

## **ACTS AFFECTING COUNTY GOVERNMENT, 2002**

Following is the list of acts affecting county government that passed in 2002. Included are the bill number and printer's number (bill version), and the date the act was signed into law. Copies of each act are available at the Legislature's web site ([www.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/BI/billroom.htm](http://www.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/BI/billroom.htm); enter the 2001-2002 session bill number and at the next screen select the correct printer's number) or from the Association. Our thanks to the Local Government Commission, from whose act summaries this list is drawn.

**ACT 1** (S.B. 1200, P.N. 1645, January 7, 2002) – The act provides for congressional reapportionment, setting the boundaries and implementing procedures for the Commonwealth's 19 congressional districts. (See Act 34, following.)

**ACT 3** (S.B. 607, P.N. 1680, January 31, 2002) – This is legislation creating the Statewide Uniform Registry of Electors (SURE) system, an Association priority. The bill amends the Election Code by placing the Voter Registration Act within the Code, by requiring the Secretary of the Commonwealth to develop the SURE system, and by making several changes in provisions relating to duties and compensation of election officials.

**ACT 4** (H.B. 1813, P.N. 2681, February 13, 2002) – The act amends the Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors Act by expanding the definition of "practice of professional counseling" to further incorporate a practitioner's education and professional competence, by adding a year to the time period during which counselors are eligible to obtain licensure without examination, and by increasing eligibility for exemption from examination based on practice experience.

**ACT 14** (H.B. 1157, P.N. 3319, March 22, 2002) – The act amends the Local Tax Collection Law by allowing governing bodies of taxing districts, in the case of a vacancy in the office of tax collector, to enter into an agreement with an adjoining or "conveniently located" taxing district for the joint collection of taxes, and by clarifying that the elected tax collector shall serve as delinquent tax collectors without necessity of being annually appointed by ordinance, and specifying the time period for which that duty shall run.

**ACT 16** (S.B. 978, P.N. 1174, March 22, 2002) – The act amends the Real Estate Tax Sale Law by authorizing counties to contract with a private firm as an alternative to creating a tax claim bureau, and by authorizing two or more counties to provide for joint tax claims administration.

**ACT 18** (S.B. 985, P.N. 1196, April 2, 2002) – The act amends the County Code by increasing the maximum amount that may be paid for row officer conference expenses from \$110 to \$175 per day (with an annual cost of living adjustment to the cap), and by increasing the maximum allowable dues for associations of row officers.

**ACT 32** (H.B. 1923, P.N. 3463, April 17, 2002) – The act amends the Recorder of Deeds Fee Law to increase from \$2 to \$5 the fee collected on each document, used for recorder technology upgrades and the County Records Improvement Fund, and by clarifying that the act is applicable to home rule counties.

**ACT 34** (H.B. 2545, P.N. 3726, April 18, 2002) -- The act provides for congressional reapportionment, setting the boundaries and implementing procedures for the Commonwealth's 19 congressional districts, and repeals Act 1 of 2002.

**ACT 39** (H.B. 1935, P.N. 3725, April 23, 2002) – This is the "Main Street Act," which establishes a Main Street Program within the Department of Community and Economic Development, having the purpose of

helping a community's downtown economic effort through establishment of a local organization dedicated to downtown revitalization and management of downtown revitalization.

**ACT 41** (H.B. 2305, P.N. 3615, May 9, 2002) – The act amends the County Code by permitting the abolition of the office of jury commissioner in Berks County if the commissioners adopt a resolution to do so. Upon approval, the office of jury commissioner would expire with the completion of the current term.

**ACT 44** (S.B. 1240, P.N. 1972, May 16, 2002) – This amendment to the Election Code establishes the statutory and regulatory framework for the Statewide Uniform Registry of Electors (SURE). It also makes a number of changes to the Code, including authorization for poll watchers to be county residents, rather than requiring residence in the municipality or township in which they are authorized to act, and further providing for restrictions on alteration of election districts.

**ACT 45** (H.B. 1459, P.N. 1741, May 16, 2002) – This is the Open Work Force Law, which states that a political subdivision or its authority cannot, by ordinance, resolution, or otherwise, require that a specified percentage of the work force, or the hours worked, under a public works construction contract be made up or performed by individuals who are residents of the specific municipality, if any portion of the construction contract or of the project to which the construction project relates is financed utilizing Commonwealth or Federal funds.

