



2025 County Priorities End of Year Status Update

CCAP members identified a total of three priority issues for 2025. Grassroots activity on the priorities began following their adoption at the 2024 Fall Conference. After a formal announcement in January, officers and staff launched efforts to work with the General Assembly and the Administration to introduce and advance proposals throughout the year. This report provides an update on the status of each priority issue.

911 Surcharge Reauthorization and Statute Updates

As part of the 2025–2026 Fiscal Code, the General Assembly and Governor reauthorized the 911 surcharge at a flat rate of \$1.95 through 2028. Counties achieved their top legislative priority for 2025 by securing reauthorization ahead of the January 31, 2026 deadline, ensuring continuity of this critical funding source. However, the surcharge remains flat-funded for the next four years. While counties had advocated for an increase to \$2.20, efforts to secure an adjustment will continue in the coming year to better reflect the true cost of operating and sustaining the 911 system.

Counties appreciate the General Assembly's timely action to extend the surcharge; however, the legislature did not approve the long-supported increase to \$2.20, which would have helped address the growing funding gap for 911 system maintenance, staffing, and technology upgrades. While reauthorization at \$1.95 avoids the most severe funding disruptions, the gap between county costs and available revenues continues to widen each year as operational demands increase.

Because counties have limited options to generate revenue beyond property taxes, they rely heavily on the 911 surcharge to support emergency communications. Rising costs associated with personnel, infrastructure, and rapidly evolving technology, particularly those related to Next Generation 911 (NG911), further strain county budgets and underscore the need for a sustainable funding solution.

In mid-2025, the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee, Local Government Commission, and Joint State Government Commission completed a comprehensive study examining 911 system efficiencies, costs, interoperability, and related operational issues. The report provides valuable insights into the system's current and future needs and highlights several longstanding concerns shared by counties, including funding adequacy, staffing challenges, and the technological demands associated with NG911 implementation.

Looking ahead, counties are actively preparing for 2026 by equipping members to engage legislators early on funding and NG911 policy updates. Counties remain committed to

advocating for the statutory changes necessary to ensure Pennsylvania's 911 system remains responsive, reliable, and aligned with evolving public safety needs.

Adequate County Mental Health Funding

Counties received flat funding for mental health services in the FY 2025–2026 state budget. While counties sought a \$100 million increase during this year's budget negotiations, no additional funding was approved. As this has been a longstanding priority and funding levels have remained unchanged for several years, counties will continue to lead efforts to ensure county mental health services are adequately and sustainably funded.

Throughout the budget process, counties played a central role in advocating for a much-needed increase in mental health funding, making meaningful progress through coordinated media engagement and advocacy efforts. By partnering with key associations and organizations and engaging county human services professionals, counties elevated the urgency of this issue and presented a unified message on the need for investment. Counties also delivered testimony highlighting their critical role in Pennsylvania's community-based mental health system and underscoring the need to strengthen service coordination. This testimony emphasized the importance of addressing systemic barriers that limit access to care and hinder the system's ability to meet the growing mental health needs of Pennsylvanians.

Looking ahead, counties remain committed to working with the General Assembly to address ongoing funding gaps and structural challenges in county mental health funding. As the consequences of prolonged underfunding continue to impact the delivery of services, counties will remain at the forefront of advocating for the resources necessary to support effective, accessible mental health services across the Commonwealth.

Vote-By-Mail Reforms

CCAP continues to advocate for addressing administrative challenges and statutory gaps within the Election Code. While there was no significant legislative movement to amend Act 77, CCAP actively monitored Election Code legislation and provided comments on proposals that could impact how counties carry out their election administration responsibilities.

CCAP issued formal communications regarding Act 77, emphasizing the importance of collaboration with counties to inform any necessary updates. As changes to Act 77 and the broader Election Code are considered, it is critical that the General Assembly ensures counties are provided with the resources, flexibility, and clarity needed to manage the growing complexity of election administration in an evolving electoral environment.

Counties also submitted formal comments on several key Election Code issues, including ballot security, open primaries, and pre-canvassing. Counties offered feedback on proposals to expand open primaries, raising concerns regarding statutory clarity and the need for sufficient implementation time – particularly in advance of a presidential election, which presents heightened logistical and administrative demands.

At the CCAP Fall Conference, the membership voted to update the Association's position on early in-person voting. Members repealed the previous platform plank opposing early in-person voting and adopted a forward-looking position that supports the concept while committing CCAP to developing recommendations to ensure any early voting framework is consistent, secure, and administratively workable for counties. The updated platform underscores that the General Assembly should not advance early voting legislation without meaningful county input. This revised position is now reflected in the CCAP Policy Platform and will guide the Association's legislative engagement moving forward.

Counties remain committed to working collaboratively with the Administration and the General Assembly to develop and refine election-related legislation that supports efficient, secure, and transparent elections across the Commonwealth.