code measure. I think one of the places that we need to start to address some of the challenges that school districts are facing relate to our education pipeline shortage that we have here in Pennsylvania, where specifically, as we talk about something that our Caucus has raised over the course of the past year or so, student-teacher stipend. When we ask our student teachers to be able to be part of an educational program and to be able to become teachers, we need to provide support along those lines and incentivize them to be able to do that. This legislation provides for a student-teacher stipend.

In addition to that, we are addressing an issue with regard to our substitute teachers here in Pennsylvania. When we have individuals who have retired, educators who have retired, who want to find the need to be able to give back to their community by coming back and working in school districts to be able to alleviate that shortfall, this legislation provides a mechanism for them to be able to do that without being penalized as it relates to their pension. One of the other issues that is in this measure relates to what we have already voted on in the past. We have all talked about the mental health crisis here in Pennsylvania, particularly as it relates to our students in our schools, given the isolation that took place with regard to the COVID-19 experience that we all had to deal with. One hundred million dollars being transferred to PCCD for our school districts across Pennsylvania. And it is important to note that every single school district will be receiving an allocation, and every single school district will participate in a subsequent formula process, as well as other school entities who will be receiving and sharing in those resources.

The other part of that as it relates to what we have referred to on our side of the aisle is our toxic schools. Folks, we have school buildings across this Commonwealth that we should not be having our students be educated in, and we need to find ways to be able to remediate those things that are taking place, whether they be mold, whether they be asbestos, whatever the case might be, we need to take steps to be able to remediate that. This legislation provides for \$75 million to be able to do that as well.

But also, as we talk about our school districts, there are two provisions here that I think are extremely important. Certainly, our necessary funding formulas, the distribution formulas that not only go to our school districts but also go to our libraries. They also go to our IU's; they go to our community colleges. I have had the privilege of serving as a treasurer in my community college in Allegheny County, and I can tell you, they are very nervous about their ability to be able to make ends meet as we go forward. And I think other Members who have opportunity to be able to talk to their community colleges are concerned about that as well.

In addition to that, we have what is referred to as what I will call the "social security fix." Right now, we have already driven out through this process \$567 million to our school districts. That would be great if they got all \$567 million, but the fact of the matter is they also have a \$500 million or so obligation, or \$550 million obligation, as it relates to our social security. But for this language, they will not be able to use that \$567 million, but for the social security obligation. This relieves them of that opportunity to be able to do that so that the full implementation of what was passed here, and the Governor signed, \$567 million for basic

ed will be able to make its way to our school districts. Those are some of the things that are important that we think need to be done in this measure.

Madam President, there is also language in here addressing the issue of the Educational [Improvement] Tax Credit, for EITC as we know for our schools. And while we recognize that that number continues to grow over the course of the years, in this measure there are provisions that provide for accountability with respect to how those resources are going out, who is receiving them, and what school districts are receiving them, as well as making certain that we reduce the percentage of these administrative fees from 20 percent to 10 percent, which I think is a significant gain as well. That means more resources are going to be going out in the program and also in the manner in which the 140 or so--130, excuse me--in the EITC program is distributed. The ability to be able to put a significant portion, \$48 million, into the disadvantaged schools across Pennsylvania, I think, is a very valuable piece of information as well.

With regard to what is missing, I concur with the gentlelady from Bethlehem that we would like to be able to see the Level Up be part of this conversation. But at the end of the day, we have an obligation to move things forward, and that is what this legislation does in a number of ways, and that is why I am honored to be able to stand here. The conversation about Level Up is something that we have to put off to maybe into December or into the future, but at the end of the day, with the School Funding Formula Commission [Basic Education Funding Commission] working to be able to give us a fair funding formula, my hope is that when we get to that--and maybe it is sometime next year--that that will alleviate the need to be able to continue to rely upon the Level Up program as we go forward. But the fact of the matter is, we have a comprehensive approach here to addressing many of the issues that are important to our schools and that is what this is about, and we will fight another day with regard to remaining issues, whether they be property tax or other type of educational conversations. So, I am going to be voting "yes" on this measure, and I thank you for the opportunity to speak on it, Madam President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Madam President, I rise with a positive and optimistic view of what we have before us this morning. And I rise to choose to focus on what we can do in this institution and what we must do in this institution in a bipartisan way. We can lament things that do not get fixed the way we would like them, although I would point out that we have 500 school districts in this Commonwealth, and I would venture to guess that each school district has their own definition of fair. We have 500 definitions of fair in this Commonwealth, and we will allow fairness to be in the eye of the beholder. But let us not lose sight of what this institution is doing today in a bipartisan way to support educational opportunities in this Commonwealth. And we can talk about individualized school districts, and we can talk about public education and private education and this kind of education and that kind of education, and we can talk about things that are unfair and missed opportunities. But let us talk about the opportunities that we are doing today.

I am proud of the work that this institution has put into this piece of legislation. I am proud of the work that we have accomplished on a bipartisan basis to move education in this

Commonwealth forward. Who is not for school safety? Who is not for school safety? Who is not for ensuring better facilities? Who is not for ensuring parents are empowered to give their children educational opportunities across this Commonwealth? We have a statewide obligation to support our students, and that is what we are doing here today, we are doing it in a bipartisan fashion. Make no mistake, this divided government is difficult. These are difficult times in this building. We all come from different corners and areas of this Commonwealth, from Democrat communities and Republican communities, no matter what corner we come from. But today is a moment that this institution, in this Senate, come together to move the ball forward. Unless those who have observed the debate this morning, or misunderstood in what we are achieving here, I want to make it very clear. And I want to thank the gentleman from Allegheny County for coming together, for meeting us across the aisle, for reconciling the differences of what we cannot do and focusing on what we can do. And I hope and I pray that our friends on the other side of the building pick up this mantle that we have demonstrated here in this body to bring people together, to advance issues, to attempt to solve real problems for real people in this Commonwealth. One step at a time, we have done it. One step at a time, we will continue to do it. But I am grateful, and I am thankful for what we are advancing here this morning. It is a good piece of legislation, and it deserves our enthusiastic and proud support.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Hughes.

Senator HUGHES. Madam President, I will try not to be as impassioned as my good friend and colleague is, but I also rise in support of this matter and to advance this ball in this process. And hopefully, sooner rather than later, we can get this all the way home. There are a number of provisions that I think are worthy of being supported. We talked about the mental health for children, which is \$100 million, which in our Basic Education Funding Commission hearings, Madam President, that was a continual refrain in every part of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that we have traveled to: the mental health and securing the mental health for our children. The school infrastructure conversation has been something that I have, and many of us on both sides of the aisle have been championing for a number of years now. And to finally get a State commitment of significant dollars in that space to begin the process of dealing with school infrastructure and the toxic school issues that we have been confronting all across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, I think is worthy of support as well.