**ACT 46** (H.B. 247, P.N. 3793, May 16, 2002) – This is the Community Services Block Grant Act, which serves as a continuation of the Community Services Act. The act is retroactive to January 1, 2002, and expires December 31, 2006.

**ACT 47** (H.B. 2087, P.N. 3684, May 16, 2002) – Amends the Sheriff Fee Act by authorizing the sheriff in a second class county, with approval of the president judge, to modify fees to offset existing costs, and authorizing additional fees for office computerization.

**ACT 56** (S.B. 391, P.N. 2068, June 19, 2002) – This is the Interstate Compact for the Supervision of Adult Offenders Act, adopted for the purposes of providing a framework to control and regulate the interstate movement of offenders in the community, providing for effective tracking, supervision, and rehabilitation of these offenders between sending and receiving states, distributing the costs and obligations among compacting states, and establishing the Interstate Commission for Adult Offender Supervision.

**ACT 57** (S.B. 1089, P.N. 2082, June 19, 2002) – Recodifies the DNA Detection of Sexual and Violent Offenders Act into the Judicial Code as the DNA Data and Testing Act.

**ACT 67** (S.B. 1092, P.N. 1524, June 25, 2002) – Amends the act requiring recorders of deeds to record final discharges of certain military personnel by adding recordation of discharges of personnel serving in reserve components.

**ACT 75** (S.B. 986, P.N. 1197, June 28, 2002) – Amends the Second Class County Code increasing the maximum amount that may be paid for row officer conference expenses from \$110 to \$175 per day (with an annual cost of living adjustment to the cap), and by increasing the maximum allowable dues for associations of row officers.

**ACT 77** (H.B. 2005, P.N. 4013, June 28, 2002) – Amends the County Code by conditionally authorizing a sheriff, deputy sheriff, detective, or other county police officer to engage in outside employment, including

employment in security services, and by authorizing commissioners to compensate solicitors appointed by the county controller or auditors.

**ACT 84** (S.B. 820, P.N. 1798, June 28, 2002) – Amends the Crimes Code by, among other things, making an offense of furnishing defined telecommunications devices to inmates.

**ACT 89** (H.B. 1848, P.N. 4197, June 29, 2002) – Amends the Tax Reform Code by, among other things, permanently suspending the transfer of the dedicated 0.25 mill capital stock and franchise tax monies to the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Fund and providing a trigger mechanism to transfer an equivalent of 0.25 mills from the General Fund to the HSCF if the HSCF balance falls below \$5 million, and by reducing the current 15% of realty transfer tax collections transferred to the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund to 10% for January 2002 to June 2002 and 7.5% for July 2002 through 2003, and restoring the 15% transfer for July 2003 and following.

**ACT 90** (H.B. 2044, P.N. 4198, June 29, 2002) – Amends the Environmental Resources Code by, among other things, adding the DEP-administered Waste Transportation Safety Program for the purpose of ensuring responsible and safe transportation of municipal or residual waste, including requirements for DEP authorization to transport waste, and by adding an additional \$4 per ton disposal fee on all solid waste disposed of at municipal landfills. In the first year, the first \$50M of revenue will go to the Environmental Stewardship Fund and the remainder to the general fund, and in following years the full amount goes to the Environmental Stewardship Fund.

**ACT 96** (H.B. 2126, P.N. 4129, June 29, 2002) – Amends the Optional Occupation Tax Elimination Act by extending its provisions to municipalities as well as schools, and requiring that the calculation of the income tax used to offset the repeal of the occupation assessment tax is to be based on 2001 collections for municipalities, and 2001-2002 collections for schools.

**ACT 100** (H.B. 2100, P.N. 4128, June 29, 2002) – Comprehensive amendments to the Right to Know (open records) Law, changing the burden of proof for determination of whether a record is open, authorizing agencies to furnish records in electronic media, providing for manner of filing requests for records and timelines for agency response, providing for redaction of nonpublic information from public records, providing appeals processes, establishing civil and criminal penalties for failure to release records, empowering agencies to establish fees for furnishing copies of records, and requiring agencies to establish written policies to implement the act.

**ACT 103** (H.B. 1458, P.N. 2677, June 29, 2002) – Comprehensive amendments to the fiscal sections of the County Code to bring the provisions up to date with current fiscal practices, to better define the roles between the commissioners and controller, and to provide tools to assist commissioners in better managing county fiscal affairs.

