

HOUSE REPUBLICAN

POLICY

COMMITTEE



2023 Q4 REPORT
OCTOBER–DECEMBER

JOSHUA D. KAIL, COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN



HOPE

Republican Policy Committee

The chill of winter has not slowed down the Republican Policy Committee as we continue our mission to listen and respond to the needs of our state. The Committee convened with our first responders, infrastructure experts, aging-support specialists, manufacturers, energy generators, students, and families to learn how we can remove and overcome the obstacles to opportunity faced throughout our Commonwealth. As our Democrat-controlled chamber moves forward with disastrous policy initiatives and lackluster legislation disconnected from the needs of our people, House Republicans have laid the groundwork for a vibrant future for Pennsylvania.

With the Capitol continuing its crawl through a slow and unproductive legislative session, the Policy Committee has moved forward by traveling the state to discuss legislative priorities that inspire **HOPE** in all Pennsylvanians.

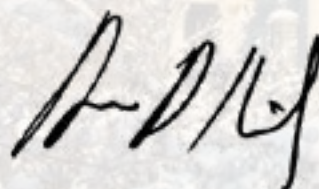
Hope for Pennsylvania families through innovative policy solutions that are people driven and future focused.

Opportunity for family-sustaining jobs. We need to promote Pennsylvania as open for business by removing burdensome taxation, easing the regulatory climate, and addressing overbearing bureaucracy.

Prosperity for working families. We must harness the ample resources offered right here in Pennsylvania, from a highly skilled workforce and abundant energy portfolio to our manufacturing might and agriculture prowess, we must foster the opportunities found here so we can reduce the burdens on working families.

Excellence in Government. Government should work for the people in an efficient and effective manner. Too often we see Government as a hurdle to success. Government must promptly react to the needs of its people and allow citizens and the market to guide sound policy.

The following report is a summary of all hearings, tours and events pursued by the 2023-2024 Republican Policy Committee from October through December 2023. This Q4 report provides a glimpse into the wide range of issues and concerns addressed by the Committee and potential solutions to the obstacles unearthed. 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.



Chairman Joshua D. Kail



TABLE OF CONTENTS

HOPE

OCTOBER 12

Keeping Our Communities Safe from Increasing Crime	6
--	---

OCTOBER 25

Aging With Confidence.....	9
----------------------------	---

OPPORTUNITY

DECEMBER 7, 8, 12

Funding Our Children's Future Series	12
--	----

Dec. 7 Pittsburgh: Funding Our Children's Future	14
--	----

Dec. 8 Philadelphia: Funding Our Children's Future	16
--	----

Dec. 12 Harrisburg: Funding Our Children's Future	18
---	----

PROSPERITY

OCTOBER 24

Advancing Our Rural Connectivity.....	22
---------------------------------------	----

OCTOBER 30

Stopping Economic Disaster: The Democrats and Their Green New Deal.....	25
---	----

EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNMENT

OCTOBER 19

Bridging the Gap: Repairing Our Infrastructure	30
--	----

THE REPUBLICAN CAUCUS AT WORK

Committee Tours	33
-----------------------	----

In the News.....	35
------------------	----

Deputy Policy Committee Chairs	38
--------------------------------------	----

Q4 Action Items	39
-----------------------	----

Q4 At A Glance.....	44
---------------------	----

2023 At A Glance	45
------------------------	----

2023 Timeline	46
---------------------	----





HOPE

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE FROM INCREASING CRIME



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AGING WITH CONFIDENCE



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Rep. Kristin Marcell

"We are experiencing a massive spillover of crime from Philadelphia."



Rep. K.C. Tomlinson

"We are here today because the fight against crime is nowhere near over."

TESTIFIERS



Jennifer Schorn, First Assistant District Attorney, Bucks County

"Further legislation is desperately needed."



The Honorable Fred Harran, Sheriff, Bucks County

"Crime knows no borders."



William McVey, Director of Public Safety, Bensalem Police

"Larry Krasner's failed practices, along with other Philadelphia officials, directly impacts the safety of Bucks County."

Keeping Our Communities Safe from Increasing Crime

October 12, 2023

Northampton Township Building

Hosted by Rep. Marcell and Rep. Tomlinson

The crime creeping out of Philadelphia can no longer be ignored. Our previously safe and family-friendly communities outside the city are now facing burglary, fraud, assault, and violence once unseen. Outside of the well-known changes that are necessary within Philadelphia County, the Republican Policy Committee traveled to neighboring Bucks County to understand the nature of the crime impacting our communities. The Committee listened to the advice of our first responders on how this epidemic can be addressed and drew attention to legislation designed to combat increasing criminality.

TAKEAWAYS

BUCKS COUNTY CRIME TRENDS

OFFICE OF THE BUCKS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Jennifer Schorn, First Assistant District Attorney

- ▶ Further legislation is desperately needed to address organized theft rings.
- ▶ Bucks County **CANNOT TRUST** that crimes will be prosecuted in Philadelphia County by Philadelphia D.A. Larry Krasner.
- ▶ Those arrested for theft are often skipping court and fleeing law enforcement **AFTER** the initial arrest. **The law needs "teeth" to keep suspects from fleeing justice.**
- ▶ Catalytic converter theft is currently adjudicated akin to stealing change from a car's center console. The law must be changed to address the seriousness of this pervasive issue.
- ▶ Methamphetamine is on the rise again and is present in many extremely violent crimes.
- ▶ Carjackings are spilling over into Bucks County from Philadelphia.
- ▶ Because **Xylazine (AKA Tranq)**, a powerful animal tranquilizer used alongside opiates, is not federally scheduled, it is difficult to prosecute traffickers and dealers.



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

TESTIFIERS



"The integrity of the US mail service is at risk!"

Steven LeCompte, Chief of Police,
Northampton Township



"Small Town USA has become a hunting ground for Philadelphia criminals."

Dominic Varacallo, Chief of Police,
Upper Southampton



"Crime incurs extra costs for our company and our customers."

Rudolph P. Muller, Jr., Regional Director,
Supply Chain Security, Bimbo Bakeries



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.



OFFICE OF THE BUCKS COUNTY SHERIFF

The Honorable Fred Harran, Sheriff

- ▶ Sheriff Harran sees striking similarities between the crack/crime epidemic of 1980s NYC and the issues being faced in Bucks County today. Drugs are pouring into our country and communities.
- ▶ **Bucks County is experiencing major increases in crime:**
 - **Robbery +22.7%**
 - **Sexual Assault +17.1%**
 - **Theft +21.8%**
 - **Burglary +32.9%**
 - **Auto Theft +30.6%**
 - **Major Crimes +18.7%**
- ▶ The local jail needs to expand detox units to accommodate inmates experiencing withdrawal.
- ▶ The new street drug, Xylazine, is directly tied to rising thefts, requires extended hospital stays and more intensive treatment as compared to the 72-hour detox common for most narcotics, is immune to Narcan, causes horrific wounds, and its use is on the rise.
- ▶ **Fatal overdoses are down, but almost purely due to Narcan.** Overdoses are still alarmingly high.
- ▶ Bucks County officers are wary of operating within Philadelphia, as they experience serious liability in their ability to perform their duties.

PUBLIC SAFETY PERSPECTIVES

BENSALEM POLICE DEPARTMENT

William McVey, Director of Public Safety

- ▶ 64 drivers this year have chosen to flee from officers. This is an increase of 3,000% over five years.
- ▶ **There has been a 75% increase in the discovery of illegal firearms in the last year. Use of "ghost guns," firearms without serial numbers, are on the rise.**
- ▶ Often, a simple car stop is the means by which officers discover more serious crimes. These car stops cannot occur in Philadelphia due to Philadelphia's "Driver Equity Laws."
- ▶ Criminals, out on bail from Philadelphia, have been found committing crimes in Bucks County.
- ▶ **Decriminalization of retail theft, lax enforcement of vehicular laws, and lack of prosecution in Philadelphia ENCOURAGES crime.**

NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Steve LeCompte, Chief of Police

- ▶ Within the last 2.5 years Northampton Township has seen a 26% increase in Part 1 crimes — Murder, rape, robbery, human trafficking, etc.
- ▶ **There has been a 600% increase in mail thefts within the last 2.5 years!** The percentage is likely higher, as mail thefts are not always reported.
- ▶ Mail theft is often handled as a single incident, even when entire neighborhoods are targeted.
- ▶ **Mail theft and fraud are inherently connected.** Victims of mail theft often lose checks, receive late fees for unpaid bills, are forced to close bank accounts, lose access to their mailbox, experience identity theft, and deal with financial loss. — **The integrity of the U.S. mail service is at risk.**
- ▶ Mail theft is often an organized criminal act, and the grading of the offense should reflect the seriousness of the crime.
- ▶ A \$100,000 loss/theft is the minimum amount a Postal Inspector needs before bringing a case to a U.S. Attorney — thus, mail theft becomes a state/local problem.

UPPER SOUTHAMPTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Dominic Varacallo, Chief of Police

- ▶ Upper Southampton is now a hunting ground for Philadelphia criminals.
- ▶ **Many criminals caught in Upper Southampton should already be in prison!** Many have lengthy records but Philadelphia does not pursue prosecutions.
- ▶ Philadelphia MURDERERS have been found in Upper Southampton, in possession of automatic weapons, and were discovered purely due to traffic stops.
- ▶ Upper Southampton experienced 60 people attempting “straw purchases” of firearms within the last year. Criminals are attempting to take advantage of the limited means of suburban police departments.

