HOUSE REPUBLICAN

# D REPUBLICATION OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE PRE

COMMITTEE



2023 Q1 REPORT JANUARY-MARCH

JOSHUA D. KAIL, COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN



## INCUBATOR OF IDEAS

#### **Republican Policy Committee**

The Republican Policy Committee operates as an incubator for the ideas and actions of all House Republicans. It is the Policy Committee's intention to serve as a resource in discovering innovative policy solutions to the obstacles to opportunity that exist throughout the Commonwealth. The Committee gives a voice to the people and champions future-focused family-supporting proposals to bring hope and prosperity to Pennsylvania.

Since day one of the 2023-24 session the Republican Policy Committee has been at the forefront of the issues facing the state. To propel the interests of Pennsylvanians, and highlight the ideas of Republican Members, the Committee has hosted hearings at a moment's notice, traveled far and wide, and examined the faults and successes of Pennsylvania. The information gathered thus far has informed the public and inspired the priorities and efforts of the Republican Caucus.

The House Republican Policy Committee is a venue by which all Republican Representatives can bring their topics and communities to the forefront so that the most important issues and concerns do not get repressed by the radical proposals pursued by our counterparts.

As was the standard in past sessions, the Policy Committee will operate closely with standing committees to develop and highlight legislative proposals pursued by the Caucus. Whether a Member desires insight into ideas initially heard at a Policy Committee hearing, or to host a tour or hearing to highlight a legislative initiative, the Policy Committee will be a conduit for the ideas and values of the entire caucus.

For the benefit of House Republicans, staff, and the public the Policy Committee will continue to proactively share the testimony received and major takeaways from Committee events. Following each hearing a writeup of the Policy Committee event is made available online to preserve the testimony and information shared with the Committee.

The following report is a summary of all hearings, tours, and events pursued by the 2023-24 Republican Policy Committee through March. This Q1 report will provide a glimpse into the wide range of issues and concerns addressed by the Committee, successes and proposals that resulted from the Committee's efforts, and insight into the will of the Republican Caucus and the people of Pennsylvania. Further information to build upon what is included in this report such as testimony, testifier biographies, and videos can be found at www.pagoppolicy.com.

ADIL

Chairman Joshua D. Kail

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

SB<sub>1</sub> **JANUARY 23 CAREERS AND OPPORTUNITY JANUARY 27 FEBRUARY 2** MARCH 9 Transportation ...... **OUR COMMUNITY CONCERNS FEBRUARY 6 FEBRUARY 15 MARCH 14 GOVERNMENT WORKING FOR US FEBRUARY 21 MARCH 22** Permitting . . . . . . . . . . .....26 **EDUCATION JANUARY 30** MARCH 16 School Choice THE REPUBLICAN CAUCUS AT WORK Deputy Policy Committee Chairs .......40 



# SB9



#### STATUE OF LIMITATIONS



"I'm here for the victims."

#### VOTER ID



"Voter ID is the single most effective and secure way to verify a voter's identity."



Ohio Secretary of State

"What makes our elections work

- what makes our democratic
republic work more than anything
else – is the confidence voters
have in our elections. Without that
confidence, there is no 'consent of
the governed.'"



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.



# Constitutional Amendments: Why We Care

January 23, 2023

140 Main Capitol Hosted by Chairman Joshua D. Kail

For the first public hearing of the session, the Policy Committee convened to inform Members and the public of the three constitutional amendments within SB1. Testimony was shared to explain the rationale and necessity of the amendments, which included a two-year window for victims of childhood sexual assault to file previously time-barred claims, authorizing the General Assembly to disapprove regulations, and requiring voters to present identification when casting a ballot. Every Pennsylvanian and Representative cares deeply about the issues within these Constitutional Amendments, and the need for these amendments was displayed at the day's hearing.

#### **TAKEAWAYS**

#### **STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS**

- ➤ SB1 is the Legislature's third attempt to enable survivors of childhood sexual abuse to achieve justice. This legislative pursuit is only now necessary due to procedural failures of former Secretary of the Commonwealth Kathy Bookvar and Gov. Tom Wolf's office, which prolonged the amendment process.
- ► The Statute of Limitations amendment will not result in criminal lawsuits, only civil, and empower victims to pursue justice.
- ➤ The General Assembly adjusted the statute of limitations in 2019 in response to the 2018 grand jury investigation of Catholic Church sexual abuse; however, this adjustment was not enough to address long-repressed abuses.

#### **VOTER ID**

➤ Voter ID is well supported by the majority of Pennsylvanians regardless of party or background. To operate in the modern world, an ID is a necessity, and multiple options are available to all who desire one. Currently, more than 65% of Pennsylvanians support requiring a state-issued ID to vote. More than 80% support signature verification for mail-in ballots.

#### REGULATORY VETO REFORM



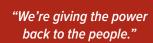
"Lawmakers have both the opportunity and responsibility to rebalance the scales and defend the separation of powers."

Grant Gulibon, Environmental Specialist, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau

"A business climate that promotes innovation and entrepreneurship is critical to encourage the next generation of potential agriculture professionals to choose farming."



"We are ready to get to work on these measurers and want the people of Pennsylvania to be able to vote directly on these proposals."



#### **VOTER ID** (cont'd)

- ▶ Voter ID is common around the country and throughout the world. Thirty-five states require Voter ID, as well as the entire European Union, Canada and Mexico. PA is one of only 15 states to not require Voter ID.
- ➤ The cost of a state-issued ID should not be an impediment to voting. Accordingly, SB1 entitles all eligible voters to receive a free state-issued ID.

#### REGULATORY VETO REFORM

- ➤ The necessity of this reform became exceedingly apparent when Gov. Wolf attempted to unilaterally, using executive fiat, join Pennsylvania with the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). The associated onerous regulations on our energy producers would cripple the state and burden residents with higher bills and decreased opportunity.
- ➤ A two-thirds majority, currently necessary to overturn a regulation by the Legislature, does not enable the will of the people to be enacted.
- ▶ It is unknown how much investment in PA has been lost to other states due to our nebulous and onerous regulatory climate. We must reform our regulations to remain competitive.









"In order to attract individuals and prevent our young people from leaving after graduation, we must have a robust economy that offers well-paying, family-sustaining jobs."

#### **TESTIFIERS**



"At Sarris Candies we don't have jobs, we don't offer the standard punch in/ punch out jobs, WE OFFER CAREERS."



"It is undeniable how Appalachia natural gas and affordable energy has unlocked a new era of manufacturing, job-creation, and growth."