**ACT 7A** (S.B. 5, P.N. 2172, June 29, 2002) – This is the Commonwealth General Appropriation Act of 2002. It is a tough-economy budget but, despite the need to trim line items and raise cigarette taxes and tipping fees, few county lines are cut, most hold to prior year funding levels, and some lines increase. Human services lines were perhaps the most disappointing. With the exception of a 9% increase in C&Y needs based budgets, there were no cost of living increases across human services lines. Additionally, the Commonwealth appropriation in the Long Term Care line was cut by \$196 million from the Governor's proposal, but the difference was made up in a transfer from lapsed tobacco settlement funds. Among environmental lines, Growing Greener funds will now come primarily from the new \$4 per ton municipal

solid waste tip fee. In the first year, \$50 million of the new tip fee revenue is marked for Growing Greener, and the remainder goes to the general fund. In subsequent years, the full amount goes into Growing Greener, unless the Commonwealth has a deficit of greater than 3%, in which case up to 25% of the revenue would go to the General Fund. Most community development lines are held even or show cuts, although workforce programs benefit from new state funds, including funding for a Critical Job Training Grant Program to provide training for dislocated workers and target areas with high demand for qualified workers, and a new Workforce Leadership grant. In corrections lines, the senior judge support grants continue; counties must track the costs for senior judge expenses to obtain the reimbursement. Although the JNET line shows a cut, specific funding is included to allow another 18 counties to join the system. Justice lines also include a moderate increase in adult probation funding.

**ACT 111** (H.B. 754, P.N. 4170, July 10, 2002) – Amends the Waste Tire Recycling Act by, among other things, requiring the DEP to establish an authorization program and registry for waste tire haulers, by authorizing DEP to establish requirements for waste tire collection programs, and by establishing grants for tire collection programs.

**ACT 112** (H.B. 1501, P.N. 4171, July 10, 2002) – Amends the Crimes Code by further restricting the sale of tobacco to minors, increasing penalties for such sales, further providing for compliance checks, and preempting local ordinances or rules concerning the sale of tobacco.

**ACT 113** (H.B. 1952, P.N. 4048, October 2, 2002) – Amends the Urban Redevelopment Law by increasing the minimum redevelopment contract amount that necessitates a payment bond from \$500 to \$10,000, by further providing for blighted property removal, and by reducing the statute of limitations for appeals from five years to one year in instances in which a redevelopment authority has exercised powers of condemnation.

**ACT 115** (H.B. 2398, P.N. 3983, October 2, 2002) – Amends the Job Enhancement Act as it relates to the Small Business First Program by adding “agricultural producer”, “normal agricultural operation”, and “limited liability company” to the definition of small business, and by further providing for loans to be made by DCED from the Small Business First Fund to eligible small business enterprises. (See also Act 120)

**ACT 116** (H.B. 582, P.N. 4169, October 2, 2002) – Amends the Crimes Code by, among other things, including vandalism, defacement, or damage of state or local government buildings or vehicles within the offense “institutional vandalism.”

**ACT 120** (S.B. 1045, P.N. 2170, October 2, 2002) – Amends the Job Enhancement Act as it relates to the Small Business First Program by adding “agricultural producer”, “normal agricultural operation”, and “limited liability company” to the definition of small business, and by further providing for loans to be made by DCED from the Small Business First Fund to eligible small business enterprises. (See also Act 115)

**ACT 121** (H.B. 219, P.N. 1510, October 2, 2002) – Amends the Crime Victims Act by expanding the scope of assistance that the victim advocate may provide in parole hearings, and authorizing crime victims to submit videotaped statements or participate in parole hearings by conference call.

**ACT 122** (H.B. 2322, P.N. 4289, October 2, 2002) – Amends the Judicial Code by creating the Access to Justice Act to provide indigent civil representation, adding a \$10 fee to documents filed in the Recorder of Deeds office, to fund both the Access to Justice fund and to provide additional funding for the Judicial Computer System Augmentation Account.

**ACT 123** (S.B. 238, P.N. 2176, October 4, 2002) – Amends the Vehicle Code by, among other things, prohibiting school vehicle drivers from operating any such vehicle with any alcohol in their system.