BIMBO BAKERIES

Rudolph P. Muller Jr., Regional Director of Supply Chain Security

- ▶ Bimbo Bakeries is the largest commercial baking company in the United States, and proudly houses its corporate headquarters in Montgomery County.
- ▶ **Catalytic converter thefts are plaguing Bimbo’s vehicles:**
 - **1,385 thefts nationwide**
 - **170 thefts in PA**
 - **The average cost per theft is \$2,438.36 — this is just the cost of replacement parts**
- ▶ Outside of replacing the catalytic converter Bimbo has enhanced security efforts, addressed collateral damage to fencing and lighting, and expended time waiting on repairs.
- ▶ **License plate readers are integral to tracking the vehicles of suspected thieves.**
- ▶ Catalytic converter theft impacts:
 - Supply chain and distribution networks
 - Emissions and regulatory compliance
 - Operations and manufacturing
 - Vehicle fleets, mechanics, and maintenance schedules
 - Grocers, businesses, and families



“Older individuals serve as pillars of support for our families and communities.”

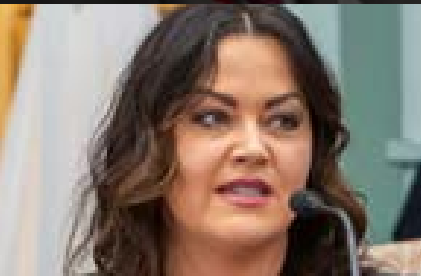
Rep. Jill Cooper

TESTIFIERS



“There are no borders relevant to scammers. These people exist in the ether.”

The Honorable Harry F. Smail Jr., Judge,
Court of Common Pleas, Westmoreland County



“We make every effort to prevent these crimes from occurring.”

The Honorable Nicole Ziccarelli,
District Attorney, Westmoreland County



“Background checks are the first protective layer we have.”

John R. Dickson, IV, President and CEO,
Redstone Highlands Communities



“Older adults don’t want to be ‘bubble wrapped’ for the rest of their lives.”

Pamela Toto, Ph.D., Professor and Director,
Doctor of Clinical Science in Occupational
Therapy Program, University of Pittsburgh

Aging with Confidence

October 25, 2023

Redstone Highlands Community Center

Hosted by Rep. Cooper

The Commonwealth works to attract new residents each year, but we also must retain those who have had careers and raised families here. The Policy Committee convened to listen to the unique needs and concerns of our aging populations and their support networks, as well as investigate means by which local and state governments can cooperate to provide assistance. Older residents, just like all Pennsylvanians, want to live in their own homes with dignity and have assurance that programs for aging with confidence are always available.

TAKEAWAYS

SENIOR SAFETY: COMBATting FRAUD WESTMORELAND COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

The Honorable Harry F. Smail Jr., Judge

- ▶ Guardianship often stems from an older adult experiencing diminished cognitive capacities, not necessarily diminished physical capacity.
- ▶ **The court is OBLIGATED to find a familial resource in a guardianship case.**
- ▶ Guardianship requires medical testimony confirming an individual’s inability to provide for themselves through their own physical or mental capabilities.
- ▶ **Tracking mechanisms are in place, and enforced, to ensure guardians do not abuse the finances or property of those in their care.**
- ▶ Penalties for guardianship fraud and scams are currently not severe enough to discourage crime.
- ▶ Judges are empowered to disallow those charged of crimes against older adults, through bond provisions, from holding certain jobs or engaging in activities that place diminished populations at risk.



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

WESTMORELAND COUNTY OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

The Honorable Nicole Ziccarelli, District Attorney

- ▶ Scams, particularly once a payment has been made, are incredibly difficult to combat and prosecute.
- ▶ **There is no shame in being the victim of a scam.** When in doubt, a potential victim should know that they can always call 911 or their district attorney's office.
- ▶ Representatives hosting "\$cam Jam" informational sessions are of great assistance in educating their communities.
- ▶ Check washing scams, tied to mail theft, are becoming increasingly common.
- ▶ Senior scams often begin with a phone call.
 - A child or grandchild may be falsely claimed to be in trouble.
 - Relative's voices and numbers may be spoofed to create a sense of credibility.
 - A fake prize may have been "won" in order to acquire financial information.
 - Fake calls from Social Security or the IRS are used to defraud payments.
 - Romance scams, where victims are "catfished" into thinking they are building a relationship with a real person, are used to steal money and information from people longing for connections.

REDSTONE HIGHLANDS COMMUNITIES

John R. Dickson, IV, President and CEO

- ▶ The workforce for senior care requires extensive background checks.
- ▶ Within background checks only convictions are noted, NOT CHARGES. This is a liability for employers.
- ▶ Abuse charges fall upon the care facility, not the staffing agency who supplied the employee.
- ▶ When a fall occurs during long-term care the liability falls on the provider. This is not the case for hospitals. This adds tremendous liability to providers of elder care.
- ▶ **Staffing ratios for senior care facilities — like those seen being applied to hospitals — are an unfunded mandate and will dramatically increase labor costs and the costs borne by our seniors.**
- ▶ Stable year-to-year state funding for senior care will increase the capabilities of our older adult facilities.

EMPOWERING SENIORS AT HOME

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Pamela Toto, Ph.D., Professor and Director, Doctor of Clinical Science in Occupational Therapy Program

- ▶ **Pennsylvania has nearly the oldest population in the US. Residents aged 85+ are the Commonwealth's largest growing demographic.**
- ▶ Aging in place does not mean having a hospital bed in your living room. It means remaining active, engaged in your community, and leading a fulfilling life.
- ▶ **Aging at home is more economical than assisted living facilities, saving residents and the Commonwealth significant money and resources.**
- ▶ 4% of older adults currently reside in assisted living facilities. We do not have the workforce to support growth in this care sector, let alone to meet current demands.
- ▶ **Only 5.8% of PA homes are age-ready for older populations.** The best tools to assist older adults to age-in-place is better lighting and support bars to reduce falls and accidents.
- ▶ Instead of finding replacements for an aging adult to perform their own tasks, the first venue should be to find means to enable the adult to retain their independence through the use of new tools, technologies, and techniques.

OPPORTUNITY

FUNDING OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE



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Funding Our Children's Future

December 7, 8, and 12, 2023

Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Harrisburg

Hosted by Chairman Kail

As House Democrats attempted to strip \$150 million in funding from the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) and Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit (OSTC) programs, the Republican Policy Committee convened three hearings to draw attention to the many entities that benefit from this funding. In Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Harrisburg the message received was abundantly clear: EITC and OSTC are key to supporting our educational institutions, empowering families, and inspiring hope in our children's future. This funding is in high demand, efficiently utilized, and provides opportunity to Pennsylvanians across the socioeconomic spectrum and throughout the state.

In 2021–2022:

Students in every county in PA receive EITC/OSTC funding.

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

77,640

AVERAGE SCHOLARSHIP

EITC: \$2,583
OSTC: \$1,853

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

139,000

More than 63,000 student scholarship applications went unfunded due to arbitrary program caps.

EITC	2022-23	HB301 2023-24
Scholarship Organizations	\$263 Million	\$325 Million
Educational Improvement Organizations	\$44.5 Million	\$54.5 Million
Pre-Kindergarten Scholarship Organizations	\$20.5 Million	\$30.5 Million
Economically Disadvantaged Schools	\$12 Million	\$60 Million
Total EITC Amount	\$340 Million	\$470 Million

OSTC		
Opportunity Scholarship Organizations	\$65 Million	\$85 Million
Total OSTC Amount	\$65 Million	\$85 Million
Total EITC Amount/OSTC Tax Credits	\$405 Million	\$555 Million

PARENTS AND STUDENTS

The Committee heard testimony from parents and students from across the state. Parents and students from Erie, Indiana County, Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, and Philadelphia shared their support for EITC & OSTC.

- Were it not for access to EITC/OSTC funding the **ONLY OPTION** for their child's education is the public school determined by their ZIP code.
- The choice to pursue alternative education is made by the entire family.

- ▶ **Many parents are entirely unaware of what EITC/OSTC can do for their children.** Efforts must be made to advertise the programs to eligible organizations and local businesses, as well as to PA families.
- ▶ EITC/OSTC enables parents to work full-time jobs without concern for the cost of child care and the future of their careers.
- ▶ **Many families make too much money to receive assistance, and too little to afford an alternative education. EITC/OSTC bridges this affordability gap.**
- ▶ Not all children learn in the same manner. Options within educational opportunities enable all children to thrive in the environment that best suits their needs.

PROGRAMS

The Committee heard testimony from Western PA Boys and Girls Clubs, the Dauphin County Library, the PA Libraries Association, private high schools, as well as Wonderspring Early Education.

- ▶ EITC funding is often a nominal portion of an educational institution's total budget, but **100% of the EITC funding goes directly toward children's educational programs.**
- ▶ The desire for EITC funding grows each year as more entities learn how to elicit and receive the funds.
- ▶ **EITC is more than just schooling. Our libraries, pre-Ks, youth organizations, and more are supported by these funds.**
- ▶ Every EITC recipient knows exactly what would occur with increased EITC funding – more educational opportunities for PA children and their families.
- ▶ **Businesses WANT to support EITC.** For many, it sounds too good to be true! The application and approval process, along with all the paperwork, makes the process unnecessarily onerous for both businesses and EITC recipients.



TESTIFIERS



"Without EITC contributions, our capacity to continue to provide these quality programs will be reduced significantly. The lives and futures of hundreds of youths will be impacted."