I would like to focus on an imperative that, I think, Madam President, really, we cannot wait any longer on, and that is the alarming crisis that exists in our teacher infrastructure. The fact that there are--we are running out of individuals to educate our children. No matter what school you may be in--whether it be an archdiocese school, whether it be a traditional public school, whether it be a charter school--no matter what school that we are in, we are literally running out of teachers. Ten years ago, Madam President, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania certified 22,000 individuals with teacher's certificates. Last year, that number had dropped to 6,000. We are literally running out of individuals to stand in front of our classrooms and provide the appropriate instruction to our children. We have entered into that process of

trying to deal with that runway of creating new teachers--especially a new, diverse teacher workforce--and this provision, a provision in this bill, will allow for us to continue down that process--the student-teacher stipend provision--which has bipartisan support on both sides of the aisle--significant bipartisan support on both sides of the aisle--where we have already budgeted \$10 million to deal with student-teacher stipends.

As you know, our student teachers, Madam President, work for about 12 weeks. They get no compensation when they go through that process. This will allow for compensation for them in rural districts, in urban districts, and will help accelerate, accelerate the number of individuals who can become teachers to teach our children. We are running out of teachers. It is a national crisis. This is a way we can help deal with this. And I think this matter in that simple space--this, along with the substitute teacher issue which allows retired teachers to come back into the classroom--this allows us to move, in a very significant way, this issue of creating more teachers in our classroom. No matter what school they are in, we need them. This provision allows for that to occur. Madam President, I think this matter is worthy of an affirmative vote. Thank you.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVE CANCELLED

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senator Vogel has returned, and his legislative leave is cancelled.

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	Costa	Kane	Rothman
Aument	Culver	Langerholc	Santarsiero
Baker	Dillon	Laughlin	Schwank
Bartolotta	DiSanto	Martin	Stefano
Boscola	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	Hughes	Robinson	Yaw
Comitta			

NAY-5

Hutchinson	Muth	Saval	Williams, Lindsey
Kearney			

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 LAID ON THE TABLE

SB 346 (Pr. No. 461) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

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

Upon motion of Senator PITTMAN, and agreed to by voice vote, the bill was laid on the table.

SB 346 TAKEN FROM THE TABLE

Senator PITTMAN. Madam President, I move that Senate Bill No. 346, Printer's No. 461, be taken from the table and placed on the Calendar.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The bill will be placed on the Calendar.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVE CANCELLED

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

CONSIDERATION OF CALENDAR RESUMED

THIRD CONSIDERATION CALENDAR RESUMED

BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION AND FINAL PASSAGE

SB 596 (Pr. No. 1232) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in theft and related offenses, further providing for the offense of organized retail theft; and establishing the Office of Deputy Attorney General for Organized Retail Crime Theft.

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 PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Schuylkill, Senator Argall.

Senator ARGALL. Madam President, nine States have already passed laws to provide more tools to prosecutors to fight organized retail crime. We are not talking about simple shoplifting. We are talking about rampant rioting and looting. The Food Merchants Association, in their support for this legislation, have stated the following: "Our goal is not to target vulnerable individuals being leveraged or manipulated into stealing, let alone those who are shoplifting to feed themselves or their families. Rather, we want the focus to be on the criminals higher up." Those ordering expiration dates to be scratched out on infant formula and other perishable goods; repackaging stolen medication and allowing it to be stored in unsafe conditions, selling it to others, and pocketing the bulk of the proceeds. The solutions being proposed

have been embraced in red States and blue States and enjoy the support of law enforcement, businesses, and trade groups. I want to thank the Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office for all of their work in helping to draft this legislation. And a special thanks to both chairs of the Committee on Judiciary, both Senator Baker and Senator Santarsiero, for helping to craft this bill into an effective and bipartisan piece of legislation that we all hope will receive the Governor's approval after the House reviews it in the near future, we hope.

Thank you, Madam President.

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-46

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

NAY-4

Cappelletti	Collett	Saval	Williams, Lindsey
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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 597, SB 831, SB 867, SB 882 and SB 887 -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION AND FINAL PASSAGE

SB 945 (Pr. No. 1111) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 16 (Counties) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, consolidating the act of August 9, 1955 (P.L.323, No.130), known as The County Code; and making repeals.

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-50

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

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 present said bill to the House of Representatives for concurrence.

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

HB 1058, HB 1096 and HB 1304 -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

BILL REREFERRED

HB 1661 (Pr. No. 2091) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of April 14, 1972 (P.L.233, No.64), known as The Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act, further providing for definitions and for prohibited acts and penalties; and providing for secure storage of xylazine.

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

SECOND CONSIDERATION CALENDAR

BILL OVER IN ORDER

SB 55 -- Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

BILLS ON SECOND CONSIDERATION AND REREFERRED

SB 194 (Pr. No. 79) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in disabled veterans' real estate tax exemption, further providing for duty of commission.

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 228 (Pr. No. 197) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act providing for museum unclaimed loaned property.

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 259, SB 265, SB 365, SB 375 and SB 501 -- 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 563 (Pr. No. 1145) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in computer offenses, providing for the offense of ransomware; and imposing duties on the Office of Administration.

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 OVER IN ORDER

SB 577 -- Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION AND REREFERRED

SB 634 (Pr. No. 673) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of February 14, 2008 (P.L.6, No.3), known as the Right-to-Know Law, in procedure, further providing for exceptions for public records.

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 ON SECOND CONSIDERATION

SB 686 (Pr. No. 754) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act authorizing the Department of General Services, with the approval of the Department of Agriculture and the Governor, to grant and convey to Joshua R. Snyder a certain tract of land located in Windsor Township, Berks County.

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

BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION AND REREFERRED

HB 689 (Pr. No. 2310) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in criminal history record information, further providing for definitions, for general regulations, for expungement, for petition for limited access, for clean slate limited access, for exceptions, for effects of expunged records and records subject to limited access and for employer immunity from liability.

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 ON SECOND CONSIDERATION

SB 847 (Pr. No. 999) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act authorizing the release of Project 70 restrictions on certain land owned by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission in Overfield Township, Wyoming County.

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

BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION, AMENDED

SB 907 (Pr. No. 1182) -- The Senate proceeded to the 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 school safety and security, providing for school security personnel.

On the question,
Will the Senate agree to the bill on second consideration?

REGAN AMENDMENT A2989 ADOPTED

Senator REGAN offered the following amendment No. A2989:

Amend Bill, page 1, line 5, by inserting after "thereto,"":
in school safety and security, further providing for school safety and security coordinator; and,

Amend Bill, page 1, line 5, by inserting after "security,"":
further providing for duties of commission and

Amend Bill, page 1, lines 9 through 11, by striking out all of said lines and inserting:

Section 1. Sections 1309-B(c) and 1315-C of the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, are amended by adding paragraphs to read:

Section 1309-B. School safety and security coordinator.