"Today's
manufacturing remains
as relevant to our
core as it ever did and
provides an exciting
career opportunity for
our communities."



"We need to focus on technical skills."

## Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

# Pennsylvania Made: Discussing Innovative Ways to Propel Our Manufacturing Opportunities

January 27, 2023

South Park Township Community Building Hosted by Rep. Andrew Kuzma

Manufacturing has always been a strong element of Pennsylvania's economy and history. At the suggestion of Rep. Kuzma (Allegheny/Washington), the Policy Committee toured family-owned Sarris Candies and held a public hearing to highlight the successes of our manufacturers, and the obstacles to opportunity they face when building and growing a business. The job-makers that joined the Committee constitute the backbone of our state, and their needs must be heard and addressed.

#### **TAKEAWAYS**

- ➤ For many employers, the bipartisan divide is secondary to the divide between government and business. Government is the shared enemy of all employer demographics.
- ➤ Focus must be shifted toward the creation of CAREERS, not just jobs. The ability to support a family and develop roots in a community is tantamount to the future of the state and our manufacturers.
- ➤ The Commonwealth should develop an "Appalachian First" vision that focuses on extracting and using our natural resources as near to the source as possible. Empower the region before we empower the nation.
- ➤ PA's laws and regulatory climate lack clarity and long-term certainty, which limits the confidence of entrepreneurs and businesses looking to invest in the state.
- Maintaining low-cost energy is key to gaining and retaining our manufacturing base. RGGI's energy cost increases would decimate our energy generators, and in turn cause our manufacturers to leave the state.
- ➤ Our manufacturers are THE LARGEST customers of PA's natural gas resources. Inexpensive, accessible natural gas retains our manufacturing base, and entices new investment in the Commonwealth.



"The success of small businesses is a critical component of our economy, and it starts with addressing the workforce shortages plaguing our employers."

#### **TESTIFIERS**



"We've never experienced this sort of staffing shortage in 40 years!"

Filippo Lombardo, General Manager, Domenico's Ristoran<u>t</u>e



Stacy Hepinger, President and CEO, Right at Home

"Not only are we looking for individuals to give jobs to, but we also serve seniors. So, we are looking for reliable and responsible people to help those that are truly in need so that we can keep our seniors safe at home."



"The overriding problem is, as a state, we continue to lose our working age population."



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

## Developing Our Workforce

February 2, 2023

Cranberry Township Municipal Center Hosted by Rep. Stephenie Scialabba

Starting before the days of the COVID-19 pandemic and forced business closures, Pennsylvania's employers were sounding the alarm that our available workforce was dwindling in both numbers and ability. To better understand the obstacles facing both our job-creators and workforce developers, the Policy Committee investigated the challenges faced when pursuing a career in the Commonwealth. The statistics and data shared appear daunting, but the concerns of our businesses and workforce can be relieved through proactive efforts to increase the state's population and prepare our workforce for the next generation of career opportunities.

#### **TAKEAWAYS**

#### **WORKFORCE CHALLENGES PANEL**

- ▶ Businesses have resorted to shorter hours and closures to account for the limited workforce, a phenomenon not seen in 40 years.
- ► Health care providers that rely on Medicaid reimbursement are severely limited in the pay they can provide to employees, resulting in a diminished workforce.
- ► Employers want greater means to incorporate the services their workforce provides into academic accreditation. Pennsylvanians should not need to weigh work over an education when the best means to gain experience stems from entry-level career opportunities.
- ➤ Every major metro area in the country is currently experiencing a workforce shortage. But, PA is especially impacted because of our falling population. Two-thirds of PA counties lost population from 2010-20, primarily due to residents moving to other states and compounded by a falling birth rate.
- ➤ The "Baby Boomers" that dominate the trades are retiring in a "Silver Wave" that will reverberate in all sectors of the economy. This concerning future can be addressed through increasing Pennsylvania's youth involvement in trades and apprenticeship programs.

### TESTIFIERS



"Most of PA's labor force IS working. 96% of the available workforce hold a job."

Carrie Amann, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Workforce Development Association



"We give someone a job from day one. Our system already works."



"We can go into a classroom and do something hands-on. We're taking carpentry right into the high schools and middle schools to grow our workforce's possibilities and potential."



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

#### **WORKFORCE CHALLENGES PANEL (cont'd)**

▶ PA has ample work to be done, and currently retains a well-equipped workforce, but we simply do not have the population to meet the needs of our industries.

#### **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PANEL**

- ▶ By and large, Pennsylvanians that CAN work ARE working; 96% of the available workforce holds a job.
- ➤ A growing number of young adults have left the labor pool entirely and show a complete disinterest in pursuing a career. This lack of motivation, and hope for the future, must be contended with.
- ➤ PA's Workforce Development Association, in order to provide the most accurate and timely data, desperately needs access to the Department of Labor's new-hire database. We must "Free the Data" to better prepare for the future.
- ▶ Ample opportunity is available through established trade unions. The Steamfitters and the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners offer free five-year apprenticeship programs that put apprentices on jobsites starting at day one. The apprenticeship programs have a long-proven track record of developing a capable workforce for PA.
- ► There must be a greater emphasis on encouraging younger generations to pursue work with their hands. Carpentry programs are now available starting in fifth grade, and trade-oriented curriculums are becoming more prevalent throughout PA schools.





"Our economy needs reliable infrastructure and transportation to connect supply chains and efficiently move goods and services to different locations. It connects households across the state to higher quality opportunities for employment, health care, and education."

#### TESTIFIERS



"There are all these grants that are a part of the federal infrastructure bill, but they are all discretionary and require letters of support and advocacy."



"Anything the state can do to incentivize and promote training for the next generation of truckers could help to alleviate the constraint of doing business in PA."



fiv

"The construction industry is pleased with the passage of IIJA, and we will realize funding for five years. The scary part is what happens after five years."



The Lindy Group

Chad Marsilio, Chief Operating Officer, PGT Trucking

"The cost of doing nothing will result in loss of life. We must fund these projects and get our supply chain moving SAFELY and efficiently again."

# Infrastructure and Transportation: Paving the Way to Pennsylvania's Future

March 9, 2023

The Crane Room Grille, New Castle Hosted by Rep. Marla Brown

Pennsylvania residents and businesses often express concern with the status of our roads and bridges, and the need to proactively address failing infrastructure. To better understand the nature of PA's road builders, maintenance workers, and industries, the Policy Committee convened to hear from experts on Pennsylvania infrastructure and transportation. The problems are not simple, the solutions are often costly and varied, but efforts are underway to pave the way to Pennsylvania's future.