Chris Watts, President and CEO, Boys & Girls Clubs of Western Pennsylvania



"We see EITC and OSTC as the path towards our long-term success and sustainability."

Michael Joyce, Principal, Bishop Canevin High School



"These scholarships help someone like me to not experience the pressure of working multiple jobs... it's literally changing our future."

Ruth Alicea, Parent from Leadership Christian Academy

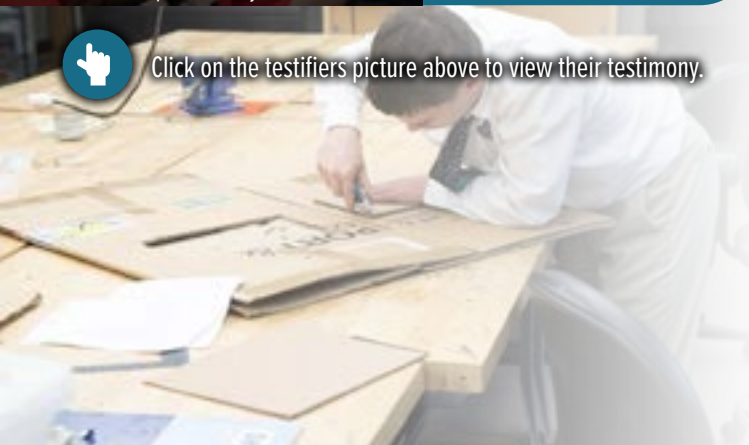


"None of this would be possible for us if it weren't for EITC scholarship funds."

Cassie Smith, Parent from Cavalry Baptist Academy



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.



Pittsburgh: Funding Our Children's Future

December 7, 2023

Bishop Canevin High School, Pittsburgh
Hosted by Chairman Kail

TAKEAWAYS

PROGRAMS

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Chris Watts, President and CEO

- Boys & Girls Clubs of Western Pennsylvania (BGCWPA) receives EITC funding as an Educational Improvement Organization (EIO) and has received more than \$250,000 in EITC funding over the last three years.
- In the last year alone BGCWPA received \$140,000 in EITC funding, constituting 2% of their annual budget. **100% of this funding goes directly toward youth programs.**
- EITC funding has been used to support summer camps, free meals, STEAM classes, literacy lessons, sports, social and emotional learning, as well as mentoring.
- **EITC is workforce development!** The funding supports BGCWPA's Career Works programming which provides career coaching, internships, job shadowing, and occupational skills to teens.
- Finding EITC funding has not been difficult, but receiving state approval for contributions takes an inordinate amount of time.
- **EITC is integral to maintaining BGCWPA's pre-K programs, as these programs are the most difficult to fundraise for.**
- EITC is seen as a growing revenue stream that BGCWPA plans to utilize to a greater extent into the future.

BISHOP CANEVIN HIGH SCHOOL

Michael Joyce, Principal

- **EITC funding is used to subsidize significant portions, 12% to 28%, of a child's tuition at Bishop Canevin High School.**
- Without EITC funding many parents could not afford to remove their children from public schools and pursue a safe and high-quality education through Bishop Canevin.

► **60% of Bishop Canevin students receive EITC funding.**

- The average cost of a Bishop Canevin education is \$15,000 per student, which is less than a public-school education but more than what many families can afford.

PARENTS

LEADERSHIP CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Ruth Alicea, Parent

► **Were it not for access to OSTC funding the ONLY OPTION for Ruth's children was the local public school.**

- Ruth's son attends public school, and her daughter attends Leadership Christian Academy. Ruth recognized that her children have different needs, and those needs are supported by EITC/OSTC funding.
- Ruth and her children do not feel that the Erie public schools are safe, and her daughter independently determined that public school was not her preferred option.
- Ruth is not pressured to hold multiple jobs, as a single mother, to support her child's educational needs. **EITC/OSTC funding allows parents to be home with their children after school and has enabled PA families to thrive.**

CAVALRY BAPTIST ACADEMY

Cassie Smith, Parent

- The Smith family lives in rural Indiana County, and few educational options were available to them.
- Without EITC/OSTC scholarships the Smith family could not afford any alternatives to the local public schools.
- More than half of the students at Cavalry Baptist Academy rely on EITC/OSTC funds.



TESTIFIERS



Zakiyyah Boone, CEO,
Wonderspring Early Education

"If there were more dollars, we could serve more children. It's that black and white!"



Christi Buker, Executive Director,
Pennsylvania Library Association

"Clearly, libraries are contributing to both the education of our young people, and also the future workforce."



Floyd Faria, Parent from Archbishop Ryan High School

"Thank you, thank you, thank you... for giving us a better life."



Ryan Haney, Parent from Archbishop Ryan High School

"I've seen this program benefit kids, from the beginning when it started until now... if there was more funding, it would benefit more kids."



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

Philadelphia: Funding Our Children's Future

December 8, 2023

Holy Family University, Philadelphia

Hosted by Chairman Kail

TAKEAWAYS

PROGRAMS

WONDERSPRING EARLY EDUCATION

Zakiyyah Boone, CEO

- ▶ Wonderspring receives EITC funds as a Pre-Kindergarten Scholarship Organization (PKSO). These funds go directly to programs to support hundreds of 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds.
- ▶ **EITC funding supports families that are otherwise not eligible for subsidized programs.** With the high cost of child care these funds enable families to retain their 9–5 full-time careers even during the summer break.
- ▶ Through access to summer programs Wonderspring combats the “summer slide,” where a child’s abilities may regress when outside of the classroom.

PENNSYLVANIA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Christi Buker, Executive Director

- ▶ Currently, 42 public libraries throughout PA operate as Educational Improvement Organizations (EIOs) to receive EITC funding.
- ▶ Libraries utilize EITC funds to provide free books to children, summer programs, cooking classes, STEM clubs, music lessons, and more.
- ▶ **EITC funds represent just 2% of a library’s budget, but this 2% constitutes 80% of all funding budgeted for children’s programs!**
- ▶ Significant work must be performed to elicit EITC funds from local businesses, as well as to receive approval from the state. The process is onerous, and both businesses and EITC recipients would benefit from assistance.
- ▶ As EITC expands in recognition and availability more public libraries intend to utilize the funds.

PARENTS

ARCHBISHOP RYAN HIGH SCHOOL

Floyd Faria, Parent

- Floyd fled religious persecution in Pakistan, and moved his wife and two daughters to Philadelphia.
- **The Faria family was told they would be bullied in Philadelphia's public schools, and were worried about the education and safety of their children.**
- The Faria family was also equally worried that, through negative influences within public schools, their children would develop antisocial behaviors.
- Thanks to EITC/OSTC scholarships the Faria family was not subjected to Philadelphia's public schools, and their education flourished.
- **Floyd believes that the education his children are provided through Archbishop Ryan High School has enabled his family to "achieve the American dream."**

ARCHBISHOP RYAN HIGH SCHOOL

Ryan Haney, Parent

- As a graduate of Archbishop Ryan High School, Ryan wished to share the same educational opportunities he received with his own children.
- It has been common knowledge for decades that Philadelphia's public schools are not capable of providing a quality education, and Ryan's community has relied on Catholic schools for generations.
- **Ryan, a middle-income, full-time working father, needed access to EITC/OSTC to ensure a quality education for his children, as he is not eligible for state assistance.**



TESTIFIERS



Lori Milach, Public Services Director,
Dauphin County Library System

"EITC funds help us to give kids experiences that will last for a lifetime."



Myles Slade-Bowers, Bishop McDevitt High School Graduate, EITC/OSTC Recipient

"School choice worked for me!"



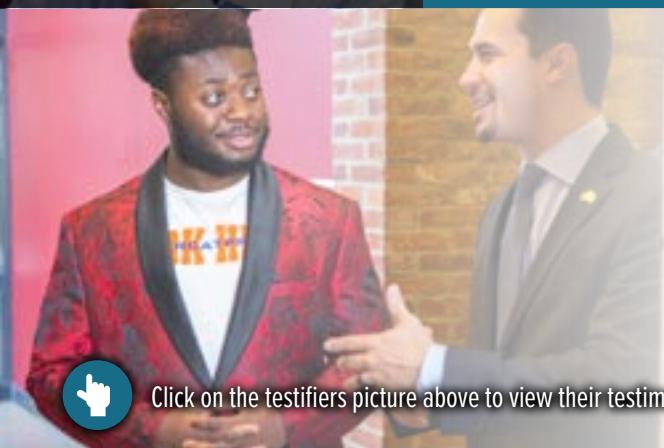
Joshua Quartmon, Parent from
The Samuel School

"EITC funding makes it possible for families like mine to attend a high-quality school."



Chad Weaver, Parent from The Samuel School

"My child is advancing quickly and is very bright. I believe this is because she had access to EITC scholarships."



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

Harrisburg: Funding Our Children's Future

December 12, 2023

Republican Caucus Room, Harrisburg

Hosted by Chairman Kail

TAKEAWAYS

PROGRAMS

DAUPHIN COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

Lori Milach, Public Services Director

- ▶ Without EITC funding, the library would have great difficulty during their busy summer months where children and families need resources to mitigate the "summer slide."
- ▶ EITC funds have been used to distribute free books at outreach events intended to build a family's home library. **Over 3,000 books have been provided FOR FREE to children and families.**
- ▶ Funding covers the cost of classroom learning aids for library clubs and programs. Sewing supplies, cooking supplies, augmented reality computers, robots, and more have been purchased for the library and our children with EITC funding.