* * *

(c) Specific duties.--The school safety and security coordinator shall:

(5.1) No later than June 30, 2024, and each June 30 thereafter, make a report to the school entity's board of directors on the school entity's current school security personnel. The following apply:

(i) Each report shall be presented to the school entity's board of directors at an executive session of the school entity's board of directors.

(ii) Each report shall be submitted to the committee and shall not be subject to the act of February 14, 2008 (P.L.6, No.3), known as the Right-to-Know Law.

(iii) Each report shall include:

(A) The number of school security personnel, as defined in section 1301-C, broken out by type.

(B) The number of each school police officer, each school resource officer and each school security guard that is armed.

(C) The school building at which each school security personnel is assigned.

(D) The training, including type of training and dates completed, by each school security personnel.

(E) A listing of other individuals utilized for school-safety-related duties.

Section 1315-C. Duties of commission.

The commission shall have the following duties under this article:

(5) Establish criteria for granting school entities waivers for the requirements in section 1316-C(a). The criteria shall include, at a minimum, the following:

(i) Documentation that the school entity does not have a municipal police department or law enforcement agency that is able to provide a school resource officer.

(ii) Documentation that the school entity has been unable to hire or contract a school police officer.

(iii) Documentation that the school entity has been unable to hire or contract a school security guard.

Section 2. The act is amended by adding a section to read:

Amend Bill, page 1, line 16, by striking out "at each school building." and inserting: as follows:

(1) Beginning with the 2025-2026 school year, a school entity shall have one armed school security personnel on duty during the school day at 33% of school buildings.

(2) Beginning with the 2026-2027 school year, a school entity shall have one armed school security personnel on duty during the school day at 66% of school buildings.

(3) Beginning with the 2027-2028 school year, a school entity shall have one armed school security personnel on duty during the school day at 100% of school buildings.

Amend Bill, page 2, by inserting between lines 16 and 17:

(f) Waiver.--A school entity that is unable to meet the requirements in section 1316-C(a) may apply for a waiver to the committee. The committee may waive the requirements in the case of a school entity that provides an attestation that it acted in good faith but is unable to fulfill the criteria. A waiver shall expire one year after its approval by the committee.

Amend Bill, page 2, line 17, by striking out "(f)" and inserting:

(g)

On the question,

Will the Senate agree to the amendment?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from York, Senator Regan.

Senator REGAN. Madam President, ensuring schools have properly trained and vetted armed security personnel in every single school building is my number one priority. However, I recognize that schools will need time to meet this goal. For that reason, my amendment establishes a phased-in approach to have all school buildings staffed with an armed school security personnel by the 2027/2028 school year. Additionally, the amendment

directs PCCD, which oversees the School Safety and Security Committee, to establish a waiver process for schools that cannot meet the yearly school staffing requirements. And finally, this amendment requires school safety and security coordinators at each school entity to submit a yearly report to both their board of directors and to the School Safety and Security Committee detailing school security personnel. This report will provide necessary data, including number of school resource officers, school police officers, and school security guards and at which buildings they are stationed as well as what training each has received. We have learned through our work on school safety, and particularly in crafting Senate Bill No. 907, that the data currently on file with the Department of Education is not correct or is unreliable. It is imperative that the committee tasked with overseeing school safety and security has accurate and up-to-date data on school security personnel throughout the State. As I have continuously stated, protecting our children in schools should be of paramount concern. And I believe this legislation is a huge step in that direction. For that reason and for many others, Madam President, I ask for an affirmative vote on my amendment to Senate Bill No. 907. Thank you.

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

Senator COSTA. Madam President, I was not intending to speak on the amendment, but I just think--I do not support the underlying bill, but I do think what this amendment does, makes, in my view, the legislation better. I anticipate that at some point, this Chamber--probably the Majority on the other side of the aisle--will support this measure and send it over to the House. But that being said, this amendment takes a couple of things that I think are important for our school districts. As I understand, and most importantly, probably, the opportunity to opt out of this program is something that is important, reporting aspects of this is important. The rollback of the implementation of the legislation is important as well, for our school districts to be able to mitigate against having to do it right away and extending it over a couple of years. So, for those reasons, I am going to support the amendment, but I think I will be in a different position on final passage whenever that day may come.

Thank you, Madam President.

And the question recurring,
Will the Senate agree to the amendment?

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

YEA-41

Argall	Dillon	Langerholc	Rothman
Aument	DiSanto	Laughlin	Schwank
Baker	Dush	Martin	Stefano
Bartolotta	Farry	Mastriano	Street
Boscola	Flynn	Miller	Tartaglione
Brewster	Fontana	Pennycuik	Vogel
Brooks	Gebhard	Phillips-Hill	Ward, Judy
Brown	Haywood	Pittman	Ward, Kim
Coleman	Hughes	Regan	Williams, Anthony H.
Costa	Hutchinson	Robinson	Yaw
Culver			

NAY-9

Cappelletti	Kane	Muth	Saval
Collett	Kearney	Santarsiero	Williams, Lindsey
Comitta			

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

On the question,
 Will the Senate agree to the bill on second consideration, as amended?
 It was agreed to.
 Ordered, To be printed on the Calendar for third consideration.

BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION
 AND REREFERRED

HB 917 (Pr. No. 2302) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, adopting the Uniform Family Law Arbitration Act.

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

BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION

SB 977 (Pr. No. 1224) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in miscellaneous provisions relating to operation of vehicles, providing for the offense of interference with operation or movement of a public transit vehicle.

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

BILLS ON SECOND CONSIDERATION
 AND REREFERRED

HB 1086 (Pr. No. 1303) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Department of Military Affairs, further providing for veterans registry; and making an editorial change.

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.

HB 1278 (Pr. No. 2303) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in wiretapping and electronic surveillance, further providing for definitions and for exceptions to prohibition of interception and disclosure of communications, providing for public access and for Department of Corrections retention policy and further providing for expiration of chapter.

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.

HB 1419 (Pr. No. 1598) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 15 (Corporations and Unincorporated Associations) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in foreign associations, further providing for termination of registration.

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.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVE CANCELLED

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

SENATE RESOLUTION No. 178, ADOPTED

Senator PITTMAN, without objection, called up from page 8 of the Calendar, **Senate Resolution No. 178**, entitled:

A Resolution directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study evaluating the outcomes of Act 44 of 2018 and to issue a report of its findings and recommendations.