**ACT 124** (H.B. 927, P.N. 4199, October 4, 2002) – Amends the General County Assessment Law by establishing that no amusement park rides shall be assessed or taxed as real estate, limiting the rates of amusement tax that can be charged at specified automobile racing facilities, and prohibiting an amusement or admissions tax to ski facilities. (See also Act 125)

**ACT 125** (H.B. 928, P.N. 4200, October 4, 2002) – Amends the Fourth to Eighth Class County Assessment Law in the same manner as Act 124.

**ACT 126** (H.B. 1215, P.N. 4443, October 10, 2002) – This is the Capital Budget Act of 2002-2003, which provides the overall limitations on debt to be incurred for capital projects by the Commonwealth.

**ACT 127** (S.B. 138, P.N. 2283, October 10, 2002) – Amends the Judicial Code by, among other things, further providing for the expenses and compensation of multicounty investigating grand juries, augmenting the policy of the Commonwealth calling for “significant” restraint “and caution” by the media in revealing the identities of children who are material witnesses to or victims of crimes, and further providing for State Police monitoring of sexually violent predators.

**ACT 128** (S.B. 572, P.N. 598, October 17, 2002) – Amends the Judicial Code by exempting the spouse, children, siblings, parents, grandparents, and grandchildren of the victims of criminal homicide from jury duty.

**ACT 129** (S.B. 612, P.N. 2228, October 28, 2002) – Amends the Criminal History Record Information Act by eliminating fees for criminal history record checks for persons who apply to become volunteers with a rape crisis or domestic violence program.

**ACT 130** (S.B. 832, P.N. 2296, October 28, 2002) – Amends the Capital Facilities Debt Enabling Act by expanding the definition of “Redevelopment assistance capital project” to include fire trucks and firefighting equipment, and increasing from \$1.2M to \$1.45M the maximum amount of redevelopment assistance capital projects to be undertaken by the Commonwealth.

**ACT 131** (S.B. 1213, P.N. 2292, October 30, 2002) – This is the Capital Budget Project Itemization Act of 2001 – 2002, itemizing capital public improvement projects to be undertaken by the Commonwealth.

**ACT 132** (H.B. 227, P.N. 3199, November 6, 2002) – Amends the Crimes Code by, among other things, adding employees of county children and youth agencies to the enumerated list of public officials provided special protection status from threat and assault due to the nature of their work or employment.

**ACT 134** (S.B. 834, P.N. 2319, November 20, 2002) – Amends the Crimes Code by, among other things, bifurcating the grading of offenses relating to certain offenses of sexual abuse of children.

**ACT 142** (H.B. 2674, P.N. 4710, December 3, 2002) – Amends the Commonwealth Procurement Code by, among other things, replacing the jurisdiction of the Board of Claims with the Board of Hearings and Appeals for Medicaid provider hearings before DPW.

**ACT 143** (S.B. 807, P.N. 2442, December 3, 2002) – Amends the Crimes Code sections on ethnic intimidation to make the offense applicable whether the victim’s protected status is “actual or perceived”

and to add ancestry, physical disability, sexual orientation, gender, and gender identity to the protected class.

**ACT 146** (H.B. 2772, P.N. 4630, December 6, 2002) -- Creates a new Targeted Community Revitalization and Crime Prevention Advisory Committee within PCCD to administer the “Weed and Seed” program. The program develops comprehensive, targeted crime prevention efforts and a planning process for the revitalization of high crime and distressed communities. Membership on the new advisory committee will include a county commissioner.

**ACT 150** (S.B. 824, P.N. 2435, December 9, 2002) – Amends the Election Code by, among other things, implementing changes to provide conformity with the federal Help America Vote act; requiring the Secretary of the Commonwealth, in consultation with county boards of elections, to develop a voluntary professional certification and poll worker training program; establishing within the Department of State a Voting Standards Development Board to develop uniform standards that define what constitutes a vote; authorizing appointment of students to serve as clerks or machine inspectors in limited circumstances; increasing the maximum allowable compensation for district election officers; eliminating the requirement that occupations be included with signatures on nomination petitions, and substituting a requirement that the name of the signatory be printed; instituting identification requirements for persons who appear to vote in an election district for the first time; limiting the nature of assistance a judge of election can offer inside the voting compartment; and requiring absentee ballots to be opened at the election district in districts where electronic voting systems are used.