STUDENTS AND PARENTS

BISHOP MCDEVITT HIGH SCHOOL

Myles Slade-Bowers, Graduate, EITC/OSTC Recipient

- ▶ Because of a vision disorder Myles was told he would never be able to read or write. Via EITC, Myles attended a school that catered to his needs, received personalized assistance, and in short time excelled in his educational pursuits.
- ▶ Myles' mother did not have the income to provide the education she wanted for her children. Were it not for EITC/OSTC funding, Myles and his siblings would have attended a failing school.
- ▶ Myles recognizes the tremendous gift presented to him through EITC/OSTC, and has devoted his life to championing these opportunities for other students.

THE SAMUEL SCHOOL

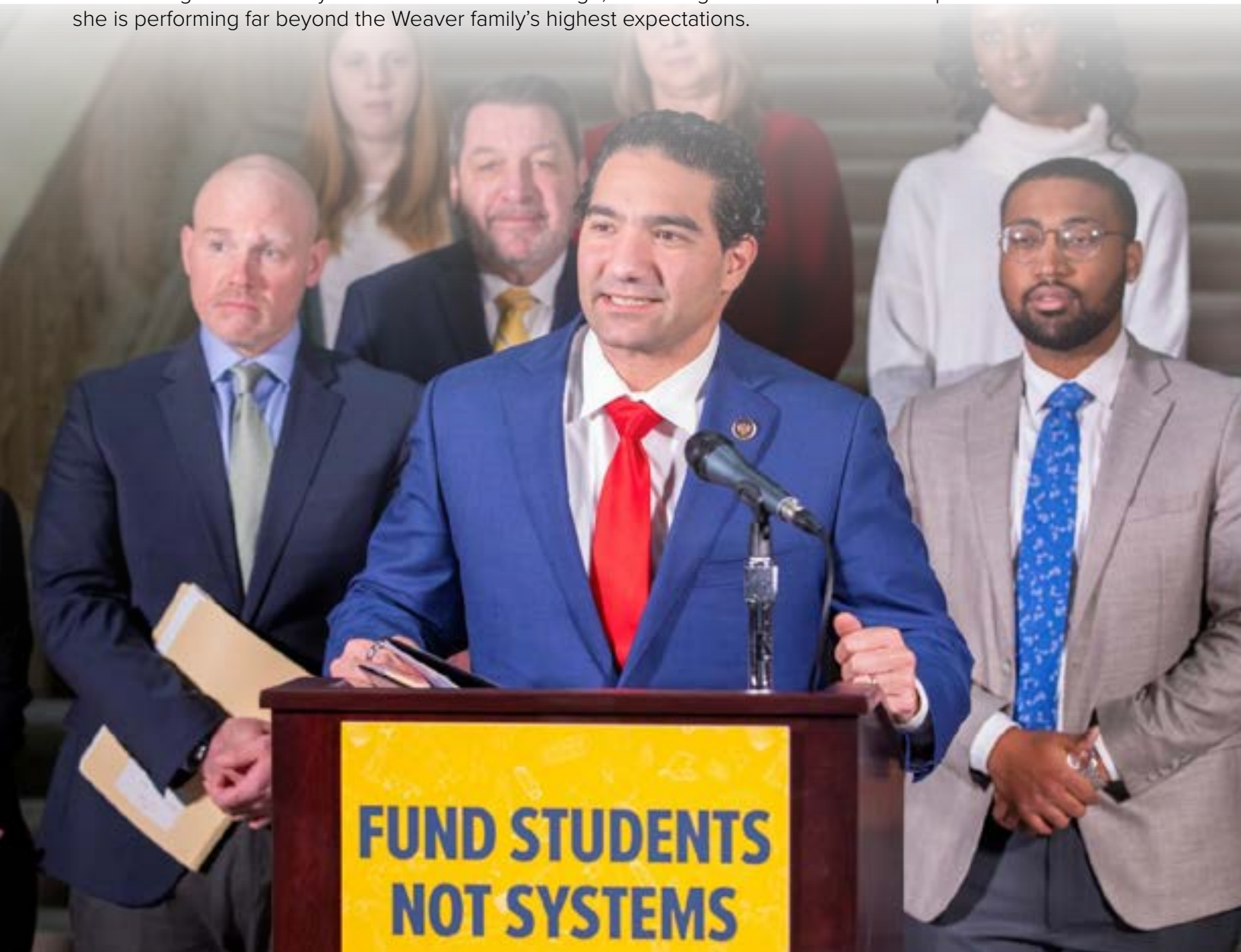
Joshua Quartmon, Parent

- ▶ Joshua and his wife initially tried to homeschool their children, but their joint career and business aspirations did not provide them the time or attention required to teach three children.
- ▶ As a small business owner, Joshua's income is too high to receive state assistance, and too low to afford the education his children deserve. If not for EITC/OSTC, Joshua would be forced to send his children to a failing school.
- ▶ **Many parents are unaware of the EITC/OSTC scholarships. Often, the schools inform the parents of the opportunity.**

THE SAMUEL SCHOOL

Chad Weaver, Parent

- ▶ Chad's wife is a paralegal, and through significant online investigating found that EITC/OSTC scholarships were available for their children. **Further efforts must be made to inform both parents and educational institutions of the accessibility of these funds.**
- ▶ Chad's daughter has always been advanced for her age, but through EITC/OSTC scholarships and The Samuel School she is performing far beyond the Weaver family's highest expectations.





PROSPERITY

ADVANCING OUR RURAL CONNECTIVITY



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STOPPING ECONOMIC DISASTER: THE DEMOCRATS & THEIR GREEN NEW DEAL



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Rep. Ryan Warner

"Broadband expansion is a pressing need, not just here in Fayette County, but across the Commonwealth."



Rep. Charity Grimm Krupa

"We are exploring the solutions needed to advance our communities."

TESTIFIERS



Gregg Downer, Supervisor, Luzerne Township

"On my drive here, I lost cellular service three times!"



Richard Black, 911/GIS Systems Manager, Fayette County Emergency Management Agency

"Rural areas matter too. This is a safety concern for our residents."



Brandon Carson, Executive Director, PA Broadband Development Authority

"Our mission is to close the digital divide and connect all Pennsylvanians."

Advancing Our Rural Connectivity

October 24, 2023

Fay-Penn Economic Development Council
Hosted by Rep. Warner and Rep. Grimm Krupa

Communication is key to a prosperous future, and obstacles to reliable connectivity were brought to light in Fayette County. Residents of rural PA often lack internet access, cellular service, and all the benefits tied to our hyperconnected modern world. To draw attention to this disparity and hear of the potential benefits of state and federal infrastructure funding, the Policy Committee heard from residents and telecommunications experts to better understand how the Commonwealth can advance our rural connectivity.

TAKEAWAYS

COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY LUZERNE TOWNSHIP

Gregg Downer, Supervisor

- Many roads and homes lack internet access in Luzerne Township, and those that have internet access only have aged land lines.
- Old land lines have frayed and broken, and Verizon has not bothered to repair existing infrastructure.
- **Residents must travel as far as 3 miles from their homes for cellular service, which creates a real concern for emergencies and 911 calls.**
- Many residents in Luzerne Township were unable to work from home during COVID due to lack of reliable internet.
- The terrain of Pennsylvania, hills and valleys, has made infrastructure expansion difficult.
- For some residents, the **ONLY INTERNET OPTION** is SpaceX's expensive StarLink satellites.
- **SCI Fayette, a state prison, does not have cellular service and in the event of an incident would struggle to inform the public.**



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

TESTIFIERS



Andrew French, Executive Director,
Redevelopment Authority of the County of
Fayette

*"We are confident that
broadband connectivity
for all of Fayette County
is achievable."*



Jeremy Crandall, Assistant Vice President,
State Legislative Affairs, CTIA

*"This is a time of
unprecedented wireless
demand from American
consumers."*



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

FAYETTE COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Richard Black, 911/GIS Systems Manager

- ▶ **Lack of internet and cellular service impedes 911 response time and response capabilities.**
- ▶ When calling 911, before any conversation takes place, the dispatch first receives the address of the closest cellular tower. More cellular towers assist in accurate address triangulation.
- ▶ Tower proximity is determined by cellular provider, which is not necessarily the closest tower to the emergency.
- ▶ If a hiker gets lost within Ohiopyle State Park, first responders have tremendous difficulty finding them through triangulation.
- ▶ **EMS is often unable to communicate with local hospitals while responding to an emergency, exacerbating the risk to people in need.**
- ▶ Lack of cellular service blocks emergency alerts. This put 400+ residents at risk during a recent tornado.

BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY

PA BROADBAND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Brandon Carson, Executive Director

- ▶ **330,000 homes and businesses across the Commonwealth lack reliable high-speed internet.**
- ▶ 26% of PA residents live in rural areas, with 81% of those rural residents lacking high-speed internet.
- ▶ **The Federal American Rescue Plan Act, along with the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA), provide roughly \$1.5 billion in funding to build high-speed internet infrastructure throughout PA.**
- ▶ PA Broadband Development Authority funds must be used for fixed terrestrial broadband services such as fiber-optic, coaxial cable, and fixed wireless connections in homes, businesses, and communities. No single technology works for the entire state.
- ▶ **Permitting, and the frequent delays that come with permitting, are a real concern for the successful rollout of infrastructure projects.**
- ▶ The state currently lacks the workforce to construct internet infrastructure. \$800,000 in grant funding has been allocated by the Department of Labor & Industry to train future trades workers to meet growing demand.