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

On the question,
 Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

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

Senator MARTIN. Madam President, I rise today to ask my colleagues for an affirmative vote to adopt Senate Resolution No. 178. This resolution directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study and provide recommendations regarding future potential legislative actions to further strengthen school safety and security programs and services created under Act 44 of 2018. As one of the authors of Act 44, which created Pennsylvania's School Safety and Security Grant Program,

formed the Safe2Say Something anonymous school threat reporting system, and created the School Safety and Security Committee under the PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency. For the past 5 years, we have all worked very hard with a strong goal in mind: keeping our children safe in school. We have led the way in making sure our schools have the resources they need to help keep kids safe. Act 44 undoubtedly has had much success better protecting the lives of our children, teachers, and school visitors. PCCD has met and exceeded every expectation and set a high standard for how State government should operate in the best interest of our communities. Now that the programs have been in place for 5 years, it is critical we take a look at what we have accomplished and how we might improve upon the success of our programs in the years ahead. This study would not only evaluate programs in Pennsylvania, but also include a review of safety and security best practices in other States.

Since September, it has been an honor to work with a number of my colleagues to improve this resolution, and I appreciate the input and thank them specifically for helping to make this resolution better. So, let us all keep working at this marathon, which is never a sprint, a marathon, in our efforts to continue our commitment to keep our children safe in our schools all across this Commonwealth. And today I ask for your affirmative vote for Senate Resolution No. 178.

Thank you, Madam President.

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

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

YEA-50

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

NAY-0

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

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The resolution is adopted.

CONSIDERATION OF CALENDAR RESUMED

THIRD CONSIDERATION CALENDAR RESUMED

HB 1461 CALLED UP

HB 1461 (Pr. No. 2288) -- Without objection, the bill, which previously went over in its order temporarily, was called up, from page 1 of the Third Consideration Calendar, by Senator PITTMAN.

NONPREFERRED APPROPRIATION BILL
ON THIRD CONSIDERATION

HB 1461 (Pr. No. 2288) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act providing for funding for State-related universities for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2024, for costs basis, for frequency of payments and for recordkeeping requirements; imposing a duty on the Auditor General; providing for financial statements, for the Agricultural College Land Scrip Fund and for restrictions; and making appropriations.

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?

POINT OF ORDER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Lycoming, Senator Yaw.

Senator YAW. Madam President, I rise to seek a ruling from the Chair pursuant to Rule 20. Madam President, this bill will appropriate funds for certain State-related entities within the Commonwealth, including the Pennsylvania College of Technology. I currently serve as chairman of the board of directors for the college, and as such, this bill will provide funding to a business with which I am affiliated, although I will receive no direct personal or pecuniary benefit from this bill. Am I excused from voting under these circumstances, Madam President?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senator Yaw requests a ruling of the Chair Pursuant to Rule 20(c): whether the Member has a direct, personal, private, or pecuniary interest in this bill. The Senate will be at ease while the Chair considers this matter.

[The Senate was at ease.]

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair thanks the gentleman for his inquiry about a conflict of interest in the factual situation just given. The Chair would rule that there is no conflict of interest and that, in accordance with Senate Rule 20, the Senator must vote on House Bill No. 1461 for the following reasons. First, the Chair finds that the Senator is a member of a class of individuals who may or may not be affected by any actions on House Bill No. 1461. Second, the Chair does not find that any votes the Senator may cast will be particularly personal to Senator Yaw or privately affect Senator Yaw alone. Therefore, it is the ruling of the Chair that you must vote on House Bill. No. 1461.

And the question recurring,
Shall the bill pass finally?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Lycoming, Senator Yaw.

Senator YAW. Madam President, I rise to support House Bill No. 1461, and especially the part of that bill that relates to the Pennsylvania College of Technology. As indicated, I am the chairman of the board of that institution. The Pennsylvania College of Technology is part of the Penn State family. However, it is a separate part of the Penn State family. It has its own board of

directors, its own president, its own faculty. It issues its own degrees, provides its own financing. It is funded separately from Penn State as part of the State-related institutions. Penn College is a school of technology. It has approximately 4,400 students in 100 programs, issuing certificates, associate degrees, baccalaureate degrees, master's degrees in nursing and physician's assistant. About 60 percent of the student body are enrolled in 4-year baccalaureate programs. Throughout its history, the college has trademarked, through the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, the phrase: degrees that work. That is proven--I think that the truth of that phrase is proven--by the fact that the college has a 96 percent placement rate.

A recent study by Georgetown University found that Penn College ranked number one on return on investment among Pennsylvania public universities after both 10 and 15 years. Penn College has an industry advisory committee with every one of its 100 programs. We have over 3,000 partnerships with businesses. In addition, last year, Penn College trained 5,000 workers and apprentices in the college's robust Workforce Development program. In 2023, the college had a 10 percent increase in enrollment. By the spring, over 25 programs were full and waitlisted. That was the spring of 2023 for this current semester in the fall. Students wanted to go to school, and the college was placed in a position of saying: we cannot train you because we do not have the room to do it, and we do not have the facilities or the equipment to do it. Usually, as I said, classes are filled in the spring. Currently, our applications are running about 18 percent ahead of last year, and if this trend continues, programs will be filled by the end of the current year for the fall of 2024.

In 2023, U.S. News & World Report ranked Penn College in its category as follows. It was number one as the most innovative school. It was number one as the best undergraduate teaching school. It was number two as the best college for veterans. The college has over 300 veterans on campus. With passage today, this vital \$3.22 million increase in the college's appropriation will enable the college to open more slots in those demand programs such as welding, electrical, and aviation, which have been waitlisted since last spring. For years, I have advocated that we should pay for performance. Penn College is doing exactly what we have asked our education institutions to do. I am very pleased to see that we have taken this step to reward performance. I ask my colleagues for an affirmative vote on House Bill No. 1461.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Hughes.

Senator HUGHES. Madam President, as mentioned in the Committee on Appropriations yesterday, and has been discussed on statewide television, 14 students from Lincoln University made the 66-mile trek from their campus to the State Capitol in support for the appropriation for Lincoln University, but also in support for the appropriation for the other three nonpreferred institutions: Penn State, Temple, and the University of Pittsburgh. That walk took several days. There were no buses, there were no cars, there were no Ubers. It was feet on the ground. And those 14, known as the Fabulous 14, represented not just the 1,800 students on Lincoln University's campus, but quite frankly, the hundreds of thousands of students in all 4 of those institutions and the others captured in this bill that will advance this appropriation out of this Chamber to the House and hopefully, soon thereafter,