**ACT 152** (H.B.152, P.N. 4693, December 9, 2002) – Amends the Vehicle Code by, among other things, decreasing from 0.04 to 0.02 percent the blood alcohol limit necessary to convict a person of driving under the influence when operating a school vehicle. **(See Act 123)**

**ACT 164** (H.B. 1686, P.N. 4603, December 9, 2002) – Amends the Library Code by changing the funding system for local libraries to clarify that the Incentive for Excellence Aid prohibition on reduction of local funding effort applies just to normal recurring costs, and allows an exception to that prohibition upon demonstrating to the state librarian “substantial curtailment of financial ability of the community.”

**ACT 170** (H.B. 1947, P.N. 4750, December 9, 2002) – Amends the Second Class County Code by increasing the authorized general purposes property tax millage to 40 mills; improving county procedures for selling or leasing real property; providing a limited exception to the separations requirement for public construction; clarifying terminology on recreation trails; and clarifying authorization of eminent domain to acquire easements for public parks.

**ACT 171** (H.B. 2055, P.N. 4696, December 9, 2002) – This is the Elder Care Payment Restitution Act, requiring that payments in excess of the cost of care actually provided be refunded by certain elder care facilities to a consumer’s personal representative upon death of the consumer, and establishing procedures for inventory and storage of consumer property.

**ACT 175** (H.B. 2109, P.N. 4681, December 9, 2002) – Amends the Municipal Waste Planning, Recycling and Waste Reduction Act by extending the sunset provision for the state’s \$2 recycling fee to January 1, 2009; allowing municipalities or counties with ordinances permitting limited burning of yard waste to receive recycling grants from DEP, reversing a recent policy decision of the Department; transferring moneys in the Recycling Fund that are not obligated by 2015 or expended by 2018 to the Solid Waste Abatement Fund; and directing the Department of Environmental Protection to develop a self-sufficiency plan for recycling

programs, including recommendations to county recycling coordinators, to be presented to the General Assembly within one year.

**ACT 177** (H.B. 2256, P.N. 4587, December 9, 2002) – Amends the Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors Act to change the educational requirements that marriage and family therapists and professional counselors must satisfy in order to obtain licensure without examination.

**ACT 182** (H.B. 2444, P.N. 3545, December 9, 2002) – Amends the Workers Compensation Act by designating all municipal coordinators of emergency management services to be employees of the municipalities for workers' compensation purposes.

**ACT 184** (H.B. 2456, P.N. 3493, December 9, 2002) – Amends the Deputy Sheriffs' Education and Training Act by increasing from 50% to 100% the reimbursement made to counties for deputy sheriffs' salaries while attending certified deputy sheriffs' basic training or continuing education schools, and providing that the Commonwealth will pay tuition directly rather than reimbursing the county.

**ACT 185** (H.B. 2595, P.N. 4633, December 9, 2002) – Amends the Second Class County Code by expanding the authorization for county employees to purchase retirement credit for armed forces service, and authorizing county employees who were formerly employees under the Urban Redevelopment Law to purchase county service.

**ACT 189** (H.B. 2729, P.N. 4723, December 9, 2002) -- Creates a Pennsylvania Travel and Tourism Office within DCED and, within that office, a 35 member Travel and Tourism Partnership Board responsible for reviewing and making recommendations to the Department and the Governor on the five year tourism master plan, providing advice on policies, procedures, legislation, and regulations affecting tourism, and serving as an advisory panel to the Department on all marketing and promotional services grants or projects valued over \$5 million. The act provides a seat on the Board for a member of CCAP to be appointed by the Governor.

**ACT 198** (S.B. 413, P.N. 2385, December 9, 2002) – Establishes a new Drug Education and Demand Reduction Fund administered by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency to provide grants to eligible organizations that administer such programs, and creates a new \$100 fee assessed against persons convicted of drug and alcohol violations, half which will remain in the counties for treatment and prevention programs, and the other half of which will be committed to the Fund.

**ACT 201** (S.B. 654, P.N. 2386, December 9, 2002) – Amends the Domestic Relations Code by adopting the Newborn Protection Act to provide for the ability of a parent to turn a newborn over to a hospital without criminal liability in limited circumstances.

**ACT 205** (S.B. 1204, P.N. 1547, December 9, 2002) – Clarifies the ability of political subdivisions to maintain records on a digital basis.

**ACT 213** (S.B. 1370, P.N. 2428, December 9, 2002) – Amends the Job Enhancement Act by, among other things, expanding the definition of small business enterprise; reinstating the Customized Job Training Program and the Machinery and Equipment Loan Fund Act; and making the Self-Employment Assistance Program Act permanent.