► Without partnerships between local governments and internet service providers grant money is unusable. Local governments must begin outreach efforts NOW.

► **All residents of Fayette County can expect to receive internet access by 2030.**

REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF FAYETTE

Andrew French, Executive Director

► Many low-income homeowners cannot afford even the most basic internet services, and must rely on the limited capabilities of their phones.

► **A lack of high-speed internet is one of the most critical issues facing Fayette County.**

► “Connectivity Opportunity Areas” (COAs) have been analyzed across the county, primarily in western Fayette, and these locations will be the first to receive new infrastructure.

► 2,374 unserved/underserved addresses are within the preliminary COAs, with many more outside the COAs in even more remote and rural regions.

► Phase 1 of the “Connect Fayette” initiative was completed with **\$5.3 million in Federal CARES act funding to create 29 hot-spot locations** throughout the most rural areas of the county, with extra attention given to Ohiopyle Borough as it hosts 1.5 million visitors per year.

► Phase 2 of the initiative, which began in 2020, uses **\$4.6 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding to expand hot spots to western and north-central Fayette County.** “Middle-mile” fiber infrastructure will also be expanded to ease future network expansions.

► Phase 3 of the initiative will utilize **\$10 million in IJA funding to install fiber lines along 118 miles of roadway and provide direct fiber-based broadband access to 1,946 unserved and 81 underserved locations.**

CELL PHONE CONNECTIVITY

CTIA – U.S. WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Jeremy Crandall, Assistant Vice President, State Legislative Affairs

► Contrary to inflationary trends the cost of wireless services and smartphones has decreased in the last year.

► **Expansions to wireless infrastructure are directly tied to a region’s economic growth.**

► To meet the demand for increased internet access PA should entertain tech-neutral policies that enable communities to choose what works best for them.

► **Private investment is key to infrastructure expansion, and a stable regulatory and tax climate encourages investment.**

► Advances in 5G technologies have enabled wireless home broadband. Wireless broadband does not carry the same infrastructure costs associated with fiber-optic but is currently not funded through federal grant programs.

► Wireless companies direct their efforts toward states that offer business-friendly policies such as:

- State sales tax exemptions for broadband equipment
- Repeal of the gross receipts tax
- Authorize flat 911 fees
- Streamlined permitting for infrastructure (Act 191 of 2012, Act 50 of 2021)
- Enable utilization of state lands for infrastructure





Chairman Joshua D. Kail, Policy Committee

"We're not New York, we're not California, but that is where the Democrat agenda is coming from."



Chairman Martin Causer, Environmental Resources and Energy Committee

"We need to grow our energy industry. Grow our energy production."

TESTIFIERS



Jim Welty, Vice President of Government Affairs, Marcellus Shale Coalition

"The war on natural gas will send us to the dark ages. 50%+ of PA electricity is derived from natural gas."



Mike Ford, Secretary-Treasurer, Pennsylvania Building & Construction Trades Council

"We want the workers on these jobs to be from PA."



David Taylor, President and CEO, Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association

"Manufacturers rely on affordable, reliable, available energy."

Stopping Economic Disaster: The Democrats and Their Green New Deal

October 30, 2023

Republican Caucus Room

Hosted by Chairman Kail & Chairman Causer

Energy policy proposals and legislation stemming from the Democrat Caucus are a disaster for the Commonwealth. If the Democrats have their way our economy will flounder, energy bills will explode, hundreds of thousands of jobs will be put at risk, foreign adversaries will be empowered, and our environment will gain no benefit from the radical proposals being forced on our people and industries. Instead of entertaining destructive and unpopular Democrat "Green New Deal" proposals, the House Republican Policy Committee convened alongside our energy extractors, trades workers, and manufacturers to highlight the endless opportunities available to the Commonwealth's future once we unleash our energy potential.

TAKEAWAYS

MARCELLUS SHALE COALITION

Jim Welty, Vice President of Government Affairs

- ▶ PA is the second largest natural gas producer in America, second only to Texas.
- ▶ **PA is the largest exporter of natural gas in America.**
- ▶ PA oil/gas regulations are among the strongest in America and worldwide.
- ▶ Natural gas is solely responsible for the dramatic decreases in Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), Nitrogen Oxides (NOx), and Green House Gasses (GHG) experienced in the Commonwealth since the 2005 PA natural gas boom.
- ▶ **\$6 BILLION in royalty payments are made to PA landowners each year.**
- ▶ Act 13 Impact Fee money, derived from every oil and gas well drilled in the state, has funded the construction of countless parks and community centers throughout the Commonwealth.



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

- ▶ University studies from a variety of states, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC), Department of Energy (DOE), United State Geological Survey (USGS), and more have determined that hydraulic fracturing does not harm our groundwater.
- ▶ The 2020 grand jury report on oil/gas setbacks which inspired calls to dramatically increase setback regulations, pursued by then-A.G. Shapiro, was described by Gov. Wolf's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) as "a disservice to the citizens of the Commonwealth," and many aspects of the report were, "factually and legally inaccurate."
- ▶ If increased setbacks were to be put in place, and PA landowners would be made unable to access the resources under their property, there are no realistic or fair means to compensate these landowners for a taking of their property.
- ▶ 3–5 days of drilling results in 40–50 years of usable unconventional well life.
- ▶ PA has the lowest methane loss from natural gas operations in the world.
- ▶ **As seen below, the setbacks to oil/gas operations as proposed within Democrat legislation is a de facto ban on oil and gas development in PA.**

COUNTY	PERCENT OF LAND BANNED UNDER CURRENT SETBACKS	PERCENT OF LAND BANNED UNDER DEMOCRAT LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS
Allegheny	75%	99%
Beaver	66%	99%
Butler	69%	99%
Lycoming	21%	65%
Susquehanna	30%	96%
Tioga	26%	81%
Washington	43%	99%

PENNSYLVANIA BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL

Mike Ford, Secretary-Treasurer

- ▶ Oil and gas development, infrastructure, and supporting roles that surround the industry equate to hundreds of thousands of family- and community-sustaining jobs.
- ▶ **There are no means of BASELOAD electrical generation outside of oil, gas, nuclear, and coal power plants. Without baseload energy the grid will collapse.**
- ▶ PJM has sounded the alarm on the future of PA energy. Our grid requires stable energy generation that can adapt to varied needs throughout the day.
- ▶ **The talk of RGGI alone stymied investment in PA and drove our trades workers to Ohio and West Virginia.**
- ▶ Natural gas related work is a gamechanger for rural PA. Small towns have attracted significant funds, residents are retained, and agricultural land has remained viable by subletting small portions for oil and gas operations.
- ▶ Loss of trade work trickles down to local economies as businesses lose their customers and communities lose their tax base.
- ▶ The loss of a potential Hydrogen Hub to West Virginia resulted in lessened opportunity for Pennsylvania trades workers.
- ▶ **The closure of the Homer City Coal-Fired Power Plant, which had NOTHING wrong with it, was a major loss to local trades workers and the future of Homer City.**

PENNSYLVANIA MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION

David Taylor, President and CEO

- ▶ **PA is the nation's largest electricity EXPORTER.**
- ▶ Susquehanna County is the #1 oil/gas producing county in America — yet the products can't get to market in New York or New England due to Democrat policy.
- ▶ Temperature points needed for steel production CANNOT be reached through any other fuel than gas or coal.
- ▶ **Oil and gas are integrally tied to agriculture. Fuel is necessary for farm vehicles, but more so the ammonia is needed as fertilizer.**
- ▶ Natural gas is required for plastic and cement production, which are key to building our society.
- ▶ America is the world's largest economy, and the second largest emitter. China is the second largest economy, but accounts for ten times the emissions.
- ▶ **Making energy more expensive makes EVERYTHING more expensive.**
- ▶ Causation between natural gas development and health risks are unfounded. Correlation \neq Causation. Findings from the same sources are conflicting, strong assumptions are made, and ample studies have shown either no relationship or even a positive relationship between health and proximity to natural gas operations.





EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNMENT

BRIDGING THE GAP: **REPAIRING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE**



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Rep. Wendy Fink

"The closing of a single bridge impacts our everyday lives."

TESTIFIERS



Kent Heffner, Supervisor,
Chanceford Township

*"There are **A LOT** of bridges out right now."*



Laura Taylor, Chief,
Southern York County EMS

"Minutes matter for fires and emergencies."



Tammy Gemmill, Resident on Lucky Road

"We, as taxpayers, can't use our own road!"



Gay Barbour, Resident on Lucky Road

"You can shut down bridges to fix them, but you can't do anything for ours?"

Bridging the Gap: Repairing Our Infrastructure

October 19, 2023

Chanceford Township Building

Hosted by Rep. Fink

A single bridge outage can have far reaching impacts on our communities. The Policy Committee traveled to Brogue to hear from constituents and PennDOT as to why Lucky Road Bridge has been in a state of disrepair since torrential flooding in 2018. Local residents, farmers, and businesses rely on the bridge and feel forgotten by their government. Due to pressure from residents, the attention of the Policy Committee, and the advocacy of Rep. Fink, Lucky Road Bridge is now slated to be rebuilt ahead of schedule and open by 2027.