to the Governor's office for his signature. I am more than proud, and I think we all should be, on both sides of the aisle, of those 14 students--which we have come to name them the Fabulous 14 from Lincoln University--for making the conscious decision to not just talk about their commitment to their institution or the others who are captured in this legislation, but to actually effectuate that commitment by making a bold public statement and walking from their campus to the State Capitol in support of this appropriation. I think all of us on both sides of the aisle were moved by that effort. Great students, smart students, committed students, fully engaged students, taking their commitment and making it very real in the 66-mile trek. We made the hopeful commitment to them--fingers crossed, working in a bipartisan fashion, commitment to them--when they arrived that, hopefully, by the end of this week the matter would leave here with their appropriation and get moved down the process to hopefully one more step, and only one more step, before it gets to the Governor's office for his signature. And the Governor has indicated he will sign it if it gets to his desk. So, Mr. [sic] President, I am obligated because of those 14 students, those Fabulous 14, from the nation's oldest degree-granting HBCU, Lincoln University, obligated to stand on this floor and saying that we thank them for their effort. We appreciate their commitment. We are enthused and excited about what they present for the future of this State, of this nation, and of this world. And I can say of this world, because if you know the history of Lincoln University, they produce world leaders, not just leaders in their own community. So, I proudly stand up for them, for all of this Commonwealth, and thank them for making that effort that they did not have to make. They could have communicated to us by email. They could have called us on our phone. Many of them have our numbers. They could have probably sent us a text message, but they did not, they walked--and we should all be proud of that effort--and hopefully the moving of this legislation will be the best response to their effort on this day.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Madam President, I share in the comments of the gentleman from Lycoming County and the gentleman from Philadelphia County and encourage my colleagues to vote in the affirmative for what I would call a consensus product. As the gentleman from Philadelphia County indicated, the Governor has committed, in writing, to not only sign House Bill No. 1461 as we have it before us, but he has also committed, in writing, to sign House Bill No. 1556, which is a very important piece of this puzzle because we are endeavoring to bring greater transparency to the State-related institutions. That work will not be finished after House Bill No. 1556 is signed into law, but we will continue along that path. We will be back here in June further debating State-related appropriations for the upcoming fiscal year. I believe that that will be a work in progress as well. And I am just thankful and appreciative, particularly with the Pennsylvania College of Technology in Williamsport, the investment that we are making to make a ready workforce in this Commonwealth. I think we all recognize how diverse our labor force has become. We all know the shortage of quality skilled labor that we have in this Commonwealth. And I think that that investment, in particular, is historic, and it is a recognition of what we must do

to prepare our workforce for tomorrow. And so, I too encourage my colleagues to vote in the affirmative.

Thank you, Madam President.

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

NAY-5

Gebhard	Mastriano	Pennycuick	Ward, Judy
Hutchinson			

A constitutional two-thirds 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.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS
ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SECRETARY**

The following announcement was read by the Secretary of the Senate:

SENATE OF PENNSYLVANIA
COMMITTEE MEETING

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2023

1:00 P.M. EDUCATION (public hearing on school mandate relief) Parkland S.D. Admin. Center 1210 Springhouse Rd., Allentown

PETITIONS AND REMONSTRANCES

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

Senator MARTIN. Madam President, I rise today to highlight my resolution, which recognized yesterday, November 14, 2023, as World Diabetes Day in Pennsylvania. First celebrated in 1991, World Diabetes Day recognizes and raises awareness of diabetes, as it has become more prevalent worldwide. According to the most updated information from the CDC, there are 37.3 million people in the United States with diabetes, a rise from 34.1 million only 2 years ago. The CDC also unfortunately states that diabetes is the seventh-leading cause of health-related deaths in our

Commonwealth. As of this year, there is no known cure for diabetes, though the risk of being diagnosed can be reduced through a healthy diet, physical activity, and the use of prescribed medication. Having said that, with these growing numbers in mind, I felt it was important to sponsor this resolution and for our body to bring attention to this day and to raise awareness of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle to help mitigate this disease.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Monroe, Senator Brown.

Senator BROWN. Madam President, I rise to offer remarks on a very important resolution. Senate Resolution No. 210 has been introduced in recognition of November 15, 2023, as Juvenile Diabetes Day and JDRF Day in Pennsylvania. Nearly 1.4 million American children and adults have type 1 diabetes, a very serious disease that has no cure. Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune disease that strikes children and adults suddenly and lasts a lifetime, requiring them to take multiple injections of insulin daily or continually infused through a pump.

Research has come a long way, but there is always more to be done. With more than \$2.8 billion allocated to research since 1970, the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, otherwise known as JDRF, is the worldwide leader in funding research to cure type 1 diabetes. JDRF is committed to improving lives today and tomorrow by accelerating critical breakthroughs to cure, prevent, and treat type 1 diabetes and its complications and to fight the disease worldwide by helping to ensure those with diabetes have affordable access to care, treatment, and education. Early detection of type 1 diabetes is possible using a blood autoantibody test. The presence of greater than or equal to two autoantibodies constitutes the diagnosis of early stage type 1 diabetes. Type 1 diabetes screening and early detection, especially in children, minimizes the risks of a potentially life-threatening condition of diabetic ketoacidosis, empowers healthcare providers, people with diabetes, and caregivers, and may offer them time to develop the skills necessary to sustain optimal glycemic management.

This resolution is being introduced to bring awareness to juvenile type 1 diabetes and, especially, to increase community awareness of risk factors, symptoms, and screening related to type 1 diabetes. By doing this, we can improve the likelihood that people, especially children, with type 1 diabetes will get the attention and care they need before developing the disease and its devastating complications. I want to extend my sincere appreciation to my Senate colleagues for joining me in recognizing November 15 as Juvenile Diabetes Day and JDRF Day in Pennsylvania.

Thank you, Madam President.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVE CANCELLED

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senator Coleman has returned, and his legislative leave is cancelled.

**PETITIONS AND REMONSTRANCES
(Continued)**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Chester, Senator Comitta.

Senator COMMITTA. Madam President, I rise today with my colleague and Majority chair of the Committee on Environmental Resources and Energy, Senator Yaw, in support of our resolution designating November 15, 2023--today--as America Recycles Day in Pennsylvania. As we approach the holiday season--a time when there tends to be a lot of goods and materials coming into and going out of our homes--it is important to remind ourselves of the benefits of recycling. Recycling helps conserve resources; recycling saves energy, reduces waste; and recycling cuts pollution. The Pennsylvania Waste Industries Association estimates that 94 percent of Pennsylvanians have some level of access to recycling, but it is crucial that we recycle properly. According to the EPA, as much as 25 percent of all recycling is contaminated and cannot be recycled. That does not mean we should give up on recycling. It means we need to do it the right way.

