

Pennsylvania Perspective for Thursday, March 27, 2025

Pennsylvania

Gov. Shapiro Fights USDA Funding Cuts for PA Farmers, Food Banks

Governor Josh Shapiro is challenging the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) decision to cancel \$13 million in funding for Pennsylvania farmers who supply food banks, arguing the move is unlawful and pledging further legal action if necessary to protect farmers and ensure food access for those in need. The Pennsylvania Capital-Star has [more](#).

Dems Flip SD-36, Retain House Majority with HD-35 Win

Democrats flipped a traditionally reliably Republican state Senate seat by fewer than 500 votes in a special election on Tuesday, with East Petersburg Mayor James Malone defeating Lancaster County Commissioner Josh Parsons. Meanwhile in the Mon Valley, Democrat Dan Goughnour also won his special election, besting Republican Chuck Davis and helping maintain a one-seat Democratic majority in the state House.

PA Housing Caucus Launched to Address Affordability, Zoning Reform

State Representative Lindsay Powell (D-Allegheny) and colleagues launched the bipartisan Pennsylvania Housing Caucus Monday to lower home costs by increasing residential units and reforming zoning laws. The caucus aims to produce more housing, preserve existing units, and protect access to housing. WITF has [more](#).

PA House Passes Bills to Protect ACA Provisions

The Pennsylvania House of Representatives passed a series of bills Wednesday to enshrine key elements of the Affordable Care Act into state law, aiming to safeguard health care protections for residents amid potential federal changes. WESA has [more](#).

Philadelphia

City Council Kicks Off FY26 Budget Hearings

This week, the Philadelphia City Council began hearing testimony about Mayor Parker's \$6.7 billion budget, with particular focus on housing, tax reform, and staffing. The Philadelphia Inquirer has [more](#).

Pittsburgh

PPS Delays School Closure Vote Amid Calls for More Data

Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) postponed a vote on closing 10 schools after parents, teachers, and city council members raised concerns about insufficient data on the closures' impacts, prompting the district to gather more information and update its feasibility report. WESA has [more](#).

Pittsburgh Hosts Inaugural Cannabis Convention Focused on Medical, Recreational Markets



David F. Bonsick

**Principal, Cozen
O'Connor Public
Strategies**

dbonsick@cozen.com
Phone: (717) 773-4214
Fax: (717) 703-5901



Beth A. Brennan

**Senior
Principal, Cozen
O'Connor Public
Strategies**

bbrennan@cozen.com
Phone: (717) 773-4213
Fax: (717) 703-5901



Jim Davis

**Executive Vice
President,
Cozen O'Connor
Public
Strategies**

jdavis@cozen.com
Phone: (717) 703-5891
Fax: (717) 703-5901



Samuel Denisco

**Senior
Principal, Cozen
O'Connor Public
Strategies**

sdenisco@cozen.com
Phone: (717) 773-4630
Fax: (717) 703-5901

The inaugural Pennsylvania Cannabis Convention in Pittsburgh will focus on medical cannabis patients, providers, and businesses preparing for potential recreational legalization, offering a business-to-business environment at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center. Axios Pittsburgh has [more](#).

Federal

Former Sen. Casey Urges Dems to Fight Against Cuts to SNAP, Medicaid

Former U.S. Senator Bob Casey of Pennsylvania emphasized the urgency of protecting the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid from proposed federal cuts, urging Democrats to focus on these core issues to support vulnerable populations and the middle class. He also expressed optimism that effective advocacy could change public opinion and counter the Trump administration's policies. The Pennsylvania Capital-Star has [more](#).



Joseph Hill

**Managing
Director, Cozen
O'Connor Public
Strategies**

jhill@cozen.com
Phone: (215) 665-2065
Fax: (215) 665-2013



Kevin J. Kerr

**Principal, Cozen
O'Connor Public
Strategies**

kkerr@cozen.com
Phone: (412) 620-6496
Fax: (412) 275-2390



Brianna A. Westbrook

**Government
Relations
Associate,
Cozen O'Connor
Public
Strategies**

bwestbrooks@cozen.com
Phone: (215) 665-4757
Fax: (215) 665-2013

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