#### **TAKEAWAYS**

#### **PENNDOT PANEL**

- ▶ The Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) was a financial boon for PennDOT. This money, while needed, is only earmarked for highways and bridges, NOT local class 3 and 4 roads. The state MUST request funding for local roads through IIJA discretionary funding.
- ➤ Though high-use roads need repaving every 10-15 years, the state's current schedule of maintenance only enables repaving every 18-20 years.
- ▶ PennDOT has focused on "poor" bridges in recent years, lowering the number from 30% to 9%. This focus has come at the cost of increasing the number of "poor" roads due to priorities in funding. PA has retained a "C-" infrastructure grade from the American Society of Civil Engineers for the last five years.
- ➤ Inflation has inhibited projects and maintenance for PennDOT and their contractors. Material costs for infrastructure have risen 20% in the past year!



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

#### **IMPACTS OF INFRASTRUCTURE PANEL:**

- ▶ PA's truck permitting and regulations are stricter than neighboring states, particularly weight restrictions and limitations on combined vehicles.
- ▶ Infrastructure encourages investment in the region. US Steel, the Shell Cracker Plant, and countless other manufacturers and businesses come to PA explicitly because of our roads, bridges, rivers, transmission lines and railroads.
- ▶ PA's gas tax revenue is shrinking due to more efficient vehicles and greater use of alternative fuels. Alternatives to the existing tax may be necessary to address the revenue shortfall.
  - 2003-2006 = 163 million gallons sold
  - 2010-2013 = 126 million gallons sold
  - **2017-2021** = 114 million gallons sold
- ▶ PA lacks adequate rest and stopping locations for our truckers. By 5 p.m. each day, rest stops along the turnpike and major thoroughfares are full with idle trucks and vehicles, resulting in truckers wasting time, energy and fuel searching for a safe place to end their shift.







"We have the potential to be a driving force to restore our nation's energy independence, and in doing so, tilt the economic scales in favor of Pennsylvania families."

#### **TESTIFIERS**



"We need more infrastructure for our natural gas to supply domestic markets and international markets as well."



"It all goes back to permitting, planning and demand."



"Some of the stigma put on fossil fuels is a drag on investment in the long term. That is a danger I see, and a danger I believe others see as well."



Rod Williamson, Executive Director, Industrial Energy Consumers of Pennsylvania

"We need reliable energy that is priced in a way that allows our Pennsylvania operations to grow and successfully compete in the global markets we serve."



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

# Rising Energy Costs in Pennsylvania

February 6, 2023 140 Main Capitol Hosted by Chairman Joshua D. Kail

Rampant inflation has led to dramatically increased energy prices for PA residents and businesses. To better understand the cause and effect of PA's rising energy costs, the Policy Committee brought together energy generators and energy consumers to share insight into the scenario we now all face. The Commonwealth has ample resources and tremendous energy potential, but unnecessary manipulation of the free market and overzealous regulations have stymied the Commonwealth's abilities to grow as a net-energy exporter of low-cost, highly reliable energy. The Policy Committee drew attention to the failures of state and federal energy policies, and enabled the concerns of the people of Pennsylvania to be heard.

#### **TAKEAWAYS**

#### **CHALLENGES FACING OUR ENERGY PROVIDERS PANEL**

- ➤ PA's Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act of 2004, Act 213, requires the state energy grid to use "alternative sources" of energy that are less efficient and dependable, and more costly than traditional sources.
- ▶ The Department of Environmental Protection is exceptionally slow in providing permits and regulatory guidance. A true "permit decision guarantee" and the use of third-party permit reviewers could alleviate this all-too-common challenge.
- ▶ Efforts to sideline coal use has led miners to subdue the over-production of coal present in the past. Vast reserves have dwindled, decreasing available supplies, thus leading to increased prices.
- ▶ Gov. Tom Wolf made his disdain for coal apparent when he declared coal mines to be a "non-essential industry" at the start of his COVID orders, all while coal-fired electric energy generation is THE ONLY source of reliable baseload power that can utilize substantial on-site storage.
- ► The unknowns associated with Gov. Wolf's attempt to enter the Commonwealth into the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) have stymied traditional energy investments in PA that will reverberate for years to come.

#### TESTIFIERS



Kevin Sunday, Director of Government Affairs, PA Chamber of Business and Industry

"Our state's energy resources have helped dramatically improve the nation's energy security, and that of our allies, as well as significantly reducing our emissions."



"Our members care about energy sources that are reliable, effective, clean, and cheap, because it directly affects their ability to survive as a business."



Mike Butler, Mid-Atlantic Executive Director, Consumer Energy Alliance

"We are witnessing irresponsible policies and proposals that have the unfortunate consequences of increasing prices and harming reliability while failing to achieve environmental goals."

#### IMPACT OF ENERGY PRICES ON CONSUMERS PANEL

- ▶ 68% of National Federation of Independent Business (NIFIB) members attribute rising input costs, namely energy, for their need to increase sales costs. Rising energy costs increase the price of nearly everything else.
- ➤ Energy consumers, our businesses and residents are far more concerned with the price of their energy than they are with the source of their energy.
- ▶ The average PA home energy expenditure is \$2,890 per year. With 12% of PA living below the poverty line, this expense constitutes nearly a quarter of their annual income.
- ► A 1 cent per kWh increase may seem small, but to our energy-intensive industries that 1 cent will balloon into a \$10 million per year increase in energy expenses.



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.





"We couldn't move forward without you. That's how strongly the Committee and this Caucus feel about your service."

#### **TESTIFIERS**



"Common sense tells us that recruiting, training and retaining a capable police department is critical for the well-being of any community."



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.



# Our Emergency First Responders in Crisis

February 15, 2023

G-50 Irvis Office Building Hosted by Chairman Joshua D. Kail

We need our first responders, and they need us. The Policy Committee heard from the men and women that answer the call in times of need, and listened to the growing concerns surrounding recruitment, morale and funding. The Commonwealth cannot wait to address these issues, as we may all find ourselves in need of the life-saving services of those willing to run into a burning building, bring order to chaos, and provide first-aid to our most vulnerable.

#### **TAKEAWAYS**

#### **OUR POLICE**

- ▶ PA is not alone when it comes to the challenge of recruiting and retaining our police. 80% of police agencies across the country are having recruitment difficulties. Furthermore, there has been an 18% increase in officer resignations since 2019, and an increase of 45% in police retirements.
- ➤ Our PA State Troopers are responsible for 80% of the Commonwealth's landmass, with that percentage continuing to grow. Our existing officers are being stretched thin, leading to increased response times and overwhelmed officers.

