

LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA
THE VOICE OF PENNSYLVANIA COUNTIES

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BUDGET NEGOTIATIONS UNDERWAY; COUNTIES PRIORITIZE MENTAL HEALTH FUNDING

Budget negotiations are now underway in Harrisburg. Since the beginning of June, both chambers have remained in session advancing legislation and continuing discussions on the Commonwealth's Fiscal Year 2026-27 budget.

The House approved its budget proposal, [House Bill 2400](#), sponsored by Rep. Jordan Harris (D-Philadelphia), which reflects Governor Shapiro's proposed \$53.3 billion spending plan. In the Senate, [Senate Bill 1220](#), sponsored by Sen. Scott Martin (R-Lancaster), has advanced through the chamber and is awaiting final consideration.

As budget negotiations continue, counties remain focused on one of their top priorities: **adequate mental health funding**. Counties are seeking a targeted state investment of **\$40 million** to help address growing demand for behavioral health services, expand access to community-based care, and sustain critical local crisis response infrastructure.

The funding request includes:

- **\$20 million in county mental health base funding** to support community-based mental health services; and
- **\$20 million dedicated to county mental health crisis services** to support county crisis infrastructure, including mobile crisis teams, crisis walk-in centers, and other local crisis response services.

These investments would help counties stabilize and expand services, improve timely access to care, and ensure individuals receive support in the least restrictive and most appropriate setting. County-operated crisis services not only save lives but also reduce reliance on more costly systems, including emergency departments, law enforcement, and inpatient treatment facilities.

For more information on CCAP's mental health funding priority, please visit the [priorities webpage](#).

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADVANCES MEASURES SUPPORTED BY COUNTIES

Over the past two weeks, several bills of importance to county government have advanced through the General Assembly. The following county-supported measures have passed either the House or Senate.

[House Bill 2469](#), introduced by Representative Lindsey Powell (D-Allegheny), passed the House unanimously on Tuesday, June 9. This bill updates Pennsylvania's public-private transportation partnership (P3) law by expanding eligibility beyond Commonwealth agencies and municipal authorities. This includes counties and other local governments to pursue innovative partnerships for the development, financing, and improvement of transportation infrastructure.

This would provide counties with greater flexibility to address local transportation needs by expanding access to public-private partnership opportunities. The additional authority could help counties leverage private-sector expertise and investment to advance critical infrastructure projects while maintaining local oversight and accountability. Overall, the bill broadens participation in transportation public-private partnerships, enhances transparency through public notice and comment requirements, and clarifies legal protections for counties and other local governments involved in these projects.

Following House passage, the bill now heads to the Senate for consideration.

[Senate Bill 1105](#), introduced by Senator Rosemary Brown (R-Monroe), was approved by the Senate on June 9 and has been referred to the House Tourism, Recreation, and Economic Development Committee for consideration. This bill updates county hotel room rental tax laws by clarifying that online booking agents that receive payment for hotel stays must collect and remit county hotel taxes. The bill authorizes counties, through ordinance,

to establish recordkeeping, reporting, tax return filing, and disclosure requirements for hotels and booking agents to verify tax compliance. It also requires counties that impose the tax to post their hotel tax ordinances and related materials online, establishes confidentiality protections for tax information, and updates definitions related to lodging accommodations subject to the tax.

This bill will help counties improve oversight and enforcement of hotel room rental taxes by authorizing reporting, recordkeeping, and disclosure requirements for hotels and booking agents. It will also provide counties with greater transparency and consistency in tax administration by requiring hotel tax ordinances and related materials to be publicly available online.

The bill now advances to the House for consideration.

[House Bill 37](#), introduced by Representative Scott Conklin (D-Centre), passed the House on Tuesday, June 9. This legislation amends the Election Code to allow county boards of elections to begin pre-canvassing ballots no earlier than seven days prior to Election Day. This change provides needed clarification to Act 77 and supports counties in fulfilling their election administration responsibilities. By allowing earlier pre-canvassing, counties would have more time to prepare mail-in and absentee ballots for counting, better manage workloads and resources, and help ensure the timely reporting of results.

The bill now advances to the Senate for further consideration.

PREVAILING WAGE EXPANSION MOVES TO HOUSE

On Wednesday, June 10, the Senate passed Senate [Bill 908](#), introduced by Senator Frank Farry (R-Bucks), which would expand the scope of Pennsylvania's Prevailing Wage Act. Under current law, prevailing wages must be paid on public construction projects with an estimated cost exceeding \$25,000—a threshold that has remained unchanged since the 1960s. Because the threshold has not been adjusted for inflation, it now applies to nearly all public construction projects across the Commonwealth, regardless of their size or complexity.

