

Pennsylvania Perspective for Thursday, February 27, 2025

Pennsylvania

PA House Committee Considers EITC to Aid Working Families

Pennsylvania's House Finance committee is exploring the introduction of an Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) to support financially constrained working families, though concerns about the program's cost remain. Center Square Pennsylvania has [more](#).

AG Sunday Discusses Federal Funding, Election Fraud, Hospital Mergers

Pennsylvania Attorney General Dave Sunday addressed federal funding issues, election fraud statute limitations, and hospital mergers during a state budget hearing Wednesday. He emphasized his role in defending state laws and the importance of proactive oversight and negotiation. PennLive has [more](#).

PA Education Secretary Defends Gov. Shapiro's Budget Proposal

Newly nominated Pennsylvania Education Secretary Dr. Carrie Rowe defended Governor Josh Shapiro's proposed \$606 million increase in education funding and warned that shutting down the U.S. Department of Education would have catastrophic consequences for the state's schools. WPMT has [more](#).

Sen. Mastriano Weighs Another Gubernatorial Run

State Senator Doug Mastriano (R-Adams/Franklin) is reportedly weighing a 2026 gubernatorial run, with the hopes of adjusting his 2022 strategy by embracing mail voting and building support within the Republican establishment. The Philadelphia Inquirer has [more](#).

PA Needs New Voter Registration System Before 2028 Election

Pennsylvania officials stress the necessity of updating the state's outdated voter registration system before the 2028 presidential election, following issues with a previous vendor and ongoing efforts to ensure reliable election operations. Center Square Pennsylvania has [more](#).

Penn State to Close Some Commonwealth Campuses

Penn State plans to close some of its Commonwealth campuses by 2027 due to falling enrollment. The closures aim to create a sustainable campus ecosystem and ensure quality education for students. The Philadelphia Inquirer has [more](#).

Avian Flu Threat Persists in PA

Experts informed Pennsylvania lawmakers that avian flu remains a significant threat, emphasizing the need for continued surveillance, testing, and vaccine development to control its spread. City & State Pennsylvania has [more](#).

Philadelphia

Tax Reform Commission Recommends Eliminating BIRT, Reducing Wage Tax



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The Philadelphia Tax Reform Commission released its interim report this week, proposing eliminating the Business Income & Receipts Tax (BIRT), reducing the wage tax, and creating a Jumpstart Fund. It also recommends a 20-year property tax abatement for converting vacant offices, establishing an Office of the Tax Advocate, and raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour.

Kensington Sees Decrease in Crime Amid Drug Market Crackdown

Philadelphia's Kensington neighborhood has experienced a significant decrease in crime following a crackdown on its open-air drug market. Billy Penn has [more](#).

Pittsburgh

City Council Approves Tax Incentive for \$740M Esplanade Development

The Pittsburgh City Council unanimously approved a tax diversion to support the \$740 million Esplanade development, which aims to fund public infrastructure and affordable housing, pending similar approvals from Allegheny County and Pittsburgh Public Schools. The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review has [more](#).

Advocates Urge Faster Unemployment Appeals Process

Pittsburgh-area advocates are calling on Pennsylvania officials to expedite the unemployment appeals process, citing long delays that have left many without benefits for months. WESA has [more](#).

PPS Propose Closures, Restructuring; Approve New Governance Policies

Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) leaders have proposed closing 14 schools due to declining enrollment and aging infrastructure, while creating three new schools and restructuring several others to optimize resources and enhance educational opportunities. The PPS board also recently approved new governance policies aimed at increasing community engagement and transparency and eliminated a campaign finance restriction.

Federal

PA House Delegation Votes Along Party Lines on Budget Resolution

All of Pennsylvania's Republican U.S. House members voted in favor of a budget resolution that Democrats argue threatens Medicaid and other benefits for low-income individuals. The resolution passed the House by a 217-215 vote. Senate Republicans indicated they would not accept the House-approved budget as-is and plan to make significant changes, signaling a challenging path ahead for President Donald Trump's legislative agenda. The

Sen. Fetterman Discusses Priorities with City & State

In a recent interview with City & State, U.S. Senator John Fetterman (D) of Pennsylvania discussed his legislative priorities, which include protecting nutrition assistance programs, improving railroad safety, and creating a national version of Pennsylvania's Whole Home Repairs program. He also emphasized his pragmatic approach to bipartisanship and his willingness to work with President Trump to achieve tangible results. City & State Pennsylvania has [more](#).

Now Unfrozen, Federal Funding Freeze Leaves PA Programs in Limbo

Despite a recent agreement to unfreeze over \$2 billion in federal funds, uncertainty remains for many Pennsylvania programs, ranging from school districts' electric bus purchases to environmental projects, due to the initial freeze ordered by President Trump.



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