

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
**Legislative Journal**

TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2024

SESSION OF 2024 208TH OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

No. 6

**SENATE**

TUESDAY, March 19, 2024

The Senate met at 1 p.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time.

The PRESIDENT (Lieutenant Governor Austin A. Davis) in the Chair.

**PRAYER**

The Chaplain, MADELINE MUSSER, Pennsylvania FFA State Chaplain, Harrisburg, offered the following prayer:

Good afternoon. I invite you to pray with me.

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank You for the opportunity to be here today to do work for the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Thank You for another day and another chance to make an impact. We give You praise as today is National Agriculture Day. Agriculture is the foundation for our nation. We thank You for the over-15,000 students in Pennsylvania who study agriculture education, who are dedicated to not only furthering the agriculture industry, but growing themselves as future leaders. These agriculture education students are members of FFA, which makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success. We thank You for the agriculture teachers, who work hard to give these opportunities to their students. We thank You for the farmer, who works day in and day out to put food on our table and provide for us all. Please be with all our elected officials. Bless everyone in this Chamber. Please let today be a celebration of community and of Pennsylvania's number one industry: agriculture. Amen.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair thanks Ms. Musser, who is the guest today of Senator Vogel.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE GOVERNOR**

**NOMINATION REFERRED TO COMMITTEE**

The PRESIDENT laid before the Senate the following communication in writing from His Excellency, the Governor of the Commonwealth, which was read as follows and referred to the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations:

MEMBER OF THE STATE BOARD OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS

March 19, 2024

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

In conformity with law, I have the honor hereby to nominate for the advice and consent of the Senate, Aaron H. Danks (Public Member), 1801 North Second Street #2, Harrisburg 17102, Dauphin County, Fifteenth Senatorial District, for appointment to the [sic] State Board of Funeral Directors, to serve for a term of five years, and until the successor is appointed and qualified, but not longer than six months beyond that period, vice Francis McCusker, Lafayette Hill, whose term expired.

JOSH SHAPIRO  
Governor

**BILLS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEES**

Senator JUDY WARD, from the Committee on Aging and Youth, reported the following bills:

**SB 1018 (Pr. No. 1275)**

An Act amending Title 2 (Administrative Law and Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in practice and procedure, providing for child victims and witnesses.

**HB 1760 (Pr. No. 2144)**

An Act amending Title 20 (Decedents, Estates and Fiduciaries) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in intestate succession, further providing for forfeiture; in wills, further providing for modification by circumstances; in slayers, further providing for definition of terms, providing for elder abuser not to acquire property, further providing for descent, distribution, dower, curtesy, and statutory rights as survivor, for legacies, for tenancies by the entirety, for joint tenants, joint owners and joint obligees, for reversions and vested remainders, for interests dependent on survivorship or continuance of life, for contingent remainders and executory or other future interests, for powers of appointment, for proceeds of insurance, for bona fide payment by insurance company or obligor, for bona fide purchasers, for record of conviction as evidence and for preadjudication rule and providing for intent to transfer notwithstanding elder abuse; and making an editorial change.

Senator ARGALL, from the Committee on Education, reported the following bills:

**SB 454 (Pr. No. 1430) (Amended)**

An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in terms and courses of study, further providing for physical education.

**HB 663 (Pr. No. 2229)**

An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in pupils and attendance, further providing for residence and right to free school privileges.

Senator BROOKS, from the Committee on Health and Human Services, reported the following bill:

**HB 1795 (Pr. No. 2211)**

An Act amending the act of September 26, 1951 (P.L.1539, No.389), known as The Clinical Laboratory Act, further providing for definitions and for exemptions.

Senator BAKER, from the Committee on Judiciary, reported the following bills:

**SB 819 (Pr. No. 928)**

An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in burglary and other criminal intrusion, providing for offenses relating to critical infrastructure facilities; and imposing penalties.

**SB 1021 (Pr. No. 1431) (Amended)**

An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in burglary and other criminal intrusion, further providing for the offense of criminal trespass; and, in offenses against the family, further providing for the offense of endangering welfare of children.

Senator DUSH, from the Committee on State Government, reported the following bills:

**SB 99 (Pr. No. 438)**

An Act amending the act of June 3, 1937 (P.L.1333, No.320), known as the Pennsylvania Election Code, in county boards of elections, further providing for expenses of county boards and of primaries and elections to be paid by county, expenses of special elections and boards to be provided with offices; in voting by qualified absentee electors, further providing for date of application for absentee ballot and for voting by absentee electors; and, in voting by qualified mail-in electors, further providing for voting by mail-in electors.

**SB 250 (Pr. No. 1432) (Amended)**

An Act amending the act of June 3, 1937 (P.L.1333, No.320), known as the Pennsylvania Election Code, in ballots, providing for antifraud ballot paper, vendor certification and antifraud measures.

**LEGISLATIVE LEAVES**

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

Senator PITTMAN. Mr. President, I request temporary Capitol leaves for Senator Regan, Senator Brooks, and Senator Dush, and a legislative leave for Senator Culver.

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

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I request temporary Capitol leaves for Senator Cappelletti and Senator Collett.

The PRESIDENT. Senator Pittman requests temporary Capitol leaves for Senator Regan, Senator Brooks, and Senator Dush, and a legislative leave for Senator Culver.

Senator Costa requests temporary Capitol leaves for Senator Cappelletti and Senator Collett.

Without objection, the leaves will be granted.

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Senator PITTMAN asked and obtained a leave of absence for Senator COLEMAN, for today's Session, for personal reasons.

**JOURNALS APPROVED**

The PRESIDENT. The Journals of the Sessions of December 11, 2023; December 12, 2023; and December 13, 2023, are now in print.

The Clerk proceeded to read the Journals of the Sessions of December 11, 2023; December 12, 2023; and December 13, 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-49**

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

**NAY-0**

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

The PRESIDENT. The Journals are approved.

**GUESTS OF SENATOR GREG ROTHMAN PRESENTED TO THE SENATE**

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Cumberland, Senator Rothman.

Senator ROTHMAN. Mr. President, I am pleased to introduce residents from my district who join us today in recognition of Future Farmers of America Week. Our guest Chaplain this morning, Madeline Musser, also serves as the FFA State Chaplain. She is a 2023 graduate of Shippensburg High School and currently resides in Newburg with her parents, Barry and Joy, and younger brother, Mitchell. Madeline plans to remain in the agriculture

industry in the future, where I am sure she will do Cumberland County proud.

Clayton Hetrick joins us this morning as the FFA State vice president. He is a 2023 graduate of Big Spring High School. Clayton resides in Newville with his parents, Chad and Rebecca, and younger brother, Cord. In the future, he plans to attend Shippensburg University and major in electrical and mechanical engineering. He plans to use this degree for designing agricultural implements.

Last but not least, Grace Brammer joins us this morning as the FFA State sentinel. Grace resides in New Kingstown in Silver Spring Township with her parents, Greg and Jackie. After graduating from Cumberland Valley High School in 2023, she plans to attend Penn State University and major in ag business before working for an agricultural company. I thank our FFA State officers for joining us this morning and advocating for farming around our Commonwealth. Please join me in providing our guests a warm Senate welcome, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guests of Senator Rothman please rise and be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

#### **GUESTS OF SENATOR ELDER A. VOGEL PRESENTED TO THE SENATE**

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Beaver, Senator Vogel.

Senator VOGEL. Mr. President, today we welcome the Pennsylvania FFA leadership team in recognition of National FFA Week in Pennsylvania. National FFA Week was February 17 to 24, however, today is National Ag Day. Agriculture is Pennsylvania's number one industry. Our farmers feed the Commonwealth and the nation, and the future of agriculture depends on cultivating the next generation of farmers. All these high school graduates on the leadership team are taking a gap year to serve the over-15,000 students and FFA chapters across Pennsylvania. Our State's FFA accomplishments include: adding 970 new first-year FFA members; record attendance at the Mid-Winter Convention at the Pennsylvania Farm Show, with nearly 10,000 people in attendance; chartering 2 new FFA chapters: Schuylkill Valley in Berks County and Spring Grove in York County.

Seated in the gallery are PA FFA officers: vice president, Clayton Hetrick, a constituent of Senator Rothman; State secretary, Rebecca Lehman, a constituent of Senator Culver; State treasurer, Grace McCarty, a constituent of Senator Aument; State reporter, Maggie McAteer, a constituent of Senator Gebhard; State sentinel, Grace Brammer, a constituent of Senator Rothman. Seated here on the floor is the State president, Crystal Bomgardner, a constituent of Senator Gebhard; and State Chaplain, Madeline Musser, a constituent of Senator Rothman. I also want to give a special thanks to Madeline, who served as our guest Chaplain today. Thank you to all on the leadership team for everything you are doing to help grow and provide a brighter future for agriculture in Pennsylvania. I ask my colleagues to please give these future farmers our usual warm Senate welcome.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guests of Senator Vogel please rise and be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

#### **LEGISLATIVE LEAVE CANCELLED**

The PRESIDENT. Senator Collett has returned, and her temporary Capitol leave is cancelled.

#### **GUESTS OF SENATOR JAY COSTA PRESENTED TO THE SENATE**

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

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I rise today to welcome a number of students from the University of Pittsburgh who are here in Harrisburg today as part of an annual Legislator for a Day program here at the Capitol Building. This program allows students to get a better sense of how we as elected leaders engage in the process of making laws and improving the lives of our Commonwealth residents. Specifically, today, I want to welcome Elizabeth Young, who is shadowing me here today. Elizabeth, please stand. She is shadowing us here today and participated already in about a half a dozen meetings or so and the like, which I think have been really important and gave her a great opportunity, quite frankly, to meet with the Chancellor of the University of Pittsburgh today to express some of her concerns and the concerns of her student colleagues. Elizabeth is majoring in urban studies with a minor in economics, and a certificate in geographic information systems. She hopes to contribute to the profound impact of effective governance on addressing social challenges.

For her first internship, she contributed to the city of Pittsburgh's LED streetlight conversion of approximately 40,000 streetlights and also a network lighting management system. Elizabeth also participated in research projects to address challenges in her community, including mapping enhanced HIV PrEP accessibility to exploring economic resilience in Fayette County. As a member of the community service fraternity Alpha Phi Omega, she devotes time to diverse service projects, from spreading positive affirmation to engaging in broader community outreach such as trash cleanup efforts. In her free time, she likes to play the guitar--maybe she will do that for us later--and spend time in nature. I sincerely hope, Elizabeth, that you enjoyed your experience here today, and invite all of my colleagues to offer her and all the other visiting University of Pittsburgh students with a warm customary Senate welcome.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guests of Senator Costa please rise and be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

#### **GUESTS OF SENATOR JOHN M. DiSANTO PRESENTED TO THE SENATE**

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Dauphin, Senator DiSanto.