Senate Bill 908 would expand the definition of "public work" to include custom fabrication and HVAC duct cleaning and would require prevailing wage rates to be paid for certain off-site custom fabrication work associated with public projects.

At a time when counties continue to face increasing infrastructure, personnel, and operational costs, the expansion of prevailing wage requirements would place additional pressure on already constrained local budgets. By increasing project costs, the bill could reduce counties' ability to undertake critical infrastructure improvements and may require local governments to delay, scale back, or reconsider planned capital investments.

Counties continue to urge the General Assembly to address a longstanding concern by modernizing the Prevailing Wage Act threshold to better reflect current economic conditions and inflation. Updating the threshold would help ensure that limited taxpayer dollars are

used as efficiently as possible while preserving counties' ability to invest in essential infrastructure, public facilities, and community services.

Counties stand ready to work with the General Assembly and the Administration on meaningful reforms that provide greater flexibility for local governments, promote fiscal stewardship, and maximize the value of public investments.

Following Senate passage, the bill now heads to the House for consideration.

SUNSHINE ACT AGENDA RESTRICTIONS ADVANCES TO THE HOUSE

On Wednesday, June 10, the Senate advanced [Senate Bill 1150](#), introduced by Senator Patrick Stefano (R-Bedford). This bill would amend Pennsylvania's Sunshine Act to limit the circumstances under which a public agency may add items to a meeting agenda after a meeting has begun. The bill would allow agenda changes only for matters that qualify under existing exceptions in law and would retain current requirements for public approval and notice of any agenda changes.

By restricting the ability of local governments to add items to an agenda during a public meeting, the bill could require governing bodies to defer action on certain matters until a future meeting. This may result in additional meetings being scheduled and publicly advertised before action can be taken, potentially delaying decisions on time-sensitive local government business.

Following Senate passage, the bill now heads to the House for consideration.

SENATE STATE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE ADVANCES ELECTION AND LAND USE BILLS

On June 2, the Senate State Government committee advanced several bills with implications for county government. The measures address election administration and state land acquisition procedures.

[Senate Bill 599](#), introduced by Senator Cris Dush (R-Potter), would amend Pennsylvania's Election Code by requiring counties to maintain a designated primary election office at the county seat and to conduct absentee and mail-in ballot activities through that office. Under the bill, voters seeking to obtain or return absentee or mail-in ballots in person would be required to do so at the county seat election office. Ballots could not be distributed or returned through satellite election offices or other ballot return locations. This legislation would centralize election administration by establishing the county seat as the primary location for in-person absentee and mail-in ballot services.

[Senate Bill 857](#), introduced by Senator Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango),

would establish additional requirements for land acquisitions by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Pennsylvania Game Commission, and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. Before purchasing, exchanging, or accepting donated land, these agencies would be required to obtain approval from the governing body of the county in which the property is located. The bill would also require notice and opportunity for public comment for municipalities and local residents before a transaction could be finalized.

Both measures have advanced from committee and are now before the full Senate. Counties will continue to monitor the legislation as it moves through the legislative process.

COUNTY-SUPPORTED BRIDGE FUNDING BILLS CLEAR COMMITTEE

On Tuesday, June 9, the House Transportation Committee advanced two bills of significance to counties, both of which counties support.

[House Bill 2437](#), introduced by Representative Nate Davidson (D-Dauphin), passed the House Transportation Committee on Tuesday, June 9. This legislation would amend the Oil and Gas Act to allow a portion of unconventional gas well fee revenues to fund bridge projects, which is a significant step forward. This change enables counties to proactively repair locally owned bridges before they reach critical risk, rather than addressing deterioration after it occurs. Expanding the allowable use of funds to include any county or municipal bridge provides counties with a more flexible funding stream, empowering them to address and rebuild critical infrastructure more effectively.

[House Bill 2214](#), introduced by Representative Anthony Bellmon (D-Philly), passed the House Transportation Committee on Tuesday, June 9. This legislation clarifies that Philadelphia's bridges are recognized as county-owned bridges and eligible for the Motor License Fund distributions. House Bill 2214 expands the ways counties are able to invest in their infrastructure. This ensures that every county across the Commonwealth is able to maintain and rebuild vital transportation infrastructure in their communities.

Together, these bills would expand funding opportunities available to counties and strengthen their ability to maintain and improve local transportation networks.

Both bills now await consideration by the full House. CCAP will continue to monitor the legislation as it advances through the legislative process.