Here is the right way we can recycle: remember that plastic bags cannot go in recycling bins. They are best recycled via bins at local grocery stores. Recycling containers should be as clean and dry as possible. Rinse out plastic, glass, and metal containers before placing them in recycling bins, and paper should be kept dry. Know what can and cannot be recycled. Check with your municipality or coordinate with your recycling collector, and if in doubt, throw it out. Materials that cannot be recycled significantly contribute to contamination and increase costs. We all have a role to play to keep recycling sustainable. I urge all Pennsylvanians to become educated recyclers and do their part to reduce, reuse, and recycle. Remember the words of sustainability proponent and Greenpeace co-executive director, Annie Leonard: "There is no such thing as 'away.' [So,] when we throw anything away, it must go somewhere." So, thank you for recycling, and thank you for joining us in designating today as America Recycles Day in Pennsylvania. Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Senator Camera C. Bartolotta) in the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Lycoming, Senator Yaw.

Senator YAW. Madam President, I rise today to speak on the following resolution designating November 15, 2023, as National Recycling Day in Pennsylvania. Madam President, in 2016, the EPA released significant findings of the economic benefits of recycling. And with the update to the national Recycling Economic Information study, the study found that in a single year, recycling and reuse activities account for 681,000 jobs and over \$37.8 billion in wages and \$5.5 billion in tax revenues. This would equate to close to 1.17 jobs for every 1,000 tons of material recycled. The potential environmental benefits of recycling include: reducing the amount of waste sent to landfills and incinerators; conserving natural resources such as timber, water, and minerals; preventing pollution by reducing the need to collect new raw materials; and saving money from further manufacturing production. Madam President, I would like to thank my co-chair, Senator Comitta, for cosponsoring this resolution with me, and I respectfully ask my colleagues to join me in designating November 15, 2023, as National Recycling Day in Pennsylvania.

Thank you, Madam President.

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

Senator TARTAGLIONE. Madam President, I rise because today marks 6,338 days since our Commonwealth's legislature last passed an increase in our minimum wage. This legislative inaction has left tens of thousands of Pennsylvanians--minimum wage and near minimum wage earners--behind and allowed the cycle of poverty to grow as wages fail to move and inflation increases prices. Raising the minimum wage, Madam President, is not merely a benefit for those who earn the current minimum, it would have a cascading effect that positively impacts all low-wage earners across the Commonwealth. In fact, Madam President, a recent study from the Economic Policy Institute reveals a compelling statistic: workers in States paying only the Federal minimum wage are 46 percent more likely to earn less than \$15 an hour. Madam President, this alarming disparity underscores our urgent need for a minimum wage hike. When the minimum wage is increased, Madam President, it acts as a floor that lifts the earnings of workers across the wage spectrum. Beyond addressing the financial struggles of those at the bottom--which frankly should be reason enough to increase our poverty-level wage--a higher minimum wage creates a ripple effect, enhancing the overall economic well-being of all low-wage earners.

That is why I introduced Senate Bill No. 12, which would put Pennsylvania's minimum wage at \$15 an hour and forever remove the legislative from the process of raising the minimum wage forward by tying the wage to inflation. But I think the Economic Policy Institute summed up the need to finally put Pennsylvania and all Americans on a path to \$15 an hour perfectly in the report. And I quote, "...there is no part of this country where even a single adult without children can achieve an adequate standard of living on [with] a wage of less than \$15 an hour." They are right, Madam President. The Federal minimum wage has lost more than a third of its value since its inflation adjusted high point in 1968. As a State following the Federal minimum wage, we should not wait for Congress to pass a minimum wage increase. We need to raise workers' wages now. Pennsylvania deserves better than our starvation-level wage. Pennsylvania deserves Senate Bill No. 12.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Allegheny, Senator Lindsey Williams.

Senator L. WILLIAMS. Madam President, I rise today to recognize the week of November 13 through 19, 2023, as Transgender Awareness Week in Pennsylvania and recognizing November 20, 2023, as Transgender Day of Remembrance. I am honored to be the prime sponsor of this Senate resolution again this year along with my fellow Members, Senator Amanda Cappelletti, Senator Katie Muth, and Senator Tim Kearney. We observe Transgender Day of Remembrance every year in November by taking time and space to remember and celebrate the lives of those transgender and non-binary individuals whose lives were lost over the previous year. Members of the community may be unable to properly grieve those losses at the time for many reasons that could include misreporting of the individual's death through accidental or intentional use of dead names by family or law enforcement or ongoing concerns about safety. And so, the annual Transgender Day of Remembrance is a way for the community to claim and honor their dead.

Today, in that spirit, I would like to lift up and speak the names of two of our fellow Pennsylvanians who were lost this year:

Theodora "Thea" Cassidy and River Paige Olmstead. Thea Cassidy was an 18-year-old freshman at Millersville University, where she was majoring in social studies education with plans to be a history teacher. Thea loved medieval history and fantasy and was an avid player of Dungeons & Dragons. She loved the arts, spending time painting many figures for her D&D campaigns and working on her sketching. Thea also loved spending time with her family and friends and her dog, Leo. Family described Thea as an, quote, incredibly empathetic person who wanted to help others. River Olmstead was a 17-year-old student at Manheim Township High School. River loved music. They were an accomplished musician who played mellophone in the marching band and aspired to be a music therapist working with children when they grow up. River also found music in the written word and was an avid reader and writer. River was a devout Christian and an active volunteer with their Sunday school and with Lydia's Closet, which provides free clothing to school-age children in need. River met challenges with compassion and combined their activism with prayer and devotion to their fellow humans. Both Thea and River loved the outdoors and the Renaissance Faire. They both enjoyed spending time with family and friends, but tragically, Thea Cassidy and River Olmstead died by suicide this fall. Their lives, their love, and the possibilities that they carried within them lost to their families, friends, and community.

Today, I want to lift up the lives of Thea and River and all those we have lost. I want to lift up the families and loved ones of all those we have lost. We see you, we see your children, and we see the struggle of the transgender and non-binary community. We see what the rhetoric that comes out of this building does to you and your families. We see legislation that denies your right to see yourselves reflected in literature, your right to free expression, and your right to just exist. We reject those efforts, and we will fight for you and your children every time they come up. As the quote on Thea's obituary says: "Pain doesn't make people, it's love that makes people. The pain is inconsequential. It's love that saves them." Love must win. The love of the family, the love of community, the love of one another must win. Until the day that love does win, we will speak their names and do the work in their memory. Thank you.