#### **OUR EMS**

- ▶ Our EMS providers have tremendous difficulty retaining adequate staffing. Providers have an annual turnover rate of 30% and are constantly searching for qualified first responders to join their ranks.
- ▶ Reimbursement through Medicaid is almost never enough to cover the costs of a call or the cost of readiness. The average EMS call costs \$550, but the average reimbursement is \$350. This is unsustainable.

#### TESTIFIERS



"Any failure in the System directly impacts morbidity and mortality. The gravity of the issues facing our state's EMS System is momentous."



"Funding starts at the local level. Our state act requires local governments to be responsible for fire protection, and funding, but it doesn't spell out HOW."

Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

#### **OUR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS**

- ▶ Inflation impacts our first responders just as it does our families. The costs of tools and apparatus has DRAMATICALLY increased in the last four years, putting further financial strain on our volunteers and communities.
- ➤ To reduce costs and increase the number of responders to an incident, local volunteer fire departments have merged. By-and-large, this has been a great success, and will be pursued further.





"The consequences of the train derailment in East Palestine have been profound to my constituents, and it is clear to me that we must act now to prevent further incidents."

#### TESTIFIERS



"To say that the incident was complex is a gross understatement."



"Testing must continue, and we have no plans to stop."



"It takes a lot of time and positive experiences for people to gain trust, so it is really important that we empower the local community."



"Our goal is to ensure farm operators can continue to operate safely, and that consumers have trust in their products."

# Impact of the Norfolk Southern Train Derailment

March 14, 2023

Darlington Township Volunteer Fire Department Hosted by Rep. Jim Marshall

The people of Pennsylvania are rightfully concerned with the derailment and fire caused by Norfolk Southern, and the Commonwealth deserves answers. Due to the magnitude of the situation, and the shared desire for information to reach as wide an audience as possible, the Republican Policy Committee convened a joint hearing alongside our Democratic counterparts to bring answers and insight directly to the impacted community. State agencies were given an opportunity to share their findings and ongoing supports, explain the events that occurred the evening of February 3 and hear directly from our impacted communities.

#### **TAKEAWAYS**

#### **STATE AGENCIES**

- Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA):
  The Commonwealth did not hesitate to respond.
  Hundreds of first responders; two separate Environmental
  Protection Agency (EPA) regions; two separate Federal
  Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regions; a
  private corporation and its contractors; and federal, state
  and local government agencies arrived at the site within
  24 hours.
- ▶ PEMA was at the forefront in recognizing the severity of the incident. PEMA's modeling of the potential risks were found to be more accurate than the initial assessments, finding that the concern of 70% phosgene conversions via a controlled burn was actually a 1% conversion.
- ► The Commonwealth had almost no say in how the derailment was managed. Norfolk Southern independently determined that a "vent and burn" was THE ONLY option. PA could determine when the "vent and burn" occurred (mid-day), but not if it could occur.



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

#### TESTIFIERS



"I'd like to see us get the testing done so that we can push all of the positive results, educate the public, and have Norfolk Southern step up after they put a black eye on this community."



"Our residents were upended from their lives and routines by what appears to be a heedless action from Norfolk Southern."



"The community deserves to hear answers on what transpired, and I believe today was a good start. As this process continues, I hope that further collaboration will continue to help the people of Beaver County."



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.



#### **Department of Environmental Protection (DEP):**

- ➤ Through extensive testing of private wells within a 2-mile radius of the incident, the department has determined that no contamination has been found thus far which exceeds short-term exposure limits. A decade of testing and studies will be needed to assure no long-term impacts go unaddressed.
- ▶ DEP has been 0% reliant on the testing results provided by Norfolk Southern, but has included their findings in state data once they have been verified by state labs. The department has worked diligently to inspire trust in their findings.

#### Department of Health (DOH):

- ➤ Ongoing surveys are used to assess regional health; 143 surveys have been completed as of March 14.
  - 85% of respondents reporting at least one symptom, primarily related to ear, nose and throat.
  - 31% report symptoms in their pets or livestock.
  - 68% are NOT planting a garden or crops this year out of concern.
- ▶ Residents of Darlington Township and Beaver County have used the Health Resource Center extensively to address health concerns and emotional trauma, and pursue testing of their water and homes. More than 500 individuals thus far have been assisted via the popup health center housed in the Darlington Township Volunteer Fire Department. The Health Resource Center will remain for the foreseeable future.

#### **Department of Agriculture:**

- ▶ Initial animal illness and death were apparent immediately following the "vent and burn" within the immediate area, but no significant or widespread issues have been seen in PA regarding animal health.
- Soil sampling within 2 miles of the derailment have yielded no concerning results. This sampling will continue to ease concerns of farmers, residents and clients of our agricultural industries.

#### **LOCAL IMPACT**

#### **Darlington Township:**

- ▶ Norfolk Southern only offered a paltry \$1,000 "inconvenience fee" to the Darlington Township residents forced to evacuate.
- ▶ Local farmers have lost customers over lingering concerns, and these losses must be compensated regardless of positive test results and data. Public confidence in their products was harmed, and they will need time to recover.

#### **Beaver County:**

- ► ALL homes within the evacuation area utilize private wells for their water, and private wells are exceedingly common in the region. Free private well testing will alleviate many of the concerns for residents and businesses.
- ► Future property sales and agricultural deals in the county will be negatively impacted for years to come. To lessen this impact residents and businesses need assurance of soil, water, and produce safety at the point of sale until positive test results are accepted by the general public.
- ➤ State, federal and Norfolk Southern funding to address the derailment will be funneled through local authorities and nonprofits within Beaver County to best assist the communities in need.



# GOVERNMENT WORKING FOR US





"We talk a lot about Regulatory Reform, but what we are hearing today are calls for Regulatory Reduction."

#### **TESTIFIERS**



David Burton, Senior Fellow in Economic Policy, The Heritage Foundation

"Bureaucracy will not help you.
You need to start training people in
administrative law, training people
in drafting regulations so that they'll
survive judicial review."



Robert McCafferty, Operator, North Country Brewing

"We wouldn't be able to open North Country Brewing today with some of the regulations that have occurred. We'd be outpriced to do so. This hurts Ma & Pa that want to be entrepreneurs today."

"We have to be able to embrace the technology and leverage the changes in innovation in health care to be able to do a better job for our citizens."