Senator DiSANTO. Mr. President, it is my pleasure to introduce today several guests from my current and original district. Joining us today are Judy Zeiders, Judi Gustus, and Suzy Keller, whom I actually had a very interesting lunch with, being very knowledgeable in all affairs concerning the government from climate change, to budget, to other items as well. So, it was very interesting. Also, they are here representing the Daughters of the American Revolution, which is alive and well to this day. Please join me in giving these women a warm Senate welcome.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guests of Senator DiSanto please rise and be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

### GUESTS OF SENATOR CAROLYN T. COMITTA PRESENTED TO THE SENATE

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

Senator COMITTA. Mr. President, I rise today to welcome Conestoga High School's Boys' Soccer Team to celebrate their State championship win and unbeaten season. The Pioneers captured the PIAA Class 4A State title in an all-District 1 contest with a come-from-behind, 2-1, double overtime win over Central Bucks South. To win a State championship is a tremendous achievement. To do it capping off an unbeaten season and in such a tough contest is extra special. Congratulations to each of our student-athletes. We have 17 graduating seniors on the team, and I know that these memories will stay with you your entire lives. This victory marks the team's second State championship win since 2021, and the fifth overall under head coach Dave Zimmerman. Thank you also to all of the parents, supporters, and coaches who made this possible. Again, head coach David Zimmerman; assistant coach Blake Stabert; assistant coach Angelo Capetola; and assistant coach Chris Engels. Please join me in extending a warm welcome to the Conestoga High School Boys' Soccer Team.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guests of Senator Comitta please rise and be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

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

Senator COMITTA. Mr. President, I rise today to welcome Olivia Schlinkman, intern at my West Chester district office. Olivia is a junior at West Chester University majoring in political science and minoring in journalism and Spanish. At West Chester University, Olivia is features editor of the student newspaper, *The Quad*. She is a member of the National Political Science Honor Society, Pi Sigma Alpha, and works with the University Dance Company.

In addition to her studies at West Chester University, Olivia is a promising young journalist, having worked her way up from editorial intern to a freelance life and culture correspondent with LNP Media Group and LancasterOnline. A few of Olivia's achievements include earning the top junior award in the political science program, being named to the dean's list for four semesters, and serving as a West Chester University College of Sciences and Mathematics Student Ambassador. As a WC alumnus and fellow Golden Ram, Olivia, we are proud of you and happy to have you on our team. We appreciate all your work and the unique skills and experience you bring to the job. Please join me in extending a warm welcome to Olivia Schlinkman.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guest of Senator Comitta please rise and be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

### GUESTS OF SENATOR ANTHONY H. WILLIAMS PRESENTED TO THE SENATE

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Anthony Williams.

Senator A.H. WILLIAMS. Mr. President, I am going to be a little unorthodox. I am honored today to have my friend, my brother, and the president of city council with us, Councilman Kenyatta Johnson. But before I make my comments, there are others from Philadelphia County who would like to make them. And so, I am going to call them in order and then ask for applause at the end. First led by our delegation leader, Senator Nikil Saval, followed by Senator Hughes, then Senator Street, and then I will conclude.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Saval.

Senator SAVAL. Mr. President, it is an honor here to, as chair of the delegation in the Senate, to welcome my friend, colleague, council president Kenyatta Johnson and his chief of staff, Mr. Christmas, to the legislature, to the Pennsylvania Senate. He is no stranger, of course, to the General Assembly, having served in the General Assembly with distinction, as well as representing the second council district over which my Senate district overlaps. We have worked together prior to my time in the legislature. Councilman Johnson and Council President Johnson has distinguished himself in his service, working on housing issues, affordable housing issues, on fighting gun violence, bringing economic development and investment to the city of Philadelphia. I am very proud to work with him significantly, and I am excited for him in his relatively new role. I know he will distinguish himself in that role as well. So, it is an honor to welcome him to the Pennsylvania Senate, and thank you for the opportunity to recognize my friend and colleague.

Thank you, Senator Anthony Williams, for arranging this visit.

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

Senator HUGHES. Mr. President, I too want to rise and welcome my good friend and colleague, and I can still call him young man, who I have watched grow up and progress through his political career, but a career that has been based on public service. And we all know that good public policy is very good politics. And I have watched him do that from a House Member to a councilperson to now president of city council. But, most importantly, I want to recognize him because he has another big fan in the Hughes household, and that is my mom, Ann Hughes, who is one of Pennsylvania's longest voters in the history of the annals of the Commonwealth. I cannot say her age because she would kill me if I did, all right? But Ann Hughes sends her warmest regards, Mr. Council President, and she is always happy to know that you are doing your work and doing it very well.

Thank you, Mr. President, and thank you, Mr. President. Good to see you, brother.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Street.

Senator STREET. Mr. President, I am pleased and proud to join my colleagues in recognizing a brother who I have known for quite some time, since we were both staffers in this Senate when I worked for Senator Kitchen, and President Johnson was then a staffer for Senator [Hardy] Williams. He has come a long way. I have watched him grow. I am pleased that we are—I have known him when we were young men, and we are about the same age; we are not as young men today. I watched him grow as a legislator, as a House Member, watched him distinguish himself as a member of council, and now as the president of that august

body. We are pleased to have him, and John Christmas as well, join us on the Senate and look forward to the leadership he is going to provide in the city of Philadelphia. Thank you for being with us, and we look forward to working with you.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Anthony Williams.

Senator A.H. WILLIAMS. Mr. President, to all of those who are scratching their heads as to why we are making such a big deal about this particular individual, because he is president of city council. We live there, and all of us beg for his power and his deference, and his support our financial needs in our districts. So, just so you know, politics is local. But in addition to that, everyone who has spoken knows councilman Johnson as "Yat," and he has befriended many people in this Chamber well before they were elected officials and has served in a way that we all should serve before we come to office, and that is to volunteer, understand what the needs are of our people. And to elevate himself to the position of council president is an extraordinary statement about the possibilities of wherever you are in society, there is no preventing, in America, the promise of when you work hard for something, that you can achieve almost anything.

He is a proud father of two boys, and he is a well-regarded and well-respected and much-loved husband of Dawn Chavous. He is my baby brother--not biologically, but by heart. And I am extremely proud that he has decided to come to the Capitol today to make sure that both sides of the aisle know that Philadelphia is open and welcoming and a place that we want you to come and visit. And we ask for your support and your prayers for us moving forward. I ask all of us to give--by the way, most significantly, you all know what I am going to say, he resides in the city of Eagles. And the best football team in Pennsylvania, as we know, resides in Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Eagles. And he happens to be, he happens to be a fan of the Philadelphia Eagles. So, I just want to make sure you all knew that. Do not sit on your hands because you are hating, but please give him a warm welcome applause from the Senate of Pennsylvania.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guests of Senator Anthony Williams please rise and be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

The PRESIDENT. I agreed with all those remarks until the end [laughter].

### **GUESTS OF SENATOR DAVID G. ARGALL PRESENTED TO THE SENATE**

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

Senator ARGALL. Mr. President, in the gallery today is my job shadow, Robbie McGrath, who is an eighth grader from the Minersville Area Junior [Junior/Senior] High School. He is involved in many activities, including basketball, soccer, baseball, the Aevidum club. He also serves as the eighth-grade class president. He is an honor student and plans to attend college to pursue interests in both political science and sports broadcast journalism, which I think is kind of a unique combination. I ask for a warm welcome for Robbie and his dad, John, here in the Pennsylvania Senate.

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

[Applause.]

### **GUEST OF SENATOR SHARIF T. STREET PRESENTED TO THE SENATE**

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Street.

Senator STREET. Mr. President, today I rise to welcome criminal justice legislative intern, Megan Fortier, from my district office. Megan is a senior at Temple University studying criminal justice with a minor in legal studies on a pre-law path. Her aspirations include going to law school and pursuing a career in criminal law or public policy. At Temple, Megan is a dean's list student, an active member of her sorority, Delta Zeta, and has held a position of vice president of risk management. She is also in the Criminal Justice Honor Society, the women in cybersecurity club, the criminal justice society, and the students against sexual assault club. Throughout her internship, she has attended community outreach programs such as a school resource fair and a gun violence town hall. In addition, she has worked with constituents, providing services such as property tax rent rebates and on criminal justice initiatives. She has also assisted her colleagues in developing a database to manage correspondence from constituents at State correctional facilities. Those constituents are interested in learning about a variety of things, including, but not limited to, learning about legislative issues, requesting assistance with home plans, seeking support letters for commutations, expressing concerns, or inviting me to attend events at SCI facilities. Supporting young people in their professional endeavors is a privilege. So, please join me in congratulating Megan on her upcoming graduation and thank her for her service to the Senate.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guest of Senator Street please rise and be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

### **GUEST OF SENATOR GENE YAW PRESENTED TO THE SENATE**

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

Senator YAW. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I rise to introduce my intern, Hayden Burke. Hayden is a graduate of Millbrook High School in Virginia and is currently a junior at Lycoming College in Williamsport, where he is majoring in political science with a minor in history. During his time at Lycoming, Hayden has been selected by his professors to serve as a peer subject tutor and teaching assistant and has also served as an election night reporter. He is a member of the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity, where he serves as the alumni liaison, house manager, the philanthropy chair, and the recruitment chair. Hayden's academic honors include being named to the dean's list for five semesters and being inducted into three different honor societies. While on campus, Hayden also finds time to participate in the Lycoming College radio club and as a member of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Upon his expected graduation in January 2025, Hayden hopes to begin his career working in the legislature or in the political field. While serving as my intern, Hayden has answered constituent questions and attended many meetings with my district staff. He also has spent time researching legal issues. I would like to welcome Hayden again to the Senate Chamber, thank him for all of his hard work, and wish him the best of luck

in his future endeavors. Mr. President, I would like to ask my colleagues to give Hayden Burke a warm Senate welcome.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guest of Senator Yaw please rise and be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

### LEGISLATIVE LEAVES CANCELLED

The PRESIDENT. Senator Dush and Senator Cappelletti have returned, and their temporary Capitol leaves are cancelled.

### GUEST OF SENATOR NICHOLAS P. MILLER PRESENTED TO THE SENATE

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Lehigh, Senator Miller.

Senator MILLER. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize my office intern, Kate Lyden. Kate is a senior at Lehigh University majoring in political science with a minor in English and Spanish. She is the president of the Pennsylvania College Democrats, a native of Bucks County, and has volunteered on multiple political campaigns. Kate has been a valuable asset to our team, assisting in reviewing legislation, corresponding with constituents, and helping to make sure events run smoothly. I have no doubt she will have a successful career in government ahead of her. Would my colleagues please join me in welcoming Kate to the Pennsylvania Senate.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guest of Senator Miller please rise and be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

### GUESTS OF SENATOR RYAN P. AUMENT PRESENTED TO THE SENATE

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

Senator AUMENT. Mr. President, it is my pleasure to welcome a gentleman that many of you in this room will recognize, as we honor his long and distinguished career. My guest for the day is the beloved WGAL Channel 8 chief meteorologist, Joe Calhoun, who retired in January after 36 years. He was the leader of the WGAL News 8 Storm Team and one of the Susquehanna Valley's most trusted weather forecasters, of course, next to our most trusted groundhog, Octoraro Orphie. While he shared his expertise and warmth with viewers during his accurate and personable forecasts, his career was truly characterized by helping and serving others. His mentorship shaped the careers of many young meteorologists, including several members of the current WGAL News 8 Storm Team. He also shared his knowledge with students at Millersville University in his role as a broadcast meteorology instructor.