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

Senator CAPPELLETTI. Madam President, each year, several of my Democratic colleagues and I co-sponsor a Senate resolution to recognize Transgender Awareness Week, the week leading up to November 20, and to honor November 20 as Transgender Day of Remembrance. Unfortunately, we are living in a time where identities are being polarized and politicized. There are so many barriers to living as our authentic selves, which means that recognizing Transgender Awareness Week and honoring the lives of those lost to violence grows increasingly important across the nation. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, in 2023 the breakdown of fatal violence against the transgender and non-conforming community is: 88 percent of the victims were people of color; 72 percent of victims were killed with a gun; 52 percent were specifically Black transgender women; 48 percent were misgendered or deadnamed by authorities or the press; and 47 percent of victims with a known killer were killed by a romantic or sexual partner, a friend, or even a family member. But we must use this week to not only call out and condemn that violence, but

also to affirm our support for Pennsylvanians and Americans who are members of the transgender community. And we can do this by advancing legislative solutions that will allow our diverse communities across the Commonwealth to thrive. Here in the Senate, we can break down barriers and use our positions of power and time in Harrisburg to make Pennsylvania a more inclusive and welcoming place to work, live, and visit. The transgender community in Pennsylvania should know that its leaders--Senators like myself, Senator Lindsey Williams, Senator Muth, Senator Kearney--and everybody in this Chamber and those who have spoken and will speak out in support of this resolution today, we see you, we hear you, and we want you to know that you are valued for exactly who you are, and we are proud to have you here. We will continue to fight for you, to remove the barriers that you face to live in peace and safety as your most authentic self.

In the spirit of that mission, I have worked with Members of the Democratic Caucus, my colleagues who you have heard from and will hear from. We have worked together to reintroduce a legislative package that will ease the burdens Pennsylvanians face when they legally try to change their names. The name change reform legislative package includes six bills that will reform the process to make it more streamlined, affordable, and accessible while reducing the burden on both of those seeking to change their names and our State institutions. This legislation sets forth reasonable initial steps that can be taken right now to improve the safety, stability, and well-being of our trans community in the Commonwealth. However, since being introduced in March, these bills have been sitting in committee waiting for consideration and a vote. I hope that today serves as a reminder to the chairs of those committees where these bills sit just how important it is that we take the steps necessary to make our Commonwealth a place where all can lead safe, healthy, joyful lives.

Thank you, Madam President,

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

Senator MUTH. Madam President, I think I am scheduled to speak on this topic and another one. I would just like to submit my remarks for the record for my first topic, which was already eloquently stated by my colleagues on Transgender Day of Remembrance. So, thank you.

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 gentlewoman from Montgomery, Senator MUTH:)

Madam President, I rise today with my colleagues Senator Lindsey Williams, Senator Tim Kearney, and Senator Amanda Cappelletti in support of our Senate resolution that designates Monday, November 20, 2023, as Transgender Day of Remembrance and the week of November 13 through November 19, 2023, as Transgender Awareness Week in Pennsylvania.

Our resolution honors all those transgender people whose lives were lost to anti-transgender violence and raises public awareness about the tragic violence affecting the transgender community across our country. The entire trans community lives in fear every second of every day--and no one should ever be subject to violence, hatred, or bigotry here in our Commonwealth just for living their true lives and being their true selves.

Too often in this Chamber, we are forced to vote on legislation that pushes a harmful narrative--bills to ban books and to limit rights using

hateful, ideological rhetoric. This resolution is an opportunity for our Chamber to come together in a bipartisan manner to show our support for all transgender Pennsylvanians, because basic human rights and human dignity should not be partisan issues.

Madam President, our Commonwealth, and really our country, must do more to ensure that our LGBTQ+ and transgender communities are guaranteed the right to safe and authentic gender expression. We should not be targeting this community. We should be celebrating their strength and their courage to be who they are, because too often they have had to put their jobs, relationships, and lives on the line just to be their true selves. There is no place for extremism and hate in our government or in our Commonwealth. Transgender people deserve to be treated with the same dignity and respect as anyone else, and they deserve to be able to live according to their gender identity.

Our resolution is a way to celebrate the transgender community and to let all of these individuals know that they belong, and they deserve respect. I ask my colleagues to support this resolution.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes, for a second time, the gentlewoman from Montgomery, Senator Muth.

Senator MUTH. Madam President, I rise today to call attention to the Senate's inability to vote on the 911 reauthorization that occurred earlier this week, actually. We have been working, my staff and I, with the other side of the aisle in the Committee on Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness to get this done, being that our 911 system statewide needs to be reauthorized, which means, legally, it needs a mechanism to collect the money to give to PEMA to continue functioning our 911 system in all 67 counties, and there is only 3 Session days left in this calendar year.

The 911 reauthorization is set to sunset, which means expire, at the final day of January of 2024. The ability to quickly access 911 is obviously a very vital part of the public safety system, and it is a critical link between the people who need help and the people who are trained to help. Yet, we as a body here have failed to vote on this measure and actually fund and give a long-overdue increase to our 911 system. I had hoped that we would finally address the 911 reauthorization this week when House Bill No. 1304 was added to the agenda in the Senate Committee on Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness meeting on Monday of this week, which, unfortunately, was scheduled off the floor and could not accommodate live streaming. And instead of including a much-needed, long-overdue increase for the 911 surcharge that we all pay in our phone bill, there was an amendment added to the legislation sent over by the House to, again, commission another study of the 911 system. Hardly different in this amendment language from the study that was just completed last year. Happy to provide that study for everyone who has not yet read it.

We had also been told to expect to vote on House Bill No. 1304 on final passage today. My staff and I had two separate amendments drafted to give my colleagues on the other side of the aisle different options to continue to support our 911 services, support our public safety entities, and support our counties and residents. Both of my amendments would have removed the requirements to conduct yet another unnecessary study and instead focused our efforts on the actual important issue that was ignored in the Committee on Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness yesterday, which was increasing funding to support our 911 system. One of the amendments would have increased the current \$1.65 surcharge to \$2.30 beginning in January 2024 and would increase by \$0.10 annually. The other option was the second amendment, which would have increased to the current surcharge

of \$1.97 with an annual \$0.10 increase in the surcharge. Both amendments would have extended the sunset date of the 911 reauthorization to January 31, 2029. Either of these amendments would have been supported in the House, and I am certain that many of my colleagues here in the Senate Majority party also would have supported these amendments based on stakeholder outreach. But, again, we went over that bill on the Calendar today to not take a vote on it.

According to the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania, without an increase in the surcharge, county property taxpayers will have to fund approximately 38 percent of the cost of the system in 2024 and about 40 percent of the cost of the system by 2025. PEMA also detailed to us the impacts our 911 system has faced this year alone because of this lack of funding. They instituted a 25 percent county cost share for each region. They had limited ability to support county efforts with GIS data development to support the next-gen 911 system--which is about to roll out--which would allow all 67 counties to coordinate across county lines for emergency response. Currently, counties do not share the same software systems and the dispatch centers have to do extra steps to communicate those requests across county lines. PEMA did not have the ability to invest in shared audio and infrastructure at these PSAPs to continue regionalization efforts. My amendments are supported by several associations and stakeholders across the Commonwealth. Groups that represent constituents in all 50 Senate districts, in all 67 counties, including the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania, the PA chapter of the National Emergency Number Association, the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs, the Pennsylvania Municipal League, and the Pennsylvania Chapter of Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials.