Jelden Arcilla, MBA, RNC, NEA-BC

Field Vice President at

LifePoint Health® & Chief Nursing Officer, Conemaugh Memorial

Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

## **Impacts and Solutions:**

## Charting a Path Through Commonsense State Regulatory Reform

February 21, 2023

G-50 Irvis Office Building Hosted by Chairman Joshua D. Kail

The Committee convened the first regulatory hearing of the session, with future hearings planned, to discuss Pennsylvania's onerous regulatory climate. Experts on responsible commonsense regulations, as well as the regulated community, shared how the Commonwealth's current regulatory process impedes the success and opportunities of our people, businesses and entrepreneurs. Both the regulatory process itself, and the regulations that have been promulgated, incur a tremendous loss on our state that deserves the attention of the Legislature.

#### **TAKEAWAYS**

- ▶ When looking toward other states for insight into the regulatory process and promulgation, PA should emulate the successes of Florida, Texas and Wyoming.
- ➤ No other state should have control or say in PA's laws or regulations. California's Fast Food Accountability and Standards (F.A.S.T.) Act and the California Air Resource Board (C.A.R.B.) emission standards are an affront to the Legislature's lawmaking authority.
- ▶ PA regulations are often duplicative, and rely on cooperation between multiple agencies and departments. For example, to brew and sell beer in Pennsylvania requires the proprietor to provide the same information to the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board (PLCB), the federal Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) and the Department of Revenue. Duplicative regulations and reporting requirements are prevalent throughout the regulated community.
- ▶ Approval of out-of-state licenses is a slow and tedious process in PA, which impedes professionals from working in the Commonwealth. This particularly impacts our health care providers.

## GOVERNMENT WORKING FOR US

- ▶ By-and-large regulations in PA are stricter than federal regulations, often without any PA-specific rationale.
- ➤ Our regulatory authorities often rely on the "expedited exceptions process" to enable activities that are not accounted for within state regulations. This is done in lieu of actually updating or clarifying existing regulations, leading to confusion within the regulated community.





"This is RIDICULOUS government overreach. Trust me, we feel your pain very deeply."

#### **TESTIFIERS**



"We want to make the state more competitive, and fixing the permitting process is key to do that."



"We miss out on a lot of projects in Pennsylvania because it just takes too long to do anything!"



Construction Trades Council

"The customer-focused view of government functions is a welcome change, and we thank [Governor Shapiro] for it, although it does not get quite as far as we need to go."



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

## **Obstacles to Opportunity:** PA's Permitting Process

March 22, 2023

205 Ryan Office Building Hosted by Chairman Joshua D. Kail

Continuing in the House's efforts to place a spotlight on PA's permitting woes, the Committee convened to hear from the manufacturers, businesses and trades who struggle to operate under our onerous rules, regulations and excessive permitting. Real-world examples of permit wait-times resulting in canceled projects and opportunity, along with suggestions to make Pennsylvania more competitive, were highlighted in the day's testimony.

#### **TAKEAWAYS**

- ► There is no reason, outside of a workable permitting process, as to why PA cannot dominate major industries and manufacturing from the ground up. PA excels at the early stages of research and development, but we lose out on supply chain and manufacturing gains due to our uncompetitive permitting policies.
- ▶ Pittsburgh's Fern Hollow Bridge repair was permitted in eight months, contrary to the average of six YEARS for most bridges. The speed to address the Fern Hollow Bridge shows that our agencies can work quickly when needed.
- ➤ A single permit can stop a project in its tracks. A 7-mile pipeline permit, which was not granted due to overzealous environmentalists, stopped a US Steel project from continuing in PA, costing millions of man-hours and decades of opportunity.
- ▶ There is NO compilation of brownfield sites or pad-ready sites in PA available to business and industry. We want these sites to be utilized and the contaminants addressed, but there is no easy way for business and industry to come to our aid.

# EDUCATION



#### **TESTIFIERS**



"We need to move toward a studentbased funding model."

"Public school district and public charter school funding are fundamentally different. As are the students they serve."



Michael A. Whisman, CPA,

Founder and Executive Officer,

"There is a word that we don't use a lot when we talk about education these days, when it used to be used all the time. That word is CHILDREN. As educators we need to be more child focused."



Executive Officer, Richard Allen Preparatory Charter School

Beth Jones, M.Ed., M.B.A., SPHR Chief Operating Officer/Interim Chief Financial Officer,

"The process to authorize a charter or allow a public charter school to open rests with the public school district in which the proposed charter is located. This process is like allowing the McDonalds' of the world to permit or deny the opening of a Chick-fil-A."



"All of our students have access to the same teachers, curriculum, support systems, and extracurricular activities – regardless of where they live."



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

## How Our Children's Future is Funded

January 30, 2023 140 Main Capitol Hosted by Chairman Joshua D. Kail

The Committee desired to share the story of our tax dollars, and how they make their way to our students. Pennsylvania public, private, charter and virtual school funding differs throughout the state, and parents should know how their money is being used both by the state and by the schools that prepare our children for the future. We must, with confidence, know that the dollars earmarked for our children's futures are effectively utilized by our educational institutions.

#### **TAKEAWAYS**

#### SCHOOL FUNDING OVERVIEW PANEL:

- ▶ PA traditional public schools allocate \$19,900 per student per year. This allocation ranks PA as eighth in the nation for per-student funding, nearly \$4,000 higher than the national average.
- ➤ The "Hold Harmless" school funding formula ensures that districts, regardless of declining enrollment, are guaranteed the same level of state funding as received in 2014-15. This formula disregards student enrollment numbers and the current status and needs of our communities.
- ➤ Charter schools, on average, allocate \$15,751 per student per year. This allocation largely stems from public funds that travel with the student, but not 100% of those funds. Charter schools do more with less, and this is due to the boosted efficiency of smaller classrooms and schools, as well as the necessity incurred by PA's imbalanced perstudent funding of public and charter schools.

#### SCHOOL FUNDING UTILIZATION PANEL:

- ▶ In recent years an increasing amount of public funds are not going directly to our students, but are instead paying the salaries of new "administrators," "coordinators" and "non-teaching professional staff."
- ➤ Special education student funding metrics offer a wider range of funding potential, \$25,000 \$50,000 per year, based on student needs and their Individualized Education.

#### EDUCATION



"Education funding is one of the most important issues that we talk about and appropriate for as legislators. It is absolutely essential that we have a global understanding of how school funding works."