Joe has also been dedicated to service, as demonstrated through his involvement with initiatives like WGAL-8's Coats for Kids Telethon, which he championed for nearly 3 decades. He was the co-creator and longtime face of this annual fundraiser that still generates tens of thousands of dollars every year for the Salvation Army. After graduating from the Pennsylvania State University in 1981 with a bachelor's degree in meteorology and spending some time in Iowa and Nebraska to kick off his career, he returned to his home State to join WGAL Channel 8. Joe, thank you for sharing your professional talent and desire to give

back to our communities. Would you please join me in welcoming my esteemed guest, Joe Calhoun, and his wife, Denise, to the Pennsylvania Senate.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guests of Senator Aument please rise and be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

### GUESTS OF SENATOR FRANK FARRY PRESENTED TO THE SENATE

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Bucks, Senator Farry.

Senator FARRY. Mr. President, I am pleased to welcome the Duncan family of Bucks County to the Senate today. We are joined by Richard, Jennifer, and Marek, who is 8 years old and has already plotted out his 2052 presidential run. So, we should all be aware of that. Richard is a clinical professor of oral medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. Jennifer is a nurse anesthetist at the Rothman Orthopedic Hospital in Bensalem. Marek, in addition to his political aspirations, is an expert in presidential trivia--which we have tested him on today, and he has done very well--and he also has his purple belt in karate. Mr. President, I ask that you join me in welcoming the Duncan family to the Senate today. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT. Would the guests of Senator Farry please rise and be welcomed by the Senate.

[Applause.]

### LEGISLATIVE LEAVE CANCELLED

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

### RECESS

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

Senator AUMENT. Mr. President, I request a recess of the Senate for the purpose of a Republican caucus to be held immediately in the Majority Caucus Room.

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

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, Senate Democrats will meet in the rear of the Chamber for a caucus immediately as well.

The PRESIDENT. For purposes of Republican and Democratic caucuses to be held in their respective caucus rooms, without objection, the Senate stands in recess.

### AFTER RECESS

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

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

### LEGISLATIVE LEAVES

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

Senator PITTMAN. Mr. President, I request a temporary Capitol leave for Senator Martin.

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

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I request legislative leaves for Senator Haywood and Senator Saval.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Senator Pittman requests a temporary Capitol leave for Senator Martin.

Senator Costa requests legislative leaves for Senator Haywood and Senator Saval.

Without objection, the leaves will be granted.

## CALENDAR

### THIRD CONSIDERATION CALENDAR

#### BILLS OVER IN ORDER

**HB 269, SB 346, SB 365 and SB 667** -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

#### BILL AMENDED

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

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

On the question,

Will the Senate agree to the bill on third consideration?

#### YAW AMENDMENT A3616 ADOPTED

Senator YAW offered the following amendment No. A3616:

Amend Bill, page 3, line 15, by striking out "or" and inserting a comma

Amend Bill, page 3, line 16, by inserting after "interest":  
or leasehold interest

Amend Bill, page 3, line 18, by striking out the comma after "right-of-way" and inserting:

or  
Amend Bill, page 3, lines 18 and 19, by striking out "or a leasehold"  
Amend Bill, page 4, line 6, by inserting after "the" where it occurs

the first time:

surface property interest

Amend Bill, page 4, line 6, by striking out "of the surface"

Amend Bill, page 4, line 22, by inserting after "surface":  
property interest

Amend Bill, page 4, line 22, by inserting after "owner,":  
subsurface property interest

Amend Bill, page 4, lines 22 and 23, by striking out "of the minerals, including coal, or oil and gas interest"

Amend Bill, page 5, line 3, by striking out "severed"

Amend Bill, page 5, line 4, by striking out "severed"

Amend Bill, page 5, line 5, by inserting after "dominant":  
, including the surface use necessary for the subsurface development of the mineral, including coal, or oil and gas estate,

Amend Bill, page 5, line 7, by striking out "several owners of the surface" and inserting:

surface property interest owner

Amend Bill, page 5, line 10, by striking out "the" and inserting:  
an existing

Amend Bill, page 5, line 12, by striking out the period after "paragraph" and inserting:

, notwithstanding that the contract or lease was entered into with a subsurface property interest owner or a predecessor to the subsurface property interest owner.

Amend Bill, page 8, line 5, by inserting after "for":

fair market

Amend Bill, page 8, line 5, by inserting after "interest":

of the pore space owners

Amend Bill, page 8, lines 16 through 30; page 9, line 1; by striking out all of said lines on said pages and inserting:

Section 5.1. Seismic exploration.

(a) Seismic activity review.--A storage operator shall prepare a seismic activity review in accordance with existing requirements for a UIC Class VI permit.

(b) Seismic survey or assessment.--Prior to application for a UIC Class VI permit developed by the department, a storage operator may conduct a seismic survey or assessment across the vicinity of a potential storage facility.

(c) Entry onto lands.--If a storage operator is unable to reasonably negotiate with a surface owner for the right to conduct a seismic survey on lands owned by the surface owner, the secretary may issue an order for the entry onto the lands by the storage operator. In this instance, the storage operator shall pay the surface owner just and reasonable compensation as established by the secretary.

(d) Limitations and claims.--A seismic survey shall be limited to geologic storage and shall remain confidential and proprietary. The storage operator shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless the property owner for all claims arising out of entry onto the property by the storage operator, its contractors and its agents.

Amend Bill, page 9, line 9, by striking out all of said line and inserting:

(b) Conditions for authorization.--

(1) To operate a carbon

Amend Bill, page 9, line 11, by inserting after "obtain":

, and must be in compliance with,

Amend Bill, page 9, line 12, by inserting after "regulations.":

Upon submission of a UIC Class VI permit application, the storage operator shall provide notice of application to the surface property interest owners and subsurface property interest owners in the vicinity of the storage facility.

(2) The following apply to seismic monitoring:

(i) A storage operator shall deploy prior to carbon sequestration, and periodically operate during carbon sequestration, a seismicity monitoring system to determine the presence or absence, magnitude and the hypocenter location to the best of the storage operator's ability of seismic activity within the vicinity of the storage facility as may be necessary to perform an array and a risk analysis and as required by the department. A storage operator may apply to the department for a waiver of this requirement if the storage operator presents a geohazard assessment and historical injection data demonstrating that induced seismicity does not pose significant risk.

(ii) If a storage operator is unable to reasonably negotiate with a surface property interest owner for the right to conduct seismic monitoring on lands owned by the surface property interest owner, the secretary may issue an order for the entry onto the lands by the storage operator. In this instance, the storage operator shall pay the surface property interest owner just and reasonable compensation as established by the secretary.

(iii) The storage operator shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless the surface property interest owner and subsurface property interest owner for all claims arising out of entry onto the property by the storage operator, its contractors and its agents.

(iv) A storage operator shall provide for the submission to the department of any seismic data above a seismic threshold or frequency determined by the department in a manner provided for by the department.

(3) To operate a carbon sequestration project under this section, a storage operator shall design the carbon sequestration project to isolate any existing or future production from the mineral, including of the coal, or oil and gas estate, from the carbon dioxide plume and

shall indicate whether the storage facility contains commercially valuable mineral, including the coal, or oil and gas estates, and, if it does, a permit may be issued only if the department is satisfied that the interests of the mineral, including coal, or oil and gas estate, will not be adversely affected and have been addressed in an agreement entered into by the storage operator and the subsurface property interest owners.

Amend Bill, page 10, line 14, by striking out "direct physical" Amend Bill, page 10, line 16, by striking out "Damages" and inserting:

Redress and damages

Amend Bill, page 10, lines 18 through 21, by striking out "may recover monetary damages due to" in line 18 and all of lines 19 through 21 and inserting:

or lessee who incurs injury or damage or loss of property value as a result of the injection or migration of carbon dioxide described in section 8(a) shall have a right of action against the storage operator for injunction, damages or other appropriate civil or equitable relief.

Amend Bill, page 10, line 22, by striking out "or" and inserting a comma

Amend Bill, page 10, line 23, by inserting after "owner": or lessee

Amend Bill, page 10, lines 23 through 26, by striking out "not seek punitive damages due to" in line 23 and all of lines 24 through 26 and inserting:

seek recovery for any of the following:

(i) General and special damages, including actual damages, for the diminution in property value resulting from the injection and migration of carbon dioxide beyond the storage facility.

(ii) Punitive damages.

(iii) Reasonable attorney fees and costs.

(iv) Injunctive and other equitable relief.

(v) Other relief which the court deems necessary and proper.

(3) A surface property interest owner, subsurface property interest owner or lessee may not seek punitive damages due to injection or migration of carbon dioxide if the storage operator is determined to have had a reasonable basis for believing that the carbon sequestration project would not result in migration of carbon dioxide beyond the storage facility.

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

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

YEA-49

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

NAY-0

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

Without objection, the bill, as amended, was passed over in its order.

BILL OVER IN ORDER

SB 832 -- Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

BILLS ON THIRD CONSIDERATION AND FINAL PASSAGE

SB 915 (Pr. No. 1350) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in registration of vehicles, further providing for lost, stolen, damaged or illegible registration plate.

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-49

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

NAY-0

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

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

SB 1047 (Pr. No. 1334) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act designating a portion of Pennsylvania Route 31 from the intersection with First Street to the intersection with Yoder Avenue in the Borough of Mount Pleasant, Westmoreland County, as the Mayor Gerald D. Lucia Memorial Highway.

Considered the third time and agreed to,

On the question, Shall the bill pass finally?

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

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Mr. President, I rise today to ask for the Senate's favorable consideration of Senate Bill No. 1047, that designates a portion of Route 31 in Mount Pleasant Township as Mayor Gerald D. Lucia Memorial Highway. The

mayor was a constituent, and I counted him among my friends. He was affectionately referred to as "Jerry." His life spanned from July 30, 1945, to December 17, 2021. During his 76 years here on Earth, the mayor served his fellow Mount Pleasant neighbors to the fullest extent, and Representative Davanzo and I wanted to do something to acknowledge and commemorate his dedicated service to our community by naming the main pass in Mount Pleasant after him.

For 36 years, Jerry served as Mount Pleasant mayor, and prior to his death had recently just won reelection. For 46 years, he was a member of the Mount Pleasant Volunteer Fire Department. He spent 31 of those years as a fire chief and as the emergency management coordinator. He was named Mount Pleasant's Citizen of the Year in 2006, and named Pennsylvania State Mayor of the Year in 2016. During his life, he served as a volunteer at the food bank, a board member of the Frick-Excela Hospital, board member of the YMCA, former president of the Westmoreland County Boroughs Association, former president of the Westmoreland County Fire Chief's Association, coordinator for the borough Christmas lights installation, secured funding for Mount Pleasant's Veteran's Park, and spearheaded the construction of the Mount Pleasant gazebo. And it is just a wonderful little town. That gazebo in that area with the park has brought so much to the area.