HOUSING LEGISLATION ADVANCES IN BOTH CHAMBERS

The General Assembly has advanced several housing-related bills aimed at addressing residential development, land use regulation, and housing availability across the Commonwealth.

In the Senate, two housing bills passed and now await consideration in the House.

[**Senate Bill 1279**](#), introduced by Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill (R-York), passed the Senate on June 3. This legislation would establish a State Housing Regulatory Compliance Officer within the executive branch through the "Reduce the Red Tape for Housing Act". The position would be responsible for working with local governments to develop standardized housing permitting processes and improve coordination related to residential development approvals.

[**Senate Bill 1281**](#), introduced by Senator Greg Rothman (R-Cumberland), passed the Senate on June 3. This legislation would direct the State Planning Board to establish rules for an expedited approval process for certain high-density residential housing developments. Under the proposal, municipalities would be required to approve qualifying housing developments even if the projects conflict with local comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, or other land use regulations, provided the developments meet standards established by the state. Eligible projects could include attached or detached housing, accessory dwelling units, modular or prefabricated housing, and mixed-use developments containing residential components. If enacted, the bill would shift approval authority for certain qualifying residential developments from local governments to the state and create a standardized approval process for those projects.

The House also advanced two housing bills that would affect local zoning and land use regulations.

[**House Bill 2186**](#), introduced by Rep. John Inglis (D-Allegheny), passed the House on June 1. The legislation would amend Pennsylvania's Consolidated Statutes to establish statewide standards governing accessory dwelling units (ADUs). Under the bill, municipalities would be required to permit at least one accessory dwelling unit on any lot containing a single-family residence. While municipalities could continue to regulate ADUs, any regulations adopted would be required to use the least restrictive approach necessary. The bill also provides that qualifying ADUs must be treated as conforming accessory uses and may not be counted toward a property's allowable residential density.

[**House Bill 2109**](#), introduced by Rep. Tarik Khan (D-Philadelphia), passed the House on June 8. The legislation would amend Pennsylvania's Consolidated Statutes to limit the authority of municipalities to regulate occupancy in single-family homes based on familial relationships. Specifically, local governments would be prohibited from restricting the number of individuals residing in a dwelling solely on the basis of whether occupants are related by blood, marriage, or legal status. Municipalities would retain the authority to enforce occupancy limits and housing standards related to public health and safety.

All four measures now head to their respective chamber for further consideration. CCAP will continue to monitor the legislation and evaluate its impact on counties as it moves through the legislative process.

WHITE HOUSE RELEASES EXECUTIVE ORDER ON AI AND CYBERSECURITY

On June 2, the White House issued an [executive order \(EO\)](#) to improve cybersecurity defenses across critical infrastructure sectors against vulnerabilities as new and emerging artificial intelligence (AI) models are increasing in sophistication and scale. The EO calls for increased voluntary collaboration between government agencies and technology companies to test frontier AI models, identify vulnerabilities, and distribute resources to critical infrastructure sectors, including counties, to bolster cybersecurity defenses.

The Executive Order directs multiple federal agencies to take action over the next 30-60 days to strengthen cybersecurity capabilities and improve the secure deployment of AI technologies.

The Executive Order does not create new requirements for counties. Counties could be able to access federal cybersecurity services and AI security tools. In this order, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) must give access to these services and tools to state and local governments.

Major provisions include expanding cybersecurity defense initiatives, establishing an AI cybersecurity clearinghouse, creating a framework for advanced AI models, and more.

For a more detailed analysis of the Executive Order, visit [NACo's website](#).

SHAPIRO ADMINISTRATION ROLLS OUT FULL GRID STANDARDS

The Shapiro Administration recently released the full standards for the Governor's Responsible Infrastructure Development (GRID) initiative, which establishes requirements that data center projects must meet to qualify for support from the Commonwealth. The standards are intended to ensure proposed projects provide measurable benefits to local communities. As part of the certification process, developers must submit a joint GRID Certification application to the Office of Transformation and Opportunity and the Department of Revenue demonstrating how the project will satisfy four core standards: protecting energy affordability, promoting transparency and community engagement, supporting workforce and economic development, and protecting the environment. The Office of Transformation and Opportunity will publicly post detailed information about each GRID-certified project on its website.

The Shapiro Administration is rolling out a new [local government toolkit](#) through the Governor's Center for Local Government Services (GCLGS) to help municipalities navigate data center proposals and make informed decisions that work best for their communities.

For a full breakdown of the GRID initiative, visit the [Commonwealth's website](#).



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