TAKEAWAYS

LOCAL PERSPECTIVES

CHANCEFORD TOWNSHIP

Kent Heffner, Supervisor

- ▶ Lucky Road Bridge was built in the 1930s, possibly earlier, and was last maintained by PennDOT 10 years ago.
- ▶ A once-in-100-year storm damaged the bridge in 2018, and the bridge was officially closed to all traffic in 2019.
- ▶ **The 2018 storm caused \$2.7 million in damage within Chanceford Township, and four of the damaged bridges are still unusable. These bridges are all within a 2- to 3-mile radius.**
- ▶ The absence of Lucky Road Bridge forces travelers to take a 10-minute detour if they wish to cross the stream.
- ▶ The local Amish community is particularly impacted as their school and fields are across the Lucky Road Bridge. Local farmers face the same obstacle when moving their equipment.
- ▶ Red Lion and vocational school buses are forced to turn on a blind hill. Students' safety should be considered in bridge repair considerations.
- ▶ **State fuel tax money is decreasing with each year and is forcing municipalities to defer maintenance plans, leading to roads and infrastructure in disrepair.**



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

TESTIFIERS



Richard Reisinger, PE., Acting District Executive for District 8, PennDOT

"It's all a balancing act of where we can use certain funds."



Richard W. Runyen, PE., Director of the Bridge Bureau, PennDOT

"Projects are planned based on appropriations."



Click on the testifiers picture above to view their testimony.

SOUTHERN COUNTY YORK EMS

Laura Taylor, Chief

- ▶ **5–7 minutes is added to emergency response times on Lucky Road due to the unusable bridge.**
- ▶ GPS does not always account for the Lucky Road Bridge outage, or other bridge outages, which further lengthens response times for first responders unfamiliar with the area.
- ▶ A mutual aid ambulance, not from the area, was delayed by 51 minutes due to the lack of a clear-cut route to a local resident.
- ▶ Fire trucks and water-carrying vehicles struggle to navigate Lucky Road and access water. **A fire in the area is difficult to address in a timely manner.**

RESIDENT ON LUCKY ROAD

Tammy Gemmill

- ▶ The barricades around the bridge were erected in 2019 and have not been serviced since. Lights are not flashing, sandbags are gone, and the barricade has fallen into the road.
- ▶ **As a taxpayer, Tammy feels the state is not prioritizing her community.**
- ▶ The lack of a bridge has led to Lucky Road itself experiencing less maintenance and care.

RESIDENT ON LUCKY ROAD

Gay Barbour

- ▶ **Lucky Road is home to about 50 families, with many older residents expressing serious concerns about EMS response times.**
- ▶ Residents have spent tremendous time and money avoiding the Lucky Road Bridge. The lack of a bridge has added great cost to the community.
- ▶ For many Pennsylvanians, it is difficult to understand how certain bridges and roads get prioritized by PennDOT.

PENNDOT

Richard Reisinger, PE., Acting District Executive for District 8

- ▶ **York County has a tremendous number of local bridges that are closed — 43.**
- ▶ York County has many state bridges that are currently not in use or in use with restrictions.
 - 6 highway bridges are closed to all traffic.
 - 1 bridge is being converted to pedestrian use only.
 - 9 bridges have some level of restriction in place.

- ▶ PennDOT calculates “bridge risk” by assessing the size of the bridge, daily traffic, weight factors, the length of detours, and the amount of truck traffic, among other considerations.
- ▶ The I-95 collapse and repair is not comparable to local bridge outages. With the declaration of an emergency by the governor, and with I-95 being a major interstate artery, time was of the essence.
- ▶ Because the state accepts federal funding for roads and bridges, all federal standards are applicable. Bridges, big and small, are built to the highest standards. Reducing a common bridge’s capabilities does not save any significant funds.
- ▶ **The engineering design costs of a bridge are often 20% of the total bridge cost. Considering Lucky Road Bridge will cost \$2 million to replace, the engineering cost is expected to be \$400,000.**
- ▶ Increases in electric vehicles will continue lessening the fuel tax, which cuts into PennDOT’s available funds.

Richard W. Runyen, PE., Director of the Bridge Bureau

- ▶ **The *length* of a detour is a consideration when prioritizing maintenance, but not the *time* of a detour. PennDOT agreed with the Policy Committee that time should also be considered within their models.**
- ▶ Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are major determiners of infrastructure maintenance and repair plans, and direct PennDOT in their priorities.
- ▶ If residents or businesses are at risk of becoming “landlocked” due to a road or bridge closure, PennDOT attempts to respond immediately.
- ▶ PennDOT does not have any “temporary bridges” and must rent them if needed. The cost is nearly \$200,000 for the installation, and \$10,000 per month, which is far too high a cost to justify for a vast majority of bridge outages.
- ▶ Emergency declarations are at the discretion of the governor and enable swift fixes as regulations and permits are waived. I-95 is a prime example of an emergency declaration and its impact on guaranteeing immediate attention.
- ▶ In a declared emergency PennDOT does not concern itself with funding and trusts that the money will arrive via state or federal programs.



OCTOBER 25, 2023
HEALTHY HOME LABORATORY

Hosted by Rep. Jill Cooper

To age with confidence, PA residents must prepare their homes to meet their needs. Simple upgrades such as better lighting, handrails, and assistive technologies enable older Pennsylvanians to remain in their homes with dignity and retain their independence. The Policy Committee visited the test space for the University of Pittsburgh's Healthy Home Laboratory and witnessed firsthand how to best prepare homes for a lifetime of healthy living.



DECEMBER 7, 2023
BISHOP CANEVIN HIGH SCHOOL

Hosted by Chairman Joshua D. Kail

Students receive a high-quality education at Bishop Canevin High School thanks to EITC/OSTC scholarships. The Policy Committee toured the school to see the many ways Bishop Canevin instills hope in the next generation and prepares the youth of Pennsylvania for future opportunities.



IN THE NEWS

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE FROM INCREASING CRIME



NEWS ■ Politics

House Policy Committee Holds Hearing on Anti-Crime Bills

Posted to Politics October 13, 2023 by Linda Stein



Pennsylvania

EXTERMINER TOP STORY

Suburban leaders blast Philadelphia DA Krasner for crime wave

By Anthony Mazzarino / The Center Square 10 hrs ago



Bucks Co. Crime Rise Topic Of House Hearing Thursday

State Reps. Kathleen "KC" Tomlinson and Kristin Marcell will address crime coming from Philadelphia at a hearing in Northampton Township.



19% Rise In Major Crimes In Bucks County: Sheriff

BRIDGING THE GAP: REPAIRING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE



Lucky Road Bridge in York County to be repaired
ahead of schedule

ADVANCING OUR RURAL CONNECTIVITY



**The
Center
Square**

Rural broadband permitting 'bottleneck' may add insult to injury

By Anthony Herron | The Center Square

HERALD-Standard

FOR STATE

Policy committee hears testimony about connectivity issues in Fayette

The Daily Courier

An urgent call to connect rural Pa.

The Daily Courier

Hearing focuses on broadband concerns in Fayette

STOPPING ECONOMIC DISASTER: THE DEMOCRATS AND THEIR GREEN NEW DEAL

**PITTSBURGH
BUSINESS TIMES**

Pennsylvania GOP leaders urge governor to let RGGI decision stand



Pennsylvania Business Report

Commonwealth Court nixes Pennsylvania's participation in RGGI

BY KIM RILEY | NOVEMBER 6, 2023 | FEATURED

FUNDING OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE



Pa. State Rep. Josh Kail: Dems Strip Away
\$150 Million From EITC/OSTC, Programs
That Fund Our Children's Future



The other educational programs funded by school tax
credits



PASS Scholarships are a bipartisan path to
better education for Pennsylvania's youth |
Opinion

DEPUTY POLICY COMMITTEE CHAIRS



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**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 are supported by Policy Committee testimony and are current as of December 27, 2023.

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

TOURISM, HOSPITALITY, AND CULTURE

The Commonwealth has something for everyone. Residents enjoy vacation destinations in their own backyards, cultural amenities, and world class attractions. Growing and championing the offerings of the state retains existing residents and encourages visitors to plant their roots and grow their families.

- *HB1301 — Zimmerman — Protecting Pennsylvania's Privately-Owned Campgrounds*
- *HR87 — Ortity — Conservation Corridors*
- *HB496 — Smith — Wine Expanded Permits and the Sale of Wine*
- *HB265 — R. Mackenzie — Amusement Park Liquor License Update*
- *HB48 — Mercuri — Expanding Online Wine Sales*
- *HB1750 — Leadbeter — Ready-to-Drink Beverages Legislation*
- *HB1734 — Scheuren — Preserved Open Space Protection Act*
- *HB1713 — Stambaugh — Farmland Preservation*

ENERGY

PA has immense energy potential waiting to be released. The Commonwealth is blessed with a bounty of energy and resources that can fuel the world. House Republicans have put forward legislation to increase our energy capabilities, provide choice to consumers, and encourage the efficient utilization of our bountiful resources.

- *HR67 — Leadbeter — Prioritizing Safe Pipeline Development*
- *HB386 — Heffley — Establishing Anthracite "hard coal" as an Official Rock of the Commonwealth*
- *HB81 — Dunbar — Cost & Percent Depletion of Mines; Oil and Gas Wells; and other Natural Deposits*
- *HB55 — Owlett — Non-Surface Drilling on State Lands*
- *HR185 — Kaufer — Geothermal Energy Projects in Communities Near Abandoned Mines*
- *HR79 — Marshall, E. Nelson — Designating the Commonwealth as a Hydrogen Hub*
- *HB330 — Stambaugh — PA Local Solar Program*
- *HB925 — Rapp — Proper Decommissioning and Bonding of Solar Energy Facilities*
- *HB1182 — Causer — Appliance Energy Freedom*
- *HB195 — Struzzi — Eliminating RGGI Regulations*

EDUCATION

FUNDING

Our schools and students require responsible funding to ensure a fruitful education. Significant work must be undertaken to address education funding throughout the state.