I could go on and on about the contributions to our community that Jerry was responsible for. But the main point is that this man, who was committed to making the world better than he left it, actually left the world better than when he was born into it. Mount Pleasant and our community is a better place for having had his guidance and dedication. I also want to mention that he is survived by his wife, Diana; his son, Jerry; and daughter, Nicole. I would like to thank them for sharing Jerry with us and with our community. His passing was a great loss, but an even greater loss for his family, and I want to recognize them today as well. Again, I ask for a favorable vote so that this deserving public servant can be recognized and memorialized for his decades of selfless attention to the community.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Fayette, Senator Stefano.

Senator STEFANO. Mr. President, I too rise in support of Senator Kim Ward's legislation. And she just spoke of the kind acts of Mr. Mount Pleasant, Jerry Lucia, as Mount Pleasant Borough was part of the 32nd Senatorial District in the last legislative map. And if you went into his town, he was there to give you the brightest smile. So, I just wanted to share my personal thanks for him being recognized. And there is a section of the town that will now remember him, though, I am sure everybody who lives there now remembers him. But this is for the future, and the future people of Mount Pleasant, for "Jerry's town" in Mount Pleasant. So, thanks again for the Senate pro tem introducing this legislation in honor of such a great man who served the community for so many years as mayor and also as its fire chief.

Thank you, Mr. 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-49

|             |            |               |                      |
|-------------|------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Argall      | Dillon     | Langerholc    | Santarsiero          |
| Aument      | DiSanto    | Laughlin      | Saval                |
| 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           |
| Cappelletti | Hughes     | Pittman       | Ward, Kim            |
| Collett     | Hutchinson | Regan         | Williams, Anthony H. |
| Comitta     | Kane       | Robinson      | Williams, Lindsey    |
| Costa       | Kearney    | Rothman       | Yaw                  |
| Culver      |            |               |                      |

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.

BILL AMENDED

**SB 1054 (Pr. No. 1348)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of November 3, 2022 (P.L.2158, No.158), known as the Overdose Mapping Act, further providing for definitions and for establishment and design; and providing for entry requirements for EMS providers.

On the question,

Will the Senate agree to the bill on third consideration?

MASTRIANO AMENDMENT A3636 ADOPTED

Senator MASTRIANO offered the following amendment No. A3636:

Amend Bill, page 1, lines 10 through 13, by striking out all of said lines and inserting:

Section 1. The definitions of "authorized users" and "information technology platform" in section 2 of the act of November 3, 2022 (P.L.2158, No.158), known as the Overdose Mapping Act, are amended and the section is amended by adding a definition to read:

Amend Bill, page 1, by inserting between lines 18 and 19:

"Authorized users." [Law enforcement officers and any other permitted users of the overdose information network, as determined by the Pennsylvania State Police, who are required to report overdoses and suspected overdoses to the network in accordance with this act.] Any of the following:

(1) Law enforcement officers.

(2) Permitted users of the overdose information network, as determined by the Pennsylvania State Police, who are required to report overdoses and suspected overdoses to the network in accordance with this act.

(3) EMS providers who are required to report overdoses and suspected overdoses to an information technology platform as defined in this act.

\* \* \*

Amend Bill, page 3, by inserting between lines 17 and 18:

(d) Exemption.--An EMS provider who does not possess the necessary reporting technology shall be exempt from the 72-hour requirement under subsection (a) and shall report the information under subsection (b) as soon as practicable.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Franklin, Senator Mastriano.

Senator MASTRIANO. Mr. President, we worked closely with the Department of Health and the Bureau of EMS to craft this amendment. It also addresses several concerns raised during discussion in one of my committees. The amendment clarifies the definition of authorized users and also creates an exemption from the 72-hour reporting requirement for the small percentage of EMS providers who have not yet acquired modern reporting technology. The amendment ensures, additionally, that EMS providers do not have to make double entries. So, if they are already using a technology other than ODIN to report overdoses, they can continue using the existing technology. The Department of Health has pledged that they can easily get that data imported to ODIN without it becoming a double entry as well. An EMS provider--and I will highlight that point again--so, an EMS provider already making an overdose report into the existing reporting system will continue doing what they are doing at their location. Our desire in this amendment is to ensure there is no additional burden on our first responders, especially EMS. With this amendment, we have the support of the Department of Health, and I think that covers it.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

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

YEA-49

|             |            |               |                      |
|-------------|------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Argall      | Dillon     | Langerholc    | Santarsiero          |
| Aument      | DiSanto    | Laughlin      | Saval                |
| 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           |
| Cappelletti | Hughes     | Pittman       | Ward, Kim            |
| Collett     | Hutchinson | Regan         | Williams, Anthony H. |
| Comitta     | Kane       | Robinson      | Williams, Lindsey    |
| Costa       | Kearney    | Rothman       | Yaw                  |
| Culver      |            |               |                      |

NAY-0

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

Without objection, the bill, as amended, was passed over in its order.

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

**SB 1058, HB 1234, HB 1246, HB 1295 and HB 1661** -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

SECOND CONSIDERATION CALENDAR

BILL OVER IN ORDER

**SB 219** -- Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

BILL OVER IN ORDER AND LAID ON THE TABLE

**SB 259 (Pr. No. 1225)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 71 (State Government) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for regulatory review and for regulatory reduction pilot program; and making an editorial change.

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

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

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

**HB 358, SB 363, SB 501, SB 577, SB 801, SB 845, SB 975, SB 1014 and SB 1017** -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION AND REREFERRED

**SB 1099 (Pr. No. 1426)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 35 (Health and Safety) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in grants to fire companies and emergency medical services companies, further providing for definitions, for publication and notice, for award of grants, for consolidation incentive, for publication and notice and for award of grants, repealing provisions relating to COVID-19 Crisis Fire Company and Emergency Medical Services Grant Program and to Emergency Medical Services COVID-19 Recovery Grant Program, further providing for expiration of authority, repealing provisions relating to expiration of authority relating to COVID-19 Crisis Fire Company and Emergency Medical Services Grant Program and to expiration of authority relating to Emergency Medical Services COVID-19 Recovery Grant Program and further providing for annual reports.

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 1101** -- Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION

**SB 1111 (Pr. No. 1429)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in sentencing, further providing for definitions and for sexual offenses and tier system.

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

BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION, AMENDED

**SB 1120 (Pr. No. 1425)** -- The Senate proceeded to the consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in bonds and recognizances, providing for bail of persons posing threat to public safety.

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

BAKER AMENDMENT A3634 ADOPTED

Senator BAKER offered the following amendment No. A3634:

- Amend Bill, page 2, by inserting between lines 22 and 23:  
(1) The person is charged with committing a violation of 18 Pa.C.S. § 2702.1 (relating to assault of law enforcement officer) or 5104.2 (relating to evading arrest or detention on foot).
- Amend Bill, page 2, line 23, by striking out "(1)" and inserting:  
(2)
- Amend Bill, page 3, line 4, by striking out "(2)" and inserting:  
(3)

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Luzerne, Senator Baker.

Senator BAKER. Mr. President, amendment No. A3634 adds two crimes relating to law enforcement to the list of circumstances that make a defendant a person posing a threat to public safety. The first is assault on a law enforcement officer to include shooting at a police officer or making them come into contact with bodily fluid. You may recall Scranton Detective Kyle Gilmartin, who earlier this year miraculously survived two gunshots to the head inflicted by an individual who was out on bail for previously assaulting a police officer. The second is evading arrest on foot. You may also recall Scranton police officer John Wilding, who was killed in the line of duty in 2015 while chasing three 17-year-old robbery suspects. He left behind a young son and daughter.

These situations are incredibly dangerous not only for the police officer, but for the public at large. They call to attention bail practices in Pennsylvania and the very real threats that law enforcement officers face each and every day on the job. Under this amendment, when an individual is charged with either of these offenses, the magistrate who sets bail will be prohibited from setting unsecured, nonmonetary bail or releasing the defendant on

his own recognizance. It is important to note that the magistrate still maintains the discretion to set whatever amount the monetary bail he or she deems appropriate. In recent years, we have found bipartisan agreement on a wide range of criminal justice reforms. To accomplish this, we have had to overcome public skepticism that we are pulling back too far on community security. So, in crafting this amendment, we are dealing with two real-life situations that are certainly consistent with the original purpose of Senator Robinson's bill. Each incident here ended in tragedy due to the reckless actions of criminal suspects. This does not deny the accused the opportunity for bail. It simply requires sufficient bail to ensure their appearance in court. And while we may have different philosophies about bail as a general subject, I hope that there is agreement that the definition of community safety begins with protection of the law enforcement community constituting the first line of public protection. I urge an affirmative vote.

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

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

YEA-36

|            |            |               |             |
|------------|------------|---------------|-------------|
| Argall     | Dillon     | Langerholc    | Robinson    |
| Aument     | DiSanto    | Laughlin      | Rothman     |
| Baker      | Dush       | Martin        | Schwank     |
| Bartolotta | Farry      | Mastriano     | Stefano     |
| Boscola    | Flynn      | Miller        | Tartaglione |
| Brewster   | Fontana    | Pennycuik     | Vogel       |
| Brooks     | Gebhard    | Phillips-Hill | Ward, Judy  |
| Brown      | Hutchinson | Pittman       | Ward, Kim   |
| Culver     | Kane       | Regan         | Yaw         |

NAY-13

|             |         |             |                      |
|-------------|---------|-------------|----------------------|
| Cappelletti | Haywood | Muth        | Street               |
| Collett     | Hughes  | Santarsiero | Williams, Anthony H. |
| Comitta     | Kearney | Saval       | Williams, Lindsey    |
| Costa       |         |             |                      |

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.

**SENATE RESOLUTION No. 251, ADOPTED**

Senator PITTMAN, without objection, called up from page 6 of the Calendar, **Senate Resolution No. 251**, entitled:

A Resolution urging the Governor to offer the services of the Pennsylvania National Guard to the State of Texas in support of Operation Lone Star.

On the question,  
Will the Senate adopt the resolution?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Franklin, Senator Mastriano.

Senator MASTRIANO. Mr. President, thank you for the consideration of Senate Resolution No. 251, which urges Governor Shapiro to deploy the Pennsylvania National Guard to the State of Texas in support of Operation Lone Star. According to U.S. Customs and Border Protection data, over 7 million illegals have crossed the southern border, with the majority entering through Texas. To put this in perspective, the total number of illegals who have entered now is greater than the individual population of at least 22 of our States. In 2021, Governor Abbott of Texas launched Operation Lone Star, deploying the Texas National Guard and the Texas Department of Public Safety to the southern border. Operation Lone Star personnel worked around the clock to detect illegal crossings, arrest human smugglers and traffickers, as well as arresting cartel gang members, and to stop the flow of deadly drugs like fentanyl that were flowing into our nation. The operation has produced significant results. More than half a million illegals were apprehended, more than 40,000 criminals arrested, and the seizure of more than 468 million lethal doses of fentanyl so far. On May 16 of last year, the Texas Governor sent letters to all the governors in the United States requesting support for Operation Lone Star through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact, which enables States to provide assistance to one another and share resources in response to disaster or emergency. So far, 14 States have answered the call. This includes Arkansas, Florida, Iowa, Idaho, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wyoming, and they have deployed their resources and their personnel from their own Guards to the border in support of Operation Lone Star. An additional two States, Missouri and Louisiana, have announced they are going to respond to the call later on this year with personnel.