#### SCHOOL FUNDING UTILIZATION PANEL (cont'd):

- Alternatives to traditional public education, such as cyber schools, must also accommodate each student with the technology necessary to participate and learn on top of funding traditional education costs.
- ➤ Alternatives to public education often make do with less financial resources than our traditional public schools due to the nature of Pennsylvania's school funding metrics. Alternative schools are incapable of recouping all of the student's education allocations from the public school district the student resides in.
- ➤ A 2022 Independent Fiscal Office report found NO CORRELATION between current per-student expenditures and student proficiency on standardized tests.





"If there ever was something both parties could get behind, in tandem, it's providing parents with options for their kids' education."

#### SCHOOL CHOICE PANEL



"These programs not only facilitate better matches between students and the education they receive, but they also result in arrangements that teachers and parents care about."



"Most Americans are fans of school choice whether they voice that approval or not. Ask parents who are looking to move if they investigated the quality of local schools."



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.



## Educational Opportunity for Our Children

March 16, 2023

Christian School of York Hosted by Rep. Joe D'Orsie

The Policy Committee began the day's events at Logos Academy, a private, faith-based, Christ-centered school in the city of York, to tour the facility and speak with current students. Immediately following the tour, members gathered for a public hearing at York Christian Academy to hear testimony from school choice researchers, school administrators, and the most important arbiters of our children's education, parents and students.

#### **TAKEAWAYS**

#### **SCHOOL CHOICE**

- ▶ Educational choice programs enroll just 2% of all publicly funded students in states where educational choice programs operate. In states where this 2% of students utilize an education choice program, the students receive only 1% of the total public education funding. Alternatives to traditional public education are forced to do more with less resources, and testing results and student engagement show that even with lesser funding, alternatives to public education produce impressive results and well-prepared students.
- ➤ Pell Grants, the GI Bill, and the Head Start Program provide funding directly to prospective students for their choice of education, so parents have asked why must K-12 be different?
- ▶ While the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program in Pennsylvania is a wonderful tool to ease financial burdens for schools and parents, school administrators have expressed that a "per-student" funding model would simplify long-term planning and deliver more predictability for our students and schools.

#### EDUCATION

#### **PARENTS AND STUDENTS PANEL**



"Not all schools are the same, even within the same school district. Having a choice has been a blessing for my children."

Anterria Graham, Parent at York Academy Regional Charter School

"School choice puts things in the right order. Returning the authority of the educational funds back to the parents."



"I am so grateful to be at a school where I am encouraged and challenged, and where I can feel myself growing in my confidence and in my leadership skills."

#### **PARENTS AND STUDENTS**

- ▶ Parents and students are following the data when determining where they would like to receive an education. Of 28 studies investigating the effects of education choice, 25 found positive outcomes, two found negative, and one could not determine any effect. Overwhelmingly, having the ability to choose leads to positive results.
- ▶ Parents recognize that not all schools are the same, even within the same school district. Without the ability to choose an alternative to traditional public education, a parent's primary options to pursue better education opportunities is dependent on their ZIP Code.
- ▶ Values between families and within communities differ immensely. Parents should be assured that the values of their home are welcome within their child's educational environment, and to some this assurance is as meaningful as the academic lessons their children receive.



## JANUARY 27, 2023 SARRIS CANDIES, CANONSBURG, PA

Hosted by Rep. Andrew Kuzma

Beyond the desire to taste the wide variety of Sarris candies the Policy Committee saw first-hand how a family-owned manufacturing operation has evolved to meet the demands of the modern day while retaining tradition and a sense of community.









#### FEBRUARY 2, 2023

## STEAMFITTERS 449 TECHNOLOGY CENTER, HARMONY, PA

Hosted by Rep. Stephenie Scialabba

The Policy Committee saw the facilities and equipment available to apprentice Steamfitters developing a lifelong trade. The Steamfitters 449 Technology Center is an incredible resource to develop our workforce in the region and prepare for the careers of the future.







#### MARCH 9, 2023

## ELLWOOD QUALITY STEELS CO., NEW CASTLE, PA

Hosted by Rep. Marla Brown

Pennsylvania exhibits its manufacturing might in New Castle. The steel foundries that built this nation remain busy producing ingots and materials that go on to become aircraft carriers, submarines, and our city's skylines. State-of-the-art techniques and technologies were on full display as the Policy Committee saw the result of PA's energy, industry, and skilled labor converge to create world renowned Pennsylvania steel.







# IN THE NEWS

#### SB<sub>1</sub>

21-second state House sessions are an inefficient waste, GOP says



BY SETH KAPLAN
JANUARY 23, 2023 / 7:16 PM / CBS PHILADELPHIA



## LaRose testifies on Ohio voter ID before Pennsylvania Republicans

By J.D. Davidson | The Center Square Jan 24, 2023

Pennsylvania House Republicans want to be called back to vote on constitutional amendments **WGAL** 

## Democratic leaders quiet ahead of session

By Christen Smith | The Center Square Feb 14, 2023

Frustration for House Rs and quiet for Ds as session draws near

by Michael Gorsegner | Wed, February 15th 2023, 4:23 PM EST



# House Republican Policy Committee holds workforce development hearing

BY LIZ CAREY (/ABOUT/EDITORIAL-TEAM/#LIZCAREY) | FEBRUARY 6, 2023

## Amid stalemate, policy hearings fill Pennsylvania's legislative void

CHRISTEN SMITH

The Center Square

PITTSBURGH BUSINESS TIMES

Manufacturers ask legislators for help in building jobs in Pittsburgh region

#### **OUR COMMUNITY CONCERNS**

# TIMES OBSERVER Red tape skyrockets energy costs in PA

Susquehanna Valley first responders call upon PA lawmakers to help ease funding shortage



Updated: 8:52 PM EST Feb 15, 2023

Pennsylvania police call hiring problems a 'crisis for law enforcement'

By Anthony Hennen | The Center Square Feb 15, 2023

#### **OUR COMMUNITY CONCERNS (CONT'D)**

## Pennsylvania EMS system teeters on brink of collapse, official says

By Anthony Hennen | The Center Square Feb 13, 2023

PA House R's hold hearing on First Responders crisis- push for action from a legislature still in recess



#### **©CBS** PITTSBURGH

Pa. lawmakers question state officials at hearing over train derailment and its impact



Western Pa. cattle farmer worries about Norfolk Southern chemical leak on agriculture industry

90.5 WESA

The paradox of East Palestine: safe test results come back, while residents report health problems