Of all the things that become a partisan battle in this building, it is absolutely shameful that reauthorizing our 911 system seems to now be on the list of things that are a battle. I hope that when we come back in December, this is truly addressed with the increase that is needed for our 911 systems to function so that property taxpayers are not stuck with additional costs to fund this system, and that it can be equitably shared across all phone line users in our Commonwealth.

Thank you, Madam President.

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

Senator COSTA. Madam President, I just rise today on petitions to talk about a visit that I had, and I think many of my colleagues have had over the course of the past couple of days, from a woman who is working very hard to help us understand the need to enact reasonable and responsible gun reform measures. I know that is always a hot topic, and I do know that there are a number of measures over here in the Senate side that came over from the House. But I wanted to point out the work that this woman is doing along those lines. And I think it is important for my colleagues first to recognize--I think many of them in the room have already received, and across the House as well, received the pair of green tennis shoes, the pin that represents the life of Maite Rodriguez. Maite was one of those students, at 10 years old, was gunned down at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas. And it has been heartbreaking, certainly to the mom and all the moms who lost children, of course, that day. But Renee [Gina] Gennari has taken the step to develop this pin that she is sharing across this

country. She has been to Washington, DC, more recently, to meet with every congressional member and provide each congressional member with this pin to remember, certainly, Maite, but also to make certain that we draw our attention to these measures that need to be advanced through our General Assembly, and all the general assemblies across Pennsylvania. Her mission is to be able to take it across this Commonwealth and across the country to be able to do this, and I just want to take a few moments, certainly, to applaud the work of this woman from Pennsylvania who has taken up this cause, and we appreciate what she is doing.

But also, I just want to take a moment to let folks know a little bit about Maite Rodriguez. These shoes are her shoes. These are the shoes that she bought. Green was her favorite color. The way she was identified, unfortunately, was by the tennis shoes she was wearing. She was someone who wanted to be a marine biologist, had a tremendous fascination with the outdoors, and was somebody who was very inquisitive and had a remarkably close relationship with her mom. That is who we deal with--well, that is what happens in the loss of those lives from gun violence, whether it be a situation or occurrence that took place in Uvalde, or even something that took place in my home community of Squirrel Hill at the Tree of Life. Or whether it is a loss of life because of suicide, access to weapons, access to assault-type weapons are problematic, certainly, in this country and in this Commonwealth, and we need to take steps to address that. We have addressed this, we tried to address this for a number of years, and it was mentioned by the previous speakers, particularly the previous speaker, when we come back here to Harrisburg in December, my hope is that we can have reasonable conversations about advancing measures that have come over from the House that address reasonable and responsible gun reform measures. We have to have that conversation. The time has come.

There is not a morning that we cannot wake up, that we do not wake up, and find out that there had been some type of a mass shooting that has taken place somewhere in Pennsylvania or somewhere in this country. The number of mass shootings that have occurred in this country have risen dramatically over the course of years. We need to take steps to be able to address that. And as we all leave here, I certainly want to wish all of my colleagues--I wish a thankful Thanksgiving, a very nice Thanksgiving--but also remember, there will be a lot of empty chairs in a lot of households across Pennsylvania, across this country, because individuals have either been the victims of gun violence or have died because of suicide along those lines. So, please, I ask my colleagues to join me in remembering Maite Rodriguez, and the reason why many of us are wearing these pins today in this Chamber.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Jefferson, Senator Dush.

Senator DUSH. Madam President, today I had--it was a difficult vote today on our nonpreferreds, and I want to apologize to the Clerk for having him have to come back. I was at the rear of the Chamber in prayer over this because, for some reason, we have started lumping these nonpreferreds together, and it has presented some difficult decisions. I happen to have both Pitt and Penn State in my district, Pitt Bradford and the main campus of Penn State University. There have been a number of things that have been occurring on our campuses of late. We saw it at the

University of Pennsylvania. We saw it, unfortunately, a few weeks ago when a young man was--if he had not had a mask on, he would have been spitting in my face while he was conversing with me. I will use that term. I have to thank President Bendapudi and the staff up there, especially the campus police, for their excellent response. And the board seems to be on the path towards bringing some corrective action to some of the things that have been happening on our campuses. A couple of weeks after that confrontation, there was someone who had ended up causing a pretty unfortunate disturbance on the campus, and he was back again. And this time, with the way the campus police handled what happened with the previous speaker, the disruptions were pretty much nil; there was nothing; and that is to the credit of the university and the university police. The answer to bad speech is more speech, and that bore out in that presentation--I will call it. The person who caused the disruption showed the reason why his language is not acceptable to most people, and I think the lack of real attendance there bore that out.

We have some other issues that are going on with the fetal tissue research at Pitt and others. And what is disturbing is that this year we have not seen the chancellors or the presidents of the universities showing up to our offices and to the Members of either the House or the Senate to make their pitch as to why they need this funding. This is a lot of money out of the pockets of our constituents. It is disturbing that there seems to be a presumption or an assumption that they are going to get this money, and I find that disturbing, especially given the fact that there are things that are directing violence on some university campuses against the people of Israel, of Jews in general. Fortunately, that has not happened in the extent that it has happened in some other universities with these nonpreferreds. Although I voted "yes" today, my vote next year on the funding of these universities is contingent on Penn State continuing on the path that I have seen in the last couple of weeks, Pitt making some corrective action and these other universities with what we passed today on the Right-to-Know, that they are responsive to the Right-to-Know requests, and we get real information out of them on the practices, the procedures, and the things that they are doing with our taxpayer money.

I wanted it on the record for my constituents because I have had quite a number of people coming up to me, including after the university--or Penn State--had told their employees that they were holding up their pay raises because of our action here. I actually had a couple of employees coming up to me and saying that and saying keep doing what you are doing. You know, they want the university to right its ship, and the people who are working on those campuses want these universities to get back to what was intended when the university systems were founded in England and the United States. And I hope to see that that is where we are going to go in the future.

Thank you, Madam President.

SENATE AT EASE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Lehigh, Senator Coleman.

Senator COLEMAN. Madam President, I request the Senate be at ease while we await communications from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will be at ease.

[The Senate was at ease.]

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

**APPOINTMENTS BY THE
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair wishes to announce the President pro tempore has made the following appointments:

Senator James R. Brewster as a member of the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee.

Senator Arthur L. Haywood III as a member of the Children's Trust Fund Board.

RECESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Madam President, I move that the Senate do now recess to the call of the President pro tempore.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, the Senate stands in recess to the call of the President pro tempore.

AFTER RECESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The time of recess having expired, the Senate will come to order.

RECESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Madam President, I move that the Senate do now recess until Thursday, November 16, 2023, at 8:33 a.m., Eastern Standard Time.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

The Senate recessed at 10:59 p.m., Eastern Standard Time.