It is a fact, indeed, that every State is now a border State, and Pennsylvania has a compelling interest to help secure the southern border of the United States. One issue alone has haunted us all: fentanyl. Fentanyl traffic through the southern border has flooded through our communities, throughout our Commonwealth, affecting every town and neighborhood. Last year, we lost over 5,000 Pennsylvanians to the fentanyl poisonings coming mostly across the southern border. That alone is justification enough, but beyond the deadly drugs, the burden with property taxes and on our school districts is increasingly burdensome. According to a 2023 report from the nonpartisan Federation for American Immigration Reform, known as FAIR, they estimate at least 251,000 illegals residing in Pennsylvania, with a cost of \$1.6 billion on our taxpayers. I could think of better ways to use that money. Our schools cannot keep up with the increased demands on providing English as a Second Language education to young people from around the world. Schools are already having issues with recruitment and teacher burnout. Now we are asking them to become translators or to work through a translator.

This crisis is also having a devastating impact on housing availability and affordability. A report by Valor Capital released last month concluded that in regions experiencing a significant influx of new residents have heightened the burden on the local population of securing housing. Right now, we have 15,000 homeless in Pennsylvania, which includes 1,400 veterans living on the streets. This higher demand and pressure on limited

housing will sadly increase those statistics. I think we should help our own homeless and our own veterans first before rewarding illegals for breaking our laws. We all know the challenges many of our hospitals and EMS providers are facing to stay afloat. It is estimated that these illegals have resulted in an \$8 million uncompensated hospital expenditure in our State alone. Of course, we cannot ignore both the local and national security risks that an unsecured border brings to communities in Pennsylvania. According to the Department of Homeland Security, over 15,000 illegals in the U.S. were convicted of committing at least one crime in 2023. Over 3,000 committed violent crimes and almost 300 sexual attacks. Just a few weeks ago, an illegal entered the U.S. through Texas and murdered a 2-year-old Maryland boy. Little Jeremy Caceres was caught in a shootout in a park on a walk with his mom. The shooter was previously twice arrested on theft charges and had been ordered removed from the United States by an immigration judge in New Jersey but was repeatedly released from custody despite three immigration detainers against him.

FBI Director Christopher Wray testified in front of the U.S. Senate last week that he was concerned illegal border crossers could launch a terror attack on a scale of 9/11. Our foreign adversaries are certainly looking to take advantage of our open border. On the 17th of March, a Hezbollah terrorist was arrested on our southern border making his way across Texas. He said his intent was to come to the United States and to build a bomb. Most of us remember from 2 months ago an illegal that was interviewed by a reporter on the border, and this illegal was insulted that he was not recognized. Well, come to find out he was an Azerbaijani dissident and terrorist, and he said: you will know who I am in the future. Where is he now? More than 276 years ago, one of our great Founding Fathers, Benjamin Franklin, created what is now our Pennsylvania National Guard to provide a common defense in our Commonwealth in times of crisis. The lawlessness on the U.S. southern border and its impact upon the people of Pennsylvania constitutes a crisis that calls for the deployment of our National Guard.

A few weeks ago, Major General Schindler, our Adjutant General, testified during a Senate Committee on Appropriations hearing that the Pennsylvania National Guard would be ready and equipped to mobilize upon the order of the Governor. The Pennsylvania National Guard deployment to assist other States is not unprecedented. The first deployment of the National Guard to the southern border was in 1916 in response to a cross-border raid from Pancho Villa on March 9, 1916, and our Guard was sent down to secure the border, and I am proud to say that my great-grandfather was one of the soldiers to respond to that call. In 2007, President Bush and a bipartisan group of border governors from 4 States launched Operation Jump Start and solicited help from all 50 States. Governor Rendell responded, putting aside any partisan politics, and he authorized the deployment of about 500 of our Pennsylvania National Guard troops to help secure the border in 2007 and 2008. The crisis now is even greater. I believe that securing our border is not a partisan issue. Instead of simply wringing our hands and saying this is a Federal government problem, let us act here in the General Assembly and do our part. I respectfully urge an affirmative vote on Senate Resolution No. 251.

Thank you, Mr. President.

**The PRESIDENT (Lieutenant Governor Austin A. Davis) in the Chair.**

LEGISLATIVE LEAVE CANCELLED

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

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

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Street.

Senator STREET. Mr. President, I rise to urge a "no" vote to this resolution. Governor Abbott has behaved in an unconstitutional, reckless, and inhumane way, placing floating barges of barbed wire in a river so that people will literally be torn to pieces if they touch it; putting people on buses and shipping them around the country, dropping them off in the middle of places where they do not know where they are, and not respecting or calling the governors or the mayors of the cities receiving them. Moreover, the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that his actions at the border are unconstitutional and illegal. How can a man stand and talk about standing for what is legal when he himself has taken illegal actions?

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania should not and must not engage in supporting the reckless, irresponsible actions of a governor who is out of control and himself is in violation of the law. This is not a Pennsylvania crisis. What is happening at the border and what Governor Abbott is doing is, in fact, precipitating a crisis and making it much worse. He should be working with the Federal government, he should be following the law, and we in Pennsylvania should not waste the Commonwealth's resources supporting the reckless and illegal actions of Governor Abbott.

We do have problems with gun violence right here in Pennsylvania that we could be addressing. We do have resources that we need to spend right here in Pennsylvania that our time and resources are better spent addressing. The Pennsylvania Senate should not be pursuing matters in Texas and certainly should not be advocating for the support of a governor whose actions have already been deemed to be unconstitutional. We need to be focused on the needs of Pennsylvanians, because they are great, not on the reckless, irresponsible, unconstitutional actions of the Governor of Texas. Mr. Chair, I yield.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Montgomery, Senator Muth.

Senator MUTH. Mr. President, I rise today in opposition to this resolution. I think for public awareness' sake and the sake of ensuring factual information, it is imperative here to state on the official record--I just want to bring quickly a few points to clarify that Senate Resolution No. 251 does not require a fiscal code. No Senate resolution requires a fiscal code. So, for the cost standpoint for taxpayer awareness, it is important to note that for approximately \$4 million, it will cost taxpayers for 90 days of coverage at the border if Pennsylvania National Guard should be sent there. Also, that the information that is cited in the resolution itself regarding the alleged \$1.6 billion in 2023 of taxpayer money that was spent to deal with illegal immigration issues, that group, the Federation for American Immigration Reform, has been identified as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center. So,

from a point of bias, I think it is just important to note that as well as that Pennsylvania has not received official correspondence asking for assistance at the border. It was said in a press conference. So, until that occurs, I do not know why we would be urging this. And also, our urgency should be behind hopefully getting Congress to pass a comprehensive immigration reform package that is humane and just and that clarifies that seeking asylum from a dangerous place is not illegal.

So, thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Cumberland, Senator Rothman.

Senator ROTHMAN. Mr. President, my friend from Philadelphia, the gentleman from Philadelphia, would be excused for missing this because it came out less than 8 minutes ago. The United States Supreme Court has refused to block Texas from implementing its own criminal law against illegal immigration, rejecting an emergency appeal from the Biden Administration, which argued that States cannot interfere with Federal authority over the border. The Texas law, known as Senate Bill No. 4, makes illegal border crossing a State crime and allows State officials to conduct deportations. The measure has been on hold as the Supreme Court weighed the government's request to halt implementation while litigation of the dispute proceeds in lower courts. A Federal district court had enjoined the law, but the Fifth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans said the law could go into effect, at least for now. So, it is not unconstitutional.

The conservative numbers that we have: over 250,000 illegal aliens, migrants, in Pennsylvania. That is the size of a Senate seat. Think about that. We are all border States at this point, and we should welcome immigrants to this country. We are a nation of immigrants, but they should come here legally, and what is happening now is a crisis. Over 8 million in the last 3 1/2 years, 8 million people have come here. Look, I understand why they come here. We live in the greatest country in the history of the world. We should celebrate why they come here, but they should come here legally like our ancestors did. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this resolution. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Bucks, Senator Santarsiero.

Senator SANTARSIERO. Mr. President, in 1865, the Confederate States of America lost the Civil War. There were two consequences of that fact. One, first and foremost, slavery was finally abolished in the United States. Secondly, the long-running debate that had consumed much of our national politics, in addition to slavery, from the time that the Constitution was passed until the end of the Civil War, namely State's rights versus Federal supremacy was decided in favor of the supremacy of the Federal government. Now, I mention that because the two examples that the maker of the resolution cited involved Presidents of the United States asking that National Guard troops be deployed. That is not the case here. That is not the case here. Instead, what we have is a governor trying to make a political point. And I am not questioning the motive of any Member of this Chamber, make it clear. I am, however, questioning the motives of the Governor of Texas because he is pretty clearly calling for this as a political stunt. And why is he doing that? Why is he doing that? Well, because the man who he supports in the coming presidential election has called on Congress and his allies, particularly in the United States House of Representatives, to take no action on the bipartisan bill

that was worked out as a compromise in the United States Senate that would not only address the crisis at the southern border, but provide vital aid to the State of Israel and the country of Ukraine. And the only reason, the only reason that that bill was not moved through the Senate and sent to the House is because that former President, now running for reelection, decided that it would not be good for him politically if it passed. And so, the Speaker of the House, Mike Johnson, has decided he would not move it. And so, we are in this era of political theater at the national level.

Mr. President, if we want to actually say something that is meaningful to deal with this crisis rather than support this resolution, I would argue that we pass a resolution calling on the United States Congress to pass the bipartisan agreement on immigration, support for Israel, and support for Ukraine. And President Biden has said he will sign that bill if it gets to his desk. It is time for the theater to end.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator PHILLIPS-HILL. Mr. President, I rise in support of Senate Resolution No. 251. As noted by the good gentleman from Cumberland County, this resolution comes on the heels of a Supreme Court decision giving Texas the go-ahead to enforce their State law in the fight against illegal immigration. I think that the Governor of Texas successfully and rightfully argued for a State solution due to Federal inaction on the immigration crisis impacting our southern border. And the Governor of Texas said: "President Biden's deliberate inaction has left Texas to fend for itself." The illegal immigration crisis is impacting us all, as previously noted by my colleague from Lancaster County when he articulated that taxpayers are on the hook for \$3.5 million after an illegal immigrant escaped a prison in Chester County. And that does not cover the cost of the ongoing litigation. Now this illegal immigrant is housed in a State prison in Greene County at the cost to Pennsylvania taxpayers. More importantly, it does not cover the life that he took here in Pennsylvania when he murdered his girlfriend in front of her 7-year-old daughter and her 3-year-old son. The cost of illegal immigration is certainly real and significant in our Commonwealth.