**ACT 214** (S.B. 1421, P.N. 2382, December 9, 2002) – This is the Religious Freedom Protection Act, which creates a general rule for state and local government that "government shall not substantially burden a

person's exercise of religion". Exceptions are allowed where the government can show that it has a compelling interest, and the burden imposed by government is the least restrictive means of furthering that compelling interest. A claimant has to prove by "clear and convincing evidence" that the statute, ordinance, or resolution creates a burden. The sole remedy is injunctive relief, and the act specifically prohibits monetary awards.

**ACT 215** (S.B. 1452, P.N. 2439, December 9, 2002) – The act amends the Judicial Code by, among other things, creating one additional judgeship each in Northampton, Delaware, Mercer, Montgomery, Indiana, Monroe, McKean, and Centre counties, and two additional judgeships in Bucks County (the judgeships will be filled in the 2003 municipal elections and will commence in 2004, with the exception of Northampton and Centre counties which will be filled in the 2005 municipal elections and commence in 2006); extensively supplementing provisions in the Juvenile Act; and establishing legal immunities for state parole officers and county probation officers.

**ACT 217** (S.B. 1478, P.N. 2438, December 9, 2002) – Extensively amends the Keystone Opportunity Zone Act by, among other things, adding the definition "improvement subzone"; authorizing political subdivisions to apply to the Department of Community and Economic Development for decertification of parts of a subzone; and extending the expiration date of the Act from December 31, 2013 to December 31, 2018.

**ACT 220** (H.B. 2302, P.N. 4697, December 16, 2002) – This is the Water Resources Planning Act, establishing a process for the creation of an updated and enhanced State Water Plan. The Act specifically preserves the existing authority of DEP and local governments to regulate water resources and protects DEP's ability to control water pollution under the Clean Streams Law. Water well provisions were not included in the bill. The statewide water planning process includes guidance from six regional committees and a state committee that will work with DEP to create the State Water Plan from regional plan components and will include designation of critical water planning areas where demand exceeds supply.

**ACT 224** (H.B. 2778, P.N. 4741, December 16, 2002) – Amends the Workforce Development Act by, among other things, altering the definitions of "certification" and "workforce development" and adding chapters on workforce leadership grants and workforce development courses. There is some question whether the bill fulfills the Association's priority because several of the bill's more significant changes were deleted, and the final version makes only modest statutory changes to conform with existing program practices. Most prominent among the deleted language was the whole set of provisions regarding the Chief Operating Officer, which would have placed the program within the Governor's office and would have been the first step toward overcoming categorical barriers to funding consolidation.

**ACT 227** (S.B. 1569, P.N. 2393, December 16, 2002) – This is the Counterterrorism Planning, Preparedness, and Response Act, charging the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency with coordinating and consulting with other state agencies, departments and offices, including the Office of Homeland Security, to establish, develop, and maintain the counterterrorism program. PEMA is required to work with county emergency management agencies, county and municipal health, police and public safety departments, volunteer services organizations and private entities to establish regional counterterrorism task forces throughout the Commonwealth responsible for preparing a counterterrorism preparedness and response plan, and for establishing specialized counterterrorism response teams to respond to potential or actual terrorist incidents involving chemical, biological, or radiological materials or other weapons of mass destruction.

**ACT 230** (S.B. 1100, P.N. 2436, December 30, 2002) – Amends the Municipalities Code by, among other things, requiring payment bonds for certain municipal construction projects that exceed \$10,000.

**ACT 231** (H.B. 1331, P.N. 4731, December 30, 2002) – The act amends the Administrative Code by, among other things, requiring the Governor to make appointments to row office vacancies from the same political party as the incumbent, and by making Senate approval a constitutional majority rather than a 2/3 vote.

**ACT 233** (S.B. 1528, P.N. 2244, December 30, 2002) – Appropriates \$16.5M into the Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Fund.

**ACT 235** (H.B. 1945, P.N. 4709, December 30, 2002) – Amends the Improvement of Deteriorating Real Property or Areas Tax Exemption Act by authorizing a local taxing authority to provide for a graduated tax exemption on the assessment attributable to the actual cost of construction of a dwelling unit under an established deteriorating dwellings improvement or deteriorating area improvement program.