- *HB890 — Grove — Requiring School Districts to Reduce their Millage Rates as They Retire Debt*
- *HB52 — Owlett — Career and Technical Education Investment Incentive Program*
- *HB1513 — White — Expanding EITC and Scholarships for Students Attending an Economically Disadvantaged School*
- *HB311 — M. Mackenzie — Education Money to Follow the Child*
- *HB1110 — Gaydos — Equity in Education: Compiling Gifted Student Expenditures*
- *HB446 — Gaydos — School Savings in Contracting*
- *HB668 — Ortity — Tuition Waivers for Kinship Care Families*

CHOICE

A child's education should not be beholden to their ZIP code. Options for students and families encourage higher classroom participation, greater control over curriculum, and increase a child's ability to have a fulfilling education.

- *HB1507 — Topper — Providing Our Students Flexible Instructional Time in School*
- *HB557 — Zimmerman — Private Academic Schools Act*
- *HB1432 — Owlett — Lifeline Scholarships*
- *HB1370 — Mercuri — Pennsylvania Opportunity Pathways Program*
- *HB884 — Grove — Innovation Schools*
- *HB1804 — Scialabba — Parental Notification and Consent for Student Access and Use of a Mental Health Services Digital Platform*

STANDARDS

Curriculums today are nebulous, our students' performance has fallen significantly due to COVID policies, and families have been sidelined in the education of their children. House Republicans hold our educational institutions in high esteem and demand that students, educators, and classrooms meet rigorous standards.

- *HB887 — Grove — Student Centered Assessment Pilot Program*
- *HB1372 — Marcell — Curriculum Transparency*
- *HB798 — Mercuri — PSAT and AP Expansion*
- *HB216 — Gleim — Protect Women's Sports Act*
- *HB211 — Gleim — Honesty in Teaching Act*
- *HB896 — Topper — Parents Added to the PA State Board of Education*
- *HB1720 — R. Mackenzie — Civics Education Graduation Requirement*
- *HB147 — Ortity — Keystone Exam Alternative Feasibility Study*
- *HB1708 — Mihalek — Amending Juvenile Justice in the Schools Act*
- *HB1555 — Mihalek — Juvenile Justice: Ensuring Equitable Responses to Youth Behavior in Schools Act*
- *HB1805 — Scialabba — Uniform Criteria for School Guidance Counselors*
- *HB1908 — Metzgar — Armed School Security*

RECRUITMENT/RETENTION

Entering the field of teaching is noble, but often difficult and time intensive. Teacher recruitment and retention is of utmost importance to our students, and we must ease the burden on our schools and enable education professionals to meet the needs of our students and families.

- *HB27 — Struzzi — Act 91 Extensions*
- *HB1019 — Rigby — Paraprofessionals to Teachers Grant Program*
- *HB1637 — Flick — Substitute Teachers (From 4-Year Degree to 2-Year Degree)*
- *HB1874 — Watro — Temporary Certification Pathway for Veterans*
- *HB1306 — Scheuren — School Bus Driver Tax Credit*

HIGHER EDUCATION

The path to achieving higher education has become increasingly unattainable. Universities are expensive, a degree no longer guarantees success, and coursework is not always aligned with the needs of business and industry. We must combat the engrained status quo, hold our educators accountable, and enable the next generation of Pennsylvanians to gain the skills they need to bring opportunity and prosperity to the state.

- *HB179 — D'Orsie — Ensuring Free Speech in Higher Education*
- *Act No. 29 of 2023 (HB1556) — Klunk — Strengthening the Right to Know Law for State-Related Universities*
- *Act No. 52 of 2023 (HB1258) — Cooper — Calculating ADM for College in the High School — Dual Enrollment*
- *HB1574 — Topper — Performance-Based Funding for State Related Universities*
- *HB467 — Struzzi — Academic Integrity: Creating the Offense of Academic Fraud*
- *HB1489 — E. Nelson — Tuition Reduction Act*
- *HB1915 — Stambaugh — Protecting the Integrity of the Agricultural College Land Script Fund*

HEALTH CARE

FUNDING

The cost of health care is often overwhelming for patients in need. Furthermore, smaller rural hospitals struggle to remain open and serve their communities. To address these growing financial concerns legislation has been introduced to assist patients and health care providers in need.

- *HR145 — Schemel — Neurological Injured Infant Fund*
- *HB969 — Gaydos — Prescription Drug Transparency to Reduce Prescription Abandonment*
- *HB555 — Gaydos — Association Health Care Plans*
- *HB53 — Owlett — Medical Assistance/Child Support*
- *HB1288 — Grove — Medical Assistance Eligibility Redetermination and Maintenance Efforts*
- *HB101 — Causer — Distressed Hospital Grant Program*
- *HB936 — Pickett — Burial Assistance Funding for Individuals with Low Incomes*
- *HB1111 — Oberlander — Medical Assistance Coverage for Pasteurized Donor Milk*
- *HB1650 — Gregory — The Lifetime Recovery from Substance Abuse Grant Program*

QUALITY OF CARE

Health care must meet the standards of the day. We must ensure that patients have appropriate care, test results are provided in understandable formats, and the most advanced practices are being utilized.

- *HB24 — Struzzi — Collaborative Care Model*
- *HB22 — Struzzi — Behavioral Health Transition Procedure Update*
- *HB1255 — Grove — Medical Assistance Physical Health & Behavioral Health Integration*
- *HB886 — Grove — Direct Primary Care*
- *HB1545 — Hogan — Digital Mental Health Services Pilot Program*
- *HB1931 — Marcell — Long-Term Care Medical Director Registry and Communication Act*
- *HB1754 — Cutler — Precision Medicine: “Biomarker” Testing*

RECRUITMENT/RETENTION

Care cannot be provided without career professionals at bedsides. The path to becoming a health care professional is challenging, the labor is mentally and physically taxing, and support is needed to maintain excellence in health care.

- *HB89 — Marcell — Health Care Heroes: Mental Health Assistance*
- *HB590 — Keefer — Remove Barriers for Nurse Graduates to Become Licensed Registered Nurses*
- *HB90 — Marcell — Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing Programs*
- *HB1835 — Marcell — Composition of the State Board of Nursing*
- *HB1722 — Grimm Krupa — Military Medic Pilot Program*
- *HB401 — Kauffman — Outpatient Renal Dialysis Recruitment and Retention*

PERMITTING & REGULATORY REFORM

PA's permitting and regulatory climate is expensive, cumbersome, and often to the detriment of the state and our industries. House Republicans have put forward reasonable reforms and expectations for our state agencies that will enable the Commonwealth to remain competitive and encourage growth.

- *HB487 — Keefer — PA REINS Act*
- *HB888 — Grove — Increases General Assembly Oversight of IRRC*
- *HB914 — Leadbeter — Beneficial Reuse of Drill Cuttings*
- *HB1925 — M. Mackenzie — One-time Automatic Review of All Economically Significant Regulations*
- *HR257 — Rigby — Urging DEP to Halt Costly Biosolids Permit Changes*
- *HR236 — Heffley — Joint State Government Commission Truck Parking Study*
- *HB1731 — Cabell — Prohibiting Mandates on Mass Transit*
- *HB1643 — Flick — Petition EPA to Remove Lycoming County from the Vehicle Emissions Inspection and Maintenance Program*
- *HB1679 — Kutz — Allowing In-Person Pickups for Dealer Plates and Inspection Stickers*

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOPMENT/TRAINING/RECRUITMENT

PA has an existing highly capable workforce, but the Commonwealth must attract new residents and continue to prepare the next generation for careers of the future. The state must position itself as a bastion of opportunity and family-supporting careers.

- *HB1387 — Kutz — Realty Transfer Tax Exclusion for First-Time Home Buyers*
- *HB882 — R. Mackenzie — CareerBound Workforce Development Program*
- *HB25 — Struzzi — Building Our Future: Adult Education and Workforce Recovery Program*
- *HB1047 — Delozier — Building Code Official Trainee Program*
- *HB169 — R. Mackenzie — Child & Dependent Care Tax Credit*

EASING LICENSING

Navigating licensing requirements to enter the workforce should not be challenging. The Commonwealth must ease the licensing process to enable people to pursue their chosen career path.

- *HB57 — Owlett — Professional License Applications — Paper Applications*
- *HB1364 — Greiner — Authorizing Advisory Opinions from Licensing Boards*
- *HB1897 — Major — Tattoo Practice Act*

MODERNIZATION

Laws and regulations of yesteryear do not address the needs of the people and businesses of today. Efforts to review outdated law, and modernize it, will enable the Commonwealth to remain streamlined and competitive.

- *HB591 — Keefer — Removing Barriers in Cosmetology*
- *HB1041 — Rigby — Mobile Barbershop & Mobile Salons*
- *HB565 — Zimmerman — Updates to Professional Engineer Licensing*
- *HB327 — Mako — Modernizes the Barber-Teacher Licensing Process*
- *HB1651 & 1652 — Wentling — Unification of the Commonwealth's Workforce Development System*
- *HB1906 — Flood — Regulating Pre-Employment Nondisclosure Agreements*
- *HB1590 — Brown — State Board of Cosmetology — Inspectors*

BUSINESS, INDUSTRY, AND CAREERS

MANUFACTURING

PA's manufacturing might is hamstrung by licensing issues, poor code enforcement, and restrictive legislation. Efforts to better the Commonwealth's manufacturing climate will bring jobs, opportunity, and innovation to our own backyards.