According to the Federation for American Immigration Reform, illegal immigration, through education, police, corrections, healthcare, and public assistance, totals \$1.64 billion in Pennsylvania alone. So, what does that mean to the everyday hardworking southern York Countian? Well, according to the federation's research, each household is on the hook for \$318 in Pennsylvania due to illegal immigration, \$318 that could go toward bills, car payments, a new appliance, you name it. Instead, it is paying for illegal immigration in this State because of the inaction on this crisis. Today, with President Biden a month removed from his State of the Union Address where he also referred to that killer as an, in his words, "illegal," we have an opportunity to join States like Ohio, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and many other States to address this issue and secure our southern border. Securing our southern border will secure our citizens' rights right here in Pennsylvania, and the longer that the Biden Administration takes to address the issue, the worse it will get. This resolution is a solution to the problem that we face and an opportunity to address this issue as a Commonwealth. We get a lot of good policy done at the State level, and this is no different.

So, I respectfully urge my colleagues to join me in supporting Senate Resolution No. 251.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Jefferson, Senator Dush.

Senator DUSH. Mr. President, I thought I had said enough on this yesterday during the Committee on Appropriations hearing, but some things concern me about what was brought up today. First of all, Article IV, Section 4 of the United States Constitution requires that: "the United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion." We have people in Mexican army uniforms on the American side of the border. We have people coming in armed, bringing folks across the border who we know and have proven to be foreign actors of terror who are on the watch list. This is an invasion. The fact that there are others coming across along with them in order to disguise that invasion does not make it any less of an invasion. In the absence of the performance of the duties of the Federal government, the Governor of Texas is absolutely exercising his State's sovereign powers to protect the citizens of the State of Texas. Talk about theater; the theater in the discussion that was brought up, that is theater. When you are talking about political stuff, that is theater. We are talking about the reality of the people here in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania who have been murdered by these people. We are talking about the reality of the impact to the taxpayers of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania who have to pay for schooling for these kids who are coming across illegally, who are having to pay for healthcare. We are taking that out of the pockets of our own citizens.

Now, if these folks had come across here legally and were contributing, that is a different discussion. And I will tell you the stuff that is going on. I had a gentleman with whom I have been working on the human sex trafficking issue. He was down on one of the ranches in Texas here about 3 weeks ago. The ranch is over 5,000 acres. The guy who owns that ranch, the brothers who own that ranch, are suffering from significant losses to the livestock on their property. And these kids who are being brought across because these folks that are involved in the sex trade are going to these parents in these countries and somehow securing those kids and bringing them up here and having our Federal government just picking up a phone call because they have got a phone number on them and calling someplace up in Denver to a burner phone and saying: hey, have you got so and so? And then that little kid is put on a bus. We cannot stand for this. The Governor of Texas absolutely has the constitutional authority to protect his citizens, and our Governor needs to stand alongside of him along with my former colleagues in the National Guard, both the Army and Air National Guard, as I did on the border just north of El Paso. We have people who are committed to helping to stop this scourge, who are committed to stopping this invasion. We need to stand alongside Texas. We need to stand alongside of the citizens in the rest of the country, and more importantly, alongside the people of Pennsylvania who are being impacted by this. I stand in support of Senate Resolution No. 251. Thank you.

## LEGISLATIVE LEAVE CANCELLED

The PRESIDENT. Senator Martin has returned, and his temporary Capitol leave is cancelled.

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

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Montgomery, Senator Pennycuick.

Senator PENNYCUICK. Mr. President, I rise in support of Senate Resolution No. 251 from my own personal experience. I have spent a considerable amount of my military service in the Middle East. During that time, I had a lot of interaction with Middle Easterners, and I had up close and personal interactions with ISIS fighters. As I watch the TV every night and they show those people waiting at the border to come into this great country--and as my colleague said, the best country on the Earth--I do not see refugees looking for a better way of life; I see military-aged fighting men, and I see men from China; I see men from Iran, the Middle East, ISIS fighters, terrorist watch list. Let me tell you what that means to America. If you think they are coming here for a better life, no, they are not. They are coming here to destroy our lives. Their mantra is: they will fight the devil at their door or take the fight to them. And they are bringing the fight to America, and they are going to be the terrorist cells in cities across this great nation. The women and children who come face a very perilous journey of rape, trafficking, and being sold into slavery.

If that is not bad enough, the fentanyl that is coming over the border is killing our children. That alone should be enough for every parent to say: no more. Yet, that is not the last of the problems. Venezuelan government just released their prisons. So, now those prisoners are coming for a better life in America. They are bringing their guns and their gangs. Nursing student Laken Riley was killed by an illegal immigrant. That could have happened to any of our children. We need to look at this for what it is. Our border is unsecure, and a country without a border is not a country. We owe it to the citizens of Pennsylvania to help Texas because they are coming here. And I do not under any thought process think that there are not bad actors, because they are coming, and they may already be here, and we owe it to every citizen of Pennsylvania to protect them with whatever we have.

Just because the fight is in Texas does not mean it does not affect us, because when they are in Philadelphia it is going to be a different story. And when the gangs are operating in Pittsburgh, we are going to be up in arms. And when the fentanyl is killing our kids at such a rate, we just cannot ignore it, we are going to say: How did this happen? This is horrible. It is happening now; we cannot wait anymore. This is not a partisan issue; this is a national issue; this is an American issue. I had always hoped that my military service would never come to my shore. Leave that military service and the death and the destruction overseas. I fear you may all find that death and destruction at your door. We need to be united with our southern States that are fighting this immigration issue, and we need to support them.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator MARTIN. Mr. President, I heard when I was walking up here, I heard the word "theater" utilized to describe what is

going on in our country right now related to immigration. I think we really need to be careful when we use such terms, given the fact about what is coming across the border and how much it is impacting every single State across our country. I do not think families who have loved ones who have died of fentanyl--which no one disputes is flowing across our border at a rapid pace--I do not want to call that theater. We heard about the story of Laken Riley. That is not theater. We are all aware of what happened here in Pennsylvania with an escaped individual who committed murder in another country, but then commits murder here when he is released into the public and the cost to our taxpayers and the actual scourge of communities as being theater. What I think theater is, is listening to the politicians talk about how they need to do a bill in order to fix what is going on there when it was exactly executive orders unwound that could be rescinded or rewritten in order for our Federal government to do its job. Saint Patrick's Day, terrorists from Hezbollah, from Lebanon, arrested crossing our border who has already confessed with his intent to set off and detonate a bomb in New York City. To our citizens, that is not theater. But why States have to respond to address this crisis, which is now impacting our whole country, is because of the failure of our Federal government to do its constitutional duty.

You know, not too long ago, I had the ability to come back into this country and have to go through that process. And of course, all of our citizens, when they are traveling through airports, there is such great irony when I think about this. We make them get passports and have to prove their identity. We make them go through 3-hour security lines to come into our country, take off various forms of our clothing and jewelry. They use dogs to search our luggage. They put all our belongings through x-ray machines. They put us through x-ray machines and air sniffing us for chemicals and other things that are on our body. We require that as a daily part of American life. But for some reason, we do not expect that same sense of security for individuals coming through our border. And for anyone who wants to tie this and say: well, we must be against immigration, or we must be against refugees--they are full of it. I come from one of those areas where people escape for religious freedom, people securing political persecution and coming to the refugee capital of the world in Lancaster. They went through the process; they went through the security; they went through the vetting. But we have people who think it is okay to put those folks through that, that did it legally. There are folks who say it is okay that we put our citizens through it on a daily basis. But somehow, if we are concerned or we want to take the initiative to bolster what is happening at our border out of concern for our loved ones--their health and well-being, their lives--that somehow that is theater. That is ridiculous. It is time we all stand up as a country, every State in this nation, the Federal government, and take seriously our responsibility to keep our citizens safe, and we can still be a welcoming country at the same time.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes, for a second time, the gentleman from Bucks, Senator Santarsiero.

Senator SANTARSIERO. Mr. President, no, the crisis is not theater. What is theater is after the negotiation of a historic, bipartisan compromise that would have instituted the toughest immigration policy that we have seen in generations, after that was hammered out, it was effectively killed in the United States

Congress. And it was killed in the United States Congress because of political theater, make no mistake. It was killed in the United States Congress because the putative Republican nominee for President decided that it would be a political liability for him if it were to pass. That is what happened. The crisis at the border can be resolved tomorrow if that bill were allowed to be brought up in the United States Congress. And it is not, because the man who tried to overturn a free and fair election--

#### POINT OF ORDER

Senator PITTMAN. Mr. President, point of order.

Senator SANTARSIERO. --by fomenting rebellion--

Senator PITTMAN. Mr. President, point of order. That--

Senator SANTARSIERO. --on January 6 is against--

The PRESIDENT. Members will suspend.

Senator PITTMAN. That has absolutely nothing to do with the topic at hand. Those comments need to be stricken from the record.

The PRESIDENT. Leaders will approach the rostrum.

[The Senate was at ease.]

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Bucks, Senator Santarsiero.

Senator SANTARSIERO. Mr. President, I will retract the comments with respect to the insurrection on January 6. But I will say this, that my comments regarding the former President and the fact that he deliberately tried to derail that compromise in Congress stand because that is the truth. That is the truth. And, again, if we as a body are interested in doing something meaningful about the crisis at the border--which, to be clear, is not theater, and I never said that it was--we should be passing a resolution that urges the United States Congress to pass that bipartisan compromise to secure the border, provide funding for the State of Israel, and provide funding for Ukraine in its hour of need.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes, for a second time, the gentleman from Jefferson, Senator Dush.

Senator DUSH. Mr. President, I will repeat, the United States shall guarantee under the Constitution, the United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union the protection from invasion. Thirty-eight months ago, we started to get this invasion because of some executive orders. They did not come from the previous President. They came from the current President. Those executive orders and the policies and procedures that have been adopted by the current Federal administration are what have led to this crisis. And for it to be suggested that the Governor of Texas or the people of this Commonwealth or the Federal legislators be held over a barrel to support legislation that has nothing to do with that--and I am talking about the additions to the border security--that is blackmail. And it is holding the citizens of Texas and each of the States of the United States hostage. That is not the responsibility of the government. And when we are here standing in support of a State who is trying to protect the rest of us from this invasion, we are doing what we are supposed to do for the people of this Commonwealth. What we are doing is not theater, but to try and tie this thing to some other form of blackmail from Federal legislators, that is theater.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes, for a second time, the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Street.

Senator STREET. Mr. President, look, I will be brief. The guns and the violence that is happening in Pennsylvania, those guns are not coming across the border from Texas. The best way we should be keeping Pennsylvania safe is not to be deploying resources to Texas. It is to pass laws addressing the gun violence that is happening here in Pennsylvania. Our resources should not be spent going down to Texas. And for a person who talks to parents of kids who have been killed almost every day, who lives in a community where people are dying, who had a staff person who once again had another relative shot this week, those guns, those bullets, those problems are not coming across the border. Those guns are being purchased in Pennsylvania. Our gun violence problem is in Pennsylvania. If we want to keep Pennsylvanians safe and deal with something that is not theater, that is not the Federal government's prerogative, that is not happening in Texas, we should not be dealing with spending Pennsylvania resources on sending people to Texas, we should be passing laws to deal with the gun violence problems right here in Pennsylvania. I yield.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Mercer, Senator Brooks.