#### **GOVERNMENT WORKING FOR US**

Permitting Reform Needed to Kickstart Economic Growth, Says Kail

MARCH 23, 2023



Taxes, health care, housing riddled with regulatory woes

By Anthony Hennen | The Center Square Feb 21, 2023

Policy Committee Chair Kail says regulations will alleviate business burdens

BY LIZ CAREY | FEBRUARY 23, 2023 | COMPANIES



Pennsylvania Business Report

Business leaders urge further progress on permit reform

BY HIL ANDERSON (/ABOUT/EDITORIAL-TEAM/#HILANDERSON) | MARCH 23, 2023

#### **EDUCATION**

Pa House Republicans Discuss Charter Reform, Call on Dems and Speaker to Open the House

Monday, January 30th 2023, 7:17 PM EST Updated: Monday, January 30th 2023, 7:20 PM EST

By Brendan Scanland





# GOP Policy Committee promotes charter, private school choices

by: <u>Kaylee Fuller</u> Posted: Mar 17, 2023 / 09:22 AM EDT Updated: Mar 17, 2023 / 09:24 AM EDT

# School choice debate continues in Pennsylvania

**®CBS NEWS** PHILADELPHIA

BY SETH KAPLAN

JANUARY 30, 2023 / 7:26 PM / CBS PHILADELPHIA

### DEPUTY POLICY COMMITTEE CHAIRS



Vice Chairman/Deputy
Policy Chair
Rep. Torren Ecker
(District 193, Adams/Cumberland)



Deputy Policy Chair Rep. Ann Flood (District 138, Northampton)



Deputy Policy Chair Rep. Mike Jones (District 93, York)



Deputy Policy Chair Rep. Robert Leadbeter (District 109, Columbia)



Deputy Policy Chair Rep. Abby Major (District 60, Armstrong/Westmoreland)



Deputy Policy Chair Rep. Zach Mako (District 183, Northampton/Lehigh)



Deputy Policy Chair Rep. Kristin Marcell (District 178, Bucks)



Deputy Policy Chair Rep. Rob Mercuri (District 28, Allegheny)



Deputy Policy Chair Rep. Natalie Mihalek (District 40, Allegheny/Washington)



Deputy Policy Chair Rep. Eric Nelson (District 57, Westmoreland)



Deputy Policy Chair Rep. Clint Owlett (District 68, Bradford/Tioga)



Deputy Policy Chair Rep. Jim Rigby (District 71, Cambria/Somerset)



Deputy Policy Chair Rep. David Rowe (District 85, Snyder/Juniata/Mifflin/ Union)



Deputy Policy Chair Rep. Craig Staats (District 145, Bucks)



**Deputy Policy Chair Rep. Jim Struzzi** (District 62, Indiana)



Deputy Policy Chair Rep. Parke Wentling (District 7, Mercer)

Testifiers that joined the Policy Committee have shared insight and ideas which the legislature may act upon this session. Republicans have heeded the call, and proposed legislation to address the obstacles to opportunities expressed by experts, industry, and our workforce. The following compilation of legislative proposals attached to the requests of testifiers grows by the day, and is current as of April 18, 2023.

Inclusion of legislation within this compilation is for general informational purposes only and is not indicative of caucus-wide support or endorsement.

#### **EDUCATION**

- PA's Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) is well utilized, but would be simpler to navigate if schools were able to apply using a per-student allocation.
  - CO-SPONSOR White EITC Expansion
  - CO-SPONSOR Mercuri Opportunity Pathways Program
- ► The "Hold Harmless" provision which entitles public schools to 2014-15 levels of funding in perpetuity is not fair to all districts. When pursuing changes to school funding "Hold Harmless" should be reviewed and reconsidered.
- ▶ Our schools must be open and honest about our children's education. Curriculums should be public, and input from parents and teachers is needed to assure a quality education and positive values are being encouraged.
  - HB213 Gleim Academic Standards Review Schedule
  - HB211 Gleim Honesty in Teaching Act Prohibits Indoctrination.
  - CO-SPONSOR Marcell/Cooper Curriculum Transparency
  - CO-SPONSOR Brown Parental Rights as a Fundamental Right
  - HB319 Borowizc Parental Rights Regarding Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity and Parental Notification
  - HB392 Kauffman Student Religious Liberties Act
- ➤ Students and families want CHOICE in their schools. Furthermore, they want the tax dollars to travel with their children to the school that best works for their needs.
  - CO-SPONSOR Owlett Lifeline Scholarship
  - HB311 M. Mackenzie Education Money to Follow the Child
  - CO-SPONSOR D'Orsie Attaching Education Money to Students
  - CO-SPONSOR White Restructuring of Charters Appeals Board
  - HB552 Zimmerman Non-public School Exemptions from Executive Mandates
  - HB896 Topper Adding Parents to the PA State Board of Education
  - HB557 Zimmerman Permitting the Licensure of Online Schools within the Private Academic Schools Act

#### **INFRASTRUCTURE**

- ▶ PennDOT is now actively investigating how and where to place more truck stops to alleviate late-day congestion and ease the lives of our truckers and all those using PA roads. PennDOT needs assistance in finding where these rest locations are in highest need.
- ► The Legislature MUST request federal IIJA funds to address class 3 and 4 road maintenance throughout Pennsylvania. Funding for local roads was not provided for explicitly within IIJA, and must be requested on a case-by-case basis.
- ▶ PA specific trucking regulations impede opportunity. We must work to bring the state's regulations in line with the rest of the country.
  - HB84 Oberlander Agricultural Hauling Permits
  - CO-SPONSOR Pickett Amending the Diesel-Powered Motor Vehicle Idling Act
  - HR57 Ecker Urging the US Department of Transportation to Ease CDL Regulations
- ▶ The gas tax appears unsustainable due to increased use of electric vehicles and efficient designs.
  - CO-SPONSOR Grove Motor Licensing Fund Revenue Restructuring
  - HB85 Irvin Mileage-Based User Fee Program