- *HB955 — Fritz — Update to Breweries/Distilleries Law*
- *HB102 — Causer — Milk Hauling Legislation*
- *HB46 — Owlett — Amending the Pennsylvania Construction Code Act*



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Entrepreneurs struggle with PA's tax laws, antiquated business practices, and finding the ideal location for their enterprise. Commonsense changes, inspired by the advocacy of business operators throughout the state, will enable businesses to thrive and generate opportunity within their communities.

- *HB995 — Lawrence — Keystone Opportunity Dairy Zones*
- *HB1238 — Greiner — Extension of Pennsylvania Rural Jobs and Investment Tax Credit (RJTC)*
- *HB701 — Kutz — Net Operating Loss for Small Businesses*
- *HR35 — R. Mackenzie — Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between Pennsylvania and the Chinese Communist Party*
- *HB1317 — Struzzi — Helping Disadvantaged Communities*
- *HB1447 — Kephart — Corporate Net Income Tax Reduction*
- *HB162 — R. Mackenzie — Electric Gross Receipts Tax*
- *HB274 — R. Mackenzie — E-Verify for All Public Contractors*
- *HB1511 — Wentling — Investing in Pennsylvania's Future — PIDA Modernization*
- *HB757 — Keefer — Home Improvement Consumer Protection Act — Contractor Misclassification*
- *HB1023 — Fritz — Incentivizing Build-out of Broadband Infrastructure*
- *HB1860 — Ortityay — Optimizing Retail Investor Options*
- *HB60 — Mercuri — A Simpler and More Certain Business Tax Environment*

SUPPORTING FAMILIES

Families, the foundational block of Pennsylvania, should not bear the burden of taxation or struggle through times of financial hardship without support. To retain families in PA, and encourage more residents to call our state home, Pennsylvania must cultivate a climate of growth and opportunity for all who work to sustain their families.

- *HB136 — Gaydos — Elimination of Pennsylvania Inheritance Tax*
- *HB166 — R. Mackenzie — Personal Income Tax Reduction*
- *HB1353 — Labs — Unemployment Compensation Eligibility Clarification*
- *HB160 — R. Mackenzie — Permanent Sales and Use Tax Exemption*
- *HB165 — R. Mackenzie — Homestead and Farmstead Exclusion Expansion*
- *HB161 — R. Mackenzie — Sales & Use Tax Holidays for Certain Items*
- *HB717 — R. Mackenzie — Disabled Veterans Real Estate Tax Exemption*
- *HB895 — Grove — Taxpayer Relief Act Update*
- *HB26 — Struzzi — Helping Grieving Families Through Unnecessary Tax Burdens*



Q4—AT A GLANCE

Q4

HEARING TIME

12h, 9m, 11s

NUMBER OF TESTIFIERS

36

**NUMBER OF
DISTRICTS VISITED**

7

NUMBER OF HEARINGS

8

**CAUCUS
PARTICIPATION**

54%

**MILES TRAVELED BY
COMMITTEE**

1,445

'23

HEARING TIME

63h, 36m, 53s

NUMBER OF TESTIFIERS

155

**NUMBER OF
DISTRICTS VISITED**

26

NUMBER OF HEARINGS

35

**CAUCUS
PARTICIPATION**

93%

**MILES TRAVELED BY
COMMITTEE**

6,535

2023—AT A GLANCE

MAP OF COUNTIES VISITED



How many members have participated in Policy Committee events this Session?

93% Have participated in at least one committee event

84% Have participated in at least two committee events

77% Have participated in three or more committee events

2023

TIMELINE

 **CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**
— WHY WE CARE —

January 23, 2023
Constitutional Amendments: Why We Care

 **Sarris CANDIES**

January 27, 2023
Tour with Sarris Candies

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR CHILDREN

March 16, 2023
Educational Opportunities for Our Children

 **LOGOS ACADEMY**

March 16, 2023
Tour with Logos Academy

IMPACT OF THE NORFOLK SOUTHERN TRAIN DERAILMENT

March 14, 2023
Impact of the Norfolk Southern Train Derailment

 **EQS**

March 9, 2023
Tour with Ellwood Quality Steels Co.

OBSTACLES TO OPPORTUNITY: PA'S PERMITTING PROCESS

March 22, 2023
Obstacles to Opportunity: PA's Permitting Process

 **Essential**
Powering modern life.

April 25, 2023
Roundtable with Essential Utilities

MANUFACTURING OUR WAY INTO THE FUTURE

April 27, 2023
Manufacturing Our Way Into the Future

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION FOR OUR DRIVERS AND STUDENTS

May 2, 2023
Effective School Transportation for Our Drivers and Students

PENNSYLVANIA'S ENERGY POLICY: BOOM OR BUST

June 23, 2023
Pennsylvania's Energy Policy: Boom or Bust

 **WELLSPAN HEALTH**

June 20, 2023
Roundtable with WellSpan Health

ELECTRIFYING OUR WORLD: IMPACTS ON GRID INTEGRITY & RELIABILITY

June 16, 2023
Electrifying Our World: Impacts on Grid Integrity & Reliability

 **ZEROEYES**
DON'T TRUST YOUR EYES

June 13, 2023
Roundtable with ZeroEyes

 **CALPINE**

August 8, 2023
Tour with Calpine Energy

DISCOVERING PENNSYLVANIA

August 9, 2023
Discovering Pennsylvania

 **ARTSQUEST**
imagine that

August 9, 2023
Tour with ArtsQuest

 **WIND CREEK**
SUNSHINE

August 10, 2023
Roundtable with Wind Creek Casino

ADVANCING OUR RURAL CONNECTIVITY

October 24, 2023
Advancing Our Rural Connectivity

BRIDGING THE GAP: REPAIRING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

October 19, 2023
Bridging the Gap: Repairing Our Infrastructure

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE FROM INCREASING CRIME

October 12, 2023
Keeping Our Communities Safe from Increasing Crime

THE COST OF HIGHER EDUCATION

September 27, 2023
The Cost of Higher Education

AGING WITH CONFIDENCE


October 25, 2023
Aging with Confidence

 **HEALTHY HOME LABORATORY**

October 25, 2023
Tour with Healthy Home Laboratory

STOPPING ECONOMIC DISASTER: THE DEMOCRATS & THEIR GREEN NEW DEAL

October 30, 2023
Stopping Economic Disaster: The Democrats and Their Green New Deal

 **PA Family Institute**

October 31, 2023
Roundtable with PA Family Institute

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Innovative

January 27, 2023
PA Made: Discussing Innovative Ways to Propel Our Manufacturing Opportunities

OUR SCHOOLS:
HOW OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE IS FUNDED

January 30, 2023
How Our Children's Future is Funded

Steamfitters
LOCAL UNION #449

February 2, 2023
Tour with Steamfitters 449

READY TO WORK

February 2, 2023
Developing Our Workforce



February 28, 2023
Roundtable with CONSOL Energy



February 21, 2023
Impacts & Solutions: Charting a Path Through Commonsense State Regulatory Reform

OUR EMERGENCY FIRST RESPONDERS IN CRISIS

February 15, 2023
Our Emergency First Responders in Crisis

FAMILIES AND BUSINESSES ARE STRUGGLING WITH HIGH ENERGY PRICES

February 6, 2023
Rising Energy Costs in Pennsylvania



May 3, 2023
Roundtable with Heim Construction

HOSPITAL PRICING TRANSPARENCY

May 4, 2023
Hospital Pricing Transparency

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE

May 8, 2023
Keeping Our Communities Safe

CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION: A PATHWAY TO OPPORTUNITY

May 17, 2023
Career & Technical Education: A Pathway to Opportunity

THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF THE ENERGY TAX

June 12, 2023
The Negative Impacts of the Energy Tax

PREGNANCY RESOURCE CENTERS: HELPING MOTHERS AND FATHERS

June 7, 2023
Pregnancy Resource Centers: Helping Mothers and Fathers



June 6, 2023
Roundtable with S&B USA Construction

FOR OUR FIRST RESPONDERS

May 30, 2023
For Our First Responders



August 21, 2023
Tour with Cameron Energy

RECLAIMING OUR POTENTIAL: PA RARE EARTH MINERALS

August 22, 2023
Reclaiming Our Potential: PA Rare Earth Minerals



September 6, 2023
Roundtable with Southwestern Energy

ADDRESSING THE MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS OF RURAL COMMUNITIES

September 7, 2023
Addressing the Mental Health Needs of Rural Communities

CREATING EDUCATIONAL PIPELINES TO PROSPERITY

September 19, 2023
Creating Educational Pipelines to Prosperity



September 18, 2023
Roundtable with Settlers Hospitality



September 13, 2023
Roundtable with MaST Community Charter School

EDUCATION: A LIFELINE TO OPPORTUNITY

September 12, 2023
Education: A Lifeline to Opportunity

FUNDING OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE

December 7, 2023
Funding Our Children's Future

FUNDING OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE

December 8, 2023
Funding Our Children's Future

FUNDING OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE

December 12, 2023
Funding Our Children's Future



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