Senator BROOKS. Mr. President, it seems as though in the past several years, any difficult issue has to be polarizing. It has to become political. But, Mr. President, the parents whose hearts are breaking because their children are no longer with them--it is not Republican, Independent, Democrat; it is not about the previous President--it is about that their child's life and losing that child somehow makes a difference in this battle against drugs. And the illegal drugs that are coming across this border are impacting Pennsylvania families. This resolution is not dealing with legal immigration in the conversation in Washington. It is dealing with deploying our National Guard to help Texas to stop the flow of those illegal drugs and illegal firearms so that our children quit dying.

I think about the kids who I watched grow up with my kids playing basketball or baseball, and they had their whole life ahead of them, and I think about cheering for those kids in the stands who are no longer here because of these drugs. This is not a political issue, and we have got to stop making it political. It does not have anything to do with President Trump. Quit playing games with the families whose hearts are breaking. This resolution, all it is about is stopping the illegal flow of drugs across our borders, the illegal firearms that are killing innocents, and, as the previous colleague talked about, the gangs that are coming across our borders. That is what this resolution is about. It is not about legal immigration or any other conversation. It is about controlling our borders and saving our kids.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I rise to lend my opposition to Senate Resolution No. 251. My colleagues on this side of the aisle, I think, very eloquently articulated to my colleagues here why we believe that it is important that an alternative path be taken. That alternative path being one where, as my colleague from Bucks County mentioned, that we find a way to encourage Congress, from this body, from this General Assembly, admonishing for Congress to not move forward what was perceived to be a historic immigration reform package with other measures

alongside of that. These are the types of things, I think, that could have a positive impact on the situation that is taking place at our borders. You know, when we talk about some of the things that the Governor of Texas has done, as was mentioned by my colleague from Philadelphia, some of the outrageous things that have taken place, there were comments about reality, and what is the reality we have here in this Commonwealth and what we have going on in Texas. Certainly, we know that there is a border crisis, as we talked about. The question is, how do we address it?

We believe that the solution is putting into place, as I mentioned, and asking Congress to enact legislation that, quite frankly, is being blocked from being enacted, from individuals who are running for President. That is a fact; that is reality. I challenge anyone to say to me at this moment in time that that is not what is taking place. There is also the reality about what came out of the Supreme Court today. Let us be very clear. The constitutionality of the law that Texas passed was not deemed to be constitutional on its merits. All that happened today was there was a stay that was lifted. But very clearly, the Supreme Court said they would remand the case back to the Court of Appeals for the Court of Appeals to then make a determination as to whether that law is constitutional or not. So, to suggest that they have the constitutional right to do that because it has been deemed to be constitutional is an inaccurate statement to that end.

What the court also said was if, in fact, the Court of Appeals does not render a decision timely, that the appellants have an opportunity to come back to the Supreme Court for it to be addressed. That is the reality. The reality is that this measure would cost this Commonwealth multiple millions of dollars, which we believe can be better spent addressing some of the things that folks talked about on the other side of the aisle: gun violence in the city of Pittsburgh, other types of violence across this Commonwealth with specific references to Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. Those problems in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia are not directly related to the activities that are taking place in Texas. These are longstanding problems that have occurred in many of our urban settings that we, quite frankly, as a General Assembly, have not taken and have not had the courage or the will to address, things like many gun safety measures that we talked about. We talked about protecting individuals, and the previous speaker talked very passionately about how families feel when they have lost loved ones. And there are many folks who have lost loved ones to gun violence, but at the end of the day, we have not done anything to be able to prevent that from happening in our own Commonwealth, in our own backyards. Lost and stolen weapons, for example, is something that we should be talking about. Straw purchasers is something, quite frankly, that will go a long way to address some of the concerns that we have here in this Commonwealth.

These are some of the measures that I think we need to be able to talk about. But let us be clear, there is an issue that needs to be resolved in this conversation, and it is what we do as a General Assembly, what we do as a Senate, to encourage others to move to action. We should be moving our Congress to action to do something at that level. We should be doing something to encourage our President to be able to take steps along those lines to maybe revise or refine what could be done at the Federal level. But for the State of Pennsylvania, the Senate of Pennsylvania, to say to the Governor: Governor, we need you to send our National

Guard folks down to Texas; when, in fact, the request has never come to the Commonwealth. There has been no request from Governor Abbott to Governor Shapiro saying please bring your troops down to Texas. That has not happened. My understanding is there was a blanket press release saying everyone come help us if you can. That is not the official request that we need. And, quite frankly, if the situation was as dire as many folks have made it to be here today, which I do not believe is the case, I think, at the end of the day, there would have been a formal request to the administration here in Pennsylvania to do something along those lines. Again, I ask my colleagues for a negative vote and not to support this measure that would require our National Guard troops move down to Texas to be able to address what is being done in Texas.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator PITTMAN. Mr. President, I am impressed. I am impressed with my friends on the other side of the aisle and their acknowledgment that the words of President Trump are more impactful on national policy than the inaction of President Biden. Indeed, I think that speaks volumes to the very reason why we are standing here today debating this very significant issue. To suggest that this is not a Pennsylvania problem, I have two words: Laken Riley. To suggest that this is political theater, I have two words: Laken Riley. Indeed, this crisis knows no borders. It knows no bounds. And if you want to talk about some political theater, let us go back to the State of the Union Address. In the President's moment of candor--granted, he misspoke on the proper name of Laken Riley--but he also was candid in his acknowledgment that she was murdered by an illegal immigrant. I was frankly impressed with that moment of candor, only to realize that in 12 hours the President had to walk his statement back because so many in his party were offended by it. It is unfortunate that the current President of the United States does not have the willpower, the capabilities, the standing among Congress to bring a deal together. To suggest that a former President of the United States can stop a current President of the United States from bringing Congress together is impressive. And it speaks to the weakness of the current leadership of the gentleman at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Now the gentleman at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue is well secured by a big wall around 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, by armed Secret Service agents with an arsenal unrivaled to anyone, anywhere.

So, we can talk about some political theater. In fact, I would argue that the political theater of the current administration is what is, sadly, laughable. In fact, it would be humorous if it was not so sad. As the gentlelady from Crawford [sic] County pointed out, these are real lives, these are real people, and to suggest that this is about political theater and to suggest that this is not a Pennsylvania problem is a travesty and, quite frankly, it is being dishonest with those who we represent. So, we must pass this resolution, and whether Texas Governor asked Governor Shapiro to be part of this or not is not relevant. This is about the sense of the Senate in what we believe is a priority for Pennsylvania to protect not only our citizens, but citizens across this nation. We are, in fact, a United States of America, which means we, as States, must come together, join together, and work to protect all of our

citizens, regardless of the State in which they live. I ask for an affirmative vote.

Thank you, Mr. President.

POINT OF ORDER

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

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, very briefly, I mean, there was a point in the gentleman's comments that I believe that he impugned the reputation and the integrity of one of our Members by referencing that his dialogue, his reference, and his remarks were dishonest. And we do not certainly believe that that was what the Member intended, but those are words that now spread across this record that we have a concern about. The fact the information that the Member spoke about, and all of our Members spoke about, is actually factual and not dishonest. I am not sure what the appropriate measure would be to address that, but if we can maybe be at ease for a moment to be able to deal with that, I would appreciate it.

Senator PITTMAN. Actually, Mr. President, I do not think there is a need to be at ease. I will clarify my reference on dishonesty. The references to political theater are dishonest comments. That is what is dishonest.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, again, I think that the reference that was made to theater was made, as it relates to the gentleman's comments, was not with respect to the crisis, I think, as he mentioned in his response to what was previously raised, and for those reasons we think that those words need to be considered being stricken from this record. I guess at the end of the day, Mr. President, one can disagree with how he portrays the situation, but it is not dishonest. That is the point I am trying to make.

The PRESIDENT. Is the gentleman seeking to make a motion?

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I make a motion we be at ease for a moment.

The PRESIDENT. Will the Leaders approach the rostrum?  
[The Senate was at ease.]

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

Senator PITTMAN. Mr. President, I will clarify my belief that the comments relevant to political theater were inaccurate. Thank you.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVES

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

Senator PITTMAN. Mr. President, I request a temporary Capitol leave for Senator Farry.

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

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

The PRESIDENT. Senator Pittman requests a temporary Capitol leave for Senator Farry.

Senator Costa requests a legislative leave for Senator Muth.

Without objection, the leaves will be granted.

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-27

|            |            |               |            |
|------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Argall     | DiSanto    | Martin        | Rothman    |
| Aument     | Dush       | Mastriano     | Stefano    |
| Baker      | Farry      | Pennycuik     | Vogel      |
| Bartolotta | Gebhard    | Phillips-Hill | Ward, Judy |
| Brooks     | Hutchinson | Pittman       | Ward, Kim  |
| Brown      | Langerholc | Regan         | Yaw        |
| Culver     | Laughlin   | Robinson      |            |

NAY-22

|             |         |             |                      |
|-------------|---------|-------------|----------------------|
| Boscola     | Dillon  | Kearney     | Schwank              |
| Brewster    | Flynn   | Miller      | Street               |
| Cappelletti | Fontana | Muth        | Tartaglione          |
| Collett     | Haywood | Santarsiero | Williams, Anthony H. |
| Comitta     | Hughes  | Saval       | Williams, Lindsey    |
| Costa       | Kane    |             |                      |

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

The PRESIDENT. The resolution is adopted.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS  
BILLS ON FIRST CONSIDERATION**

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

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

The bills were as follows:

**SB 99, SB 250, SB 454, SB 819, SB 1018, SB 1021, HB 663, HB 1760 and HB 1795.**

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

**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY**

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

SENATE OF PENNSYLVANIA  
COMMITTEE MEETINGS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 2024

|               |  |  |
|---------------|--|--|
| 9:30 A.M.     | GAME AND FISHERIES (to consider Senate Bills No. 67 and 1087; and House Bill No. 1409) | Room 8E-A<br>East Wing<br>(LIVE<br>STREAMED) |
| 10:30 A.M.    | FINANCE (to consider Senate Bills No. 148, 416, 479, 659, 1051 and 1056)               | Room 8E-A<br>East Wing<br>(LIVE<br>STREAMED) |
| Off the Floor | RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS (to consider certain Executive Nominations)            | Rules Committee<br>Conference Room           |

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 2024

10:30 A.M. VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY Darlington Twp.  
PREPAREDNESS (public hearing on the Vol. Fire Dept.  
Norfolk Southern train derailment on the 3590 Darlington  
Pennsylvania border - one year after) Road, Darlington

## PETITIONS AND REMONSTRANCES

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Philadelphia, Senator Tartaglione.

Senator TARTAGLIONE. Mr. President, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in supporting Senate Resolution No. 240 in recognizing March as Disability [Disabilities] Awareness Month in Pennsylvania. As we approach this coming budget this season and the busiest part of our legislative schedule, I encourage my colleagues to reaffirm and renew our commitment to helping people with disabilities. In Pennsylvania, 1 in every 4 adults has some form of disability according to the CDC. That is over 2.5 million Pennsylvanians and is perhaps a shocking figure to hear. A disability can affect someone from any age, race, or background, whether it be acquired at birth or from later-in-life event. Many of our friends and neighbors are experiencing disability, some of which may not be easily evident, but they still face their own individual challenges in living with a disability, even if their challenges are different from mine.