#### **PERMITTING**

- As is standard for federal permits, the scope of appeals should be limited to issues raised during the public comment period.
- ▶ When applications are not reviewed within the legal time limit they should be automatically "deemed approved" and issued to the applicant.
- ► Means to swiftly address emergencies and utilize new technologies should be considered within every rule and regulation.
  - CO-SPONSOR Pickett Emergency Stream Maintenance
  - HB200 Owlett 10-year Municipal Stream Maintenance Permits
- ➤ Our state agencies should use permit fees for their intended purpose, and be required to dedicate these fees to permit processing until there is no permit backlog and all permits are processed by the legal deadlines.
- ▶ If our state agencies are incapable of meeting deadlines and hiring experts to review permits, they should enable the utilization of **third-party permit reviewers**. This is already the case in Massachusetts, Washington, and New Jersey.
  - HB734 Fink Permitting Transparency & Reform
- ► A "One-Stop Shop" would ease the permitting process and streamline the process for key projects. An Executive Order has established this proposal, and the "One-Stop Shop" can be further codified in statute.
- ▶ Duplicitous oversight and review of permits increases timelines and incurs unnecessary strain on the regulated community. Efficiency in permitting and licensing should be paramount.
  - HB560 Zimmerman Online Permit Tracking System
  - CO-SPONSOR Greiner Authorizes Advisory Opinions from Licensing Boards
- ▶ Regulations that incur a significant financial impact on the state should REQUIRE legislative approval.
  - HB487 Keefer PA REINS Act

#### **REGULATORY REVIEW REFORM**

- ► The regulatory review process must be open, fair, and be composed of varied interests to produce coherent rules and regulations. Public and private input will strengthen the effectiveness of regulations, and ease their adoption.
  - HB888 Grove Increasing General Assembly Oversight of IRRC
  - CO-SPONSOR Kephart Strengthening the Regulatory Review Act
- ► Changes to the process may also improve regulatory flexibility when it comes to the regulated communities being burdened by regulatory "red tape."
  - CO-SPONSOR Klunk Independent Office of the Repealer
  - CO-SPONSOR Labs Establishing a Regulatory Sandbox Program

#### **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

- ▶ PA's Workforce Development Association needs assistance "freeing the data" to effectively direct local planning and business design. The PA Department of Labor and Industry provides data that may be up to 18 months old, instead of providing more relevant new-hire data.
  - CO-SPONSOR Culver New Hire and Unemployment Compensation Data Sharing

#### **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT (CONT'D)**

- ▶ The state's population is directly related to your workforce potential. PA has the skill, but lacks the numbers. Efforts to incentivize skilled labor, or young people, to the Commonwealth is needed to meet the opportunities available. Home ownership programs, auto registration waivers, ease of transferring licenses, etc. will attract a workforce from far and wide.
  - HB591 Keefer Removing Barriers in Cosmetology
  - CO-SPONSOR Kutz Realty Transfer Tax Exclusion for First Time Home Buyers
  - HB327 Mako Modernizes the Barber-Teacher Licensing Process
  - HB565 Zimmerman Updates to Professional Engineer Licensing
  - HB590 Keefer Removes Barrier for Nurse Graduates to Become Licensed Registered Nurses
- ▶ Real-time data must drive PA's state agency efforts to prepare our workforce and manufacturers for the careers of the future. Existing programs must evolve, and new programs must be developed to meet the needs of our workforce.
  - CO-SPONSOR Grove Updating the Human Services Code
  - CO-SPONSOR Gaydos Advanced Manufacturing Grants and Loans
- ➤ To remain competitive, Pennsylvanians often pursue an education while employed in an entry-level position. Increasing the ability to attain college credits or certifications while employed would ease the long journey to become a nurse, mechanic, engineer, IT professional, graphic designer, and more.
  - HB404 Watro Military Medic to Civilian EMT/Paramedic
  - HB882 R. Mackenzie CareerBound Workforce Development Program
  - CO-SPONSOR Struzzi Adult Education and Workforce Recovery Fund
  - HB401 Kauffman Outpatient Renal Dialysis Recruitment and Retention
  - CO-SPONSOR Delozier Building Code Official "Trainee" Program
  - HB65 Roae Creating a Written Examination for State EMTs, EMRs, and Paramedics.

#### **ENERGY**

- Labor, industry, and our energy generators are ALL against the enaction of RGGI.
  - HB195 Struzzi Eliminating RGGI Regulations
- ▶ Utilize PA's bounty. There is ample energy throughout the state waiting to be harnessed for the good of the Commonwealth and the betterment of our nation.
  - HB55 Owlett Non-Surface Drilling on State Lands
  - CO-SPONSOR Leadbeter Increasing Federal Support of Pipeline Development
  - CO-SPONSOR Causer Conventional Oil and Gas Act

#### **FIRST RESPONDERS**

- ► Local governments are required to provide fire and EMS services, but are not instructed on how to cover the costs. The law needs clarity in the expectations we place on local governments.
  - HB29 Struzzi Easing Borough Hiring of Police Officers
  - CO-SPONSOR Rigby Enhancing Funding Capabilities for Emergency Services
  - CO-SPONSOR Jozwiak Fire Department Response Reimbursement
  - CO-SPONSOR Roae Expanding Municipal EMS Funding Options
- Our first responders must be told, through words and actions, how important they are to retaining our quality of life and safety. Increased morale starts through raising our voices to publicly praise and thank those that risk life and limb to respond in times of need.
  - HB358 R. Mackenzie Keystone First Responder Award

#### FIRST RESPONDERS (CONT'D)

- ➤ To increase recruiting and retention of first responders the Legislature should look toward varied incentives. Examples include educational incentives, student loan assistance, family leave, mandatory stress leave, as well as retention and recruiting bonuses. Pension portability is key to bringing in first responders from out-of-state, as was proposed in SB669 of the 2021-22 session.
  - HB79 Owlett Updating Campus Police Officer Provisions
  - HB749 Bonner State Police Officer Retirement Credit
  - CO-SPONSOR Rigby State Death Benefits for County 911 Dispatchers
- ▶ The judicial system must support the work of our first responders, and not allow dangers to society to commit crime with impunity and continue to walk our streets. Our officers need assurance that offenders are duly incarcerated and held accountable for the acts they commit.
  - HB596 C. Williams Prosecuting Felons in Possession of Guns in Philadelphia
- ▶ Insurers are raising rates on first responders, particularly following COVID. On-the-job risks and liabilities are resulting in a limited number of insurance carriers which further increases the need for greater funding.
  - HB23 Struzzi Expanding Health Benefits for Campus Police
- ▶ The mental health needs of our first responders, particularly EMS, must be recognized and supported.



# C1-AT A GLANCE



### NOTES





### STATE REPRESENTATIVE JOSHUA D. KAIL House Republican Policy Committee Chairman



#### **BEAVER OFFICE**

690 State Avenue, Beaver, PA 15009 • P: 724-728-7655

#### ATLASBURG OFFICE

1569 Smith Township Road, Atlasburg, PA 15021 • P: 724-587-3095

#### CAPITOL OFFICE

Room 414, Main Capitol Building, P.O. Box 202015, Harrisburg, PA 17120-2015 • P: 717-260-6144

RepKail.com