Despite advances in legal protections and the general increase in awareness, people with disabilities still face discrimination in the workforce, lack crucial public accommodations, and experience hardships in the day-to-day activities. This resolution seeks to bring awareness to the unique challenges faced by people with disabilities. I hope my colleagues will join me in ensuring that our fellow Pennsylvanians are provided the dignity, respect, and accommodations they deserve this month and beyond.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes, for a second time, the gentlewoman from Philadelphia, Senator Tartaglione.

Senator TARTAGLIONE. Mr. President, I rise because today marks 6,463 days since our Commonwealth last passed an increase in our minimum wage. However, as time has passed and I have met with more and more people, I have realized our priority cannot be raising the minimum wage. We need to implement a living wage for all workers. Mr. President, a minimum wage is a floor. It sets the lowest standard for the monetary value we assign to a person's time. Today, and every day for nearly two decades, this body has, through inaction, accepted that a person's time is worth just \$7.25 an hour, or 12 cents a minute.

For some reason, Mr. President, we have assigned a worth to workers in our Commonwealth's time who just are not able to sustain a life. Twelve cents a minute is an embarrassment. It is as simple as that. Mr. President, I want to be clear on this, making sure Pennsylvanians are able to earn not just a minimum wage but a living wage is not just about adjusting numbers on a paycheck. It is about acknowledging the inherent dignity in every individual and ensuring that they have the means to lead fulfilling lives. Mr. President, we live in a society where hard work is valued and rewarded, and rightfully so. The American dream is alive and well for so many, but for some reason, we forget those who need our help. The reality is that too many Pennsylvanians are forced to work multiple jobs or rely on public assistance

programs despite their dedication and efforts, working full time, sometimes even 50, 60, or 70 hours a week.

Look, my entire career has been dedicated to fighting for the working class across the Commonwealth. From my time as a union business agent and a staffer in both the Philadelphia City Council and the Pennsylvania Treasurer's Office to serving in this esteemed Chamber, I have seen firsthand how crucial it is to make sure our neighbors are able to survive off of the work they do. That is why I have championed minimum wage increases in the past and will continue to ensure we protect our low-wage earners today. As this budget season quickly approaches, I know we will come together to lay out our priorities and plan to help drive our Commonwealth through the next year. I, for one, know what my top priority will be, Mr. President. I am going to fight to ensure all Pennsylvanians earn a fair and livable wage for their work. I hope my colleagues will join me and agree. Our workers deserve better, Mr. President. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Franklin, Senator Mastriano.

Senator MASTRIANO. Mr. President, in reference to our recent debate on Operation Lone Star and the deployment of Pennsylvania National Guard troops to the Texas border, there was some discussion about whether a letter existed from Governor Greg Abbott to Governor Shapiro. And this is from the Governor of Texas' website and from his office, dated May 16, 2023. It says: "Governor Greg Abbott today urged the nation's Governors to help support Texas' unprecedented border security efforts in the wake of President Joe Biden ending Title 42 last week and his continued refusal to enforce Federal immigration laws." A following letter was sent to each of the 49 governors, and the letter reads, from the Office of Governor Greg Abbott: [Reading]

May 16, 2023

Dear Governor:

President Joe Biden's negligent disregard for America's national security hit another devastating milestone last week when his administration ended Title 22 [42] expulsions. Since taking office, President Biden has willfully refused to enforce our nation's immigration laws while systematically dismantling every effective border security policy that previously led to the lowest number of illegal border crossings in decades. The resultant surge in illegal immigration and transnational criminal activity is a direct consequence of these misguided actions, and yet President Biden further jeopardized our nation's security by ending Title 42 expulsions on May 11, 2023.

The letter continues, and I quote: [Reading]

With the end of Title 42 expulsions, President Biden's own administration estimates that at least 150,000 migrants are waiting to cross the U.S.-Mexican [U.S.-Mexico] border and enter our country illegally. The flood of illegal border activity invited by the Biden Administration flows directly across the southern border into Texas communities, but this crisis does not stop in our State. Emboldened Mexican drug cartels and other transnational criminal enterprises profit off of this chaos, smuggling people and dangerous drugs like fentanyl into communities nationwide.

In the Federal government's absence, we, as Governors, must band together to combat President Biden's ongoing border crisis and ensure the safety and security that all Americans deserve. The Emergency Management Assistance Compact empowers states to provide assistance to one another in times of disaster or emergency, both of which accurately describe the current border crisis. Join us in the mission to defend our national sovereignty and--the--territorial integrity and send all available law enforcement personnel and resources to the Texas-Mexico border to

serve alongside our thousands of Texas National Guard soldiers and Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) troopers.

Since 2021, Texas has spent more than \$4.5 billion on essential border security operations, and the Texas Legislature is currently contemplating an additional \$4.6 billion for the next two years. Additionally, Texas' continued work building our border wall has been funded through hundreds of millions of Texas taxpayer dollars and through private donations totaling more than \$55 million to date. But Texas alone should not have to shoulder the financial burden of protecting our nation.

As Governor of a border State on the frontlines, I have taken unprecedented actions to protect Texans and Americans. Since I launched our historic border mission, Operation Lone Star, in March 2021, Texas has apprehended more than 376,000 illegal immigrants and made over 28,000 criminal arrests, with over 25,000 felony charges. Operation Lone Star has also seized more than 416 million lethal doses of fentanyl that would have otherwise spread into communities across the nation. That's enough deadly fentanyl to kill every man, woman, and child in the United States. The [In] preparation for the end of Title 42 expulsions, I deployed the new Texas Tactical Border Force to the Texas-Mexico border. Hundreds of specially trained Texas National Guard soldiers joined the thousands already deployed as part of Operation Lone Star and immediately began targeting hotspots along the border to intercept and repel illegal crossings.

These efforts helped Texas hold the line against the influx of illegal crossings and criminal activity following the end of Title 42 expulsions, with widespread media coverage and recognition of our efforts in areas like Brownsville and El Paso. Even as the Biden Administration pulled Border Patrol agents off the line in areas like McAllen, the State of Texas held strong thanks to our brave, hardworking Texas National Guard soldiers and DPS troopers. Without the historic efforts Texas has deployed to respond to President Biden's derelictions of duty, the end of Title 42 expulsions would have been significantly worse. Because of Texas' surge in border security strategies and resources, including miles of additional razor wire barriers, illegal border encounters decreased significantly from last week's highs.

Already, states like Idaho have stepped up to [help] fill in the dangerous gaps created by President Biden's failed open border policies. Last week, Idaho Governor Brad Little announced the deployment of a team of Idaho State Police personnel to support Texas' border security operations [efforts] in a monthlong mission to prevent the smuggling of people and illicit drugs like fentanyl into America. The State of Florida has also offered resources, such as hundreds of Florida National Guard soldiers and law enforcement officers, as well as assets like drone technology. I thank these states for proactively addressing the crisis and request other states follow their lead in helping to secure America's border.

President Biden unleashed a nationwide crisis and subsequently denied the Federal government's responsibility to address it. However, as Texas had [has] demonstrated, when united, we can overcome any challenge.

Sincerely,

GREG ABBOTT  
Governor of Texas

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I am sorry, I apologize for not letting you know. I just have brief remarks I would like to share with our colleagues with regard to an important Senate Democratic initiative around the area of housing and the role that the Governor's budget has played with respect to that. My colleague Senator Haywood for a couple of years now has led the effort with respect to our PHARE program here in Pennsylvania, which is the Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement Fund. In this year's budget, Governor Shapiro has asked that we work towards increasing the PHARE program from its current \$60 million to \$100 million over the next several years

by increasing each year \$10 million. Every one of our districts, we know that we have housing needs along those lines, we have old housing, we have housing that needs to be rehabilitated. As I mentioned, our housing stock is old, and it impacts the people's ability to remain in their communities and their neighborhoods along those lines. But in addition to the PHARE program that Senate Democrats have been advancing for a number of years now, the Governor's proposal also carried with it other Senate Democratic priorities, specifically, some dealing with the Whole-Home Repair[s] Program. We did \$125 million back in 2022.

Again, every single county in this Commonwealth is experiencing the opportunity to drive our resources to stabilize not only homes, but neighborhoods and communities because of the Whole-Home Repair[s] Program. The Governor's proposal we have been working on would provide State resources this time in the amount of \$50 million to maintain that program: \$10 million for a Homeless Assistance Program, which is vitally important to address the needs of our homeless individuals across this Commonwealth as we see happening across many of our urban centers right now; \$5 million for legal representation and eviction proceedings; and \$5 million to local governments for response to emergency housing situations. These individual things build upon the work that has been done in a bipartisan, bicameral way, working with Governor Shapiro when we took two steps over the last couple of years to address the property tax and rent rebate. Again, in 2022, when provided, I believe it was \$130 million, to provide a 70 percent bump in the amount received by individuals, a bonus. And then followed that up this past year with an increase in the amounts individuals would receive, the maximum amount being from \$650 to \$1,000. But more importantly, increase in the income limits from \$35,000 to \$45,000 for homeowners and from \$15,000 to \$45,000 for those renters. These are important measures that address what needed to be done along those lines.

But going back to our proposal for PHARE--Senate Democrats have been advancing for a number of years--I would like to read some statistics that we do know that the PHARE program has provided and know that if we continue to implement what we have been talking about with regard to the program as recommended by the Governor and our Caucus. It is important that folks know these are the type of statistics that come from that activity, and this was as of June 30, 2023: 752 new affordable housing units using PHARE funds; 2,046 affordable housing units preserved or rehabilitated; 84 new single-family homes; 484 housing units for families facing homelessness; 592 new homebuyers who will get support to purchase their first home; over 11,600 families who received housing, counseling, and financial education; and over 10,700 families who receive housing assistance with rent, utilities, or transportation. Again, as I mentioned, our Caucus has made this a high priority, and we are delighted to see that Governor Shapiro has made this part of his budget proposal. And as we go forward to address the many issues that the Governor has raised through the budget proposal, one, ensuring that people have the opportunity to live in safe and secure and clean housing, environmentally free housing. That is what I think this Caucus is about, and we want to continue to have work in that space to address many of these issues that we think are imperative to be part of our final budget. So, I urge my colleagues to join us in working to ensure that these housing measures, to build upon the good work that we have already done in the

housing space, to be able to implement these proposals as part of Governor Shapiro's budget going forward.

Thank you, Mr. President.

#### **APPOINTMENTS BY THE MINORITY LEADER**

The PRESIDENT. The Chair wishes to announce the Minority Leader has made the following appointments:

Mr. Thomas J. Gluodenis, Jr., as a member of the Cleanup Standards Scientific Advisory Board.

Mr. Kevin Warren as a member of the Climate Change Advisory Committee.

#### **RECESS**

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

Senator AUMENT. Mr. President, I move that the Senate do now recess until Wednesday, March 20, 2024, at 11 a.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time, unless sooner recalled by the President pro tempore.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

The Senate recessed at 5:15 p.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time.