



**TESTIMONY ON  
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA (CCAP)**

Presented to the House Local Government Committee

By  
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## **About CCAP**

The County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization representing all 67 counties in Pennsylvania. County commissioners and council members, chief clerks, administrators or their home rule counterparts, and solicitors are members of the association.

CCAP is the voice of Pennsylvania counties. CCAP provides county leaders with information and guidance related to legislation, education, media, insurance, technology and many other issues that help create and maintain crucial services for residents throughout the state.

CCAP supports county leadership that is responsive to the needs and circumstances of citizens. CCAP stands firmly against state and federal actions that limit fiscal, administrative or programmatic authority over those developed locally.

Founded in 1886, CCAP is an affiliate of the National Association of Counties (NACo).

## **CCAP Governance and Leadership**

The [Board of Directors](#) is responsible for administering Association affairs and coordinating policy functions. Voting members of the Board include the past president, officers, representatives of each of the seven districts, chairs of standing committees and representatives to the NACo Board. The Association's slate of officers includes a president, first vice-president, second vice-president and a treasurer.

CCAP has ten [standing policy committees](#) — Agriculture; Assessment and Taxation; Community and Economic Development; County Governance; Courts and Corrections; Elections Reform; Emergency Management and Veterans Affairs; Energy, Environment and Land Use; Human Services; and Technology. These policy committees examine issues and recommend positions to the membership for the Pennsylvania County Platform. The Association also has a Resolutions and Policy committee that reviews new policy resolutions and presents them to the membership for voting. A strategic planning committee, an education committee and a few ad hoc committees round out the list.

The [Platform](#) is the basis for all of CCAP's lobbying efforts. Every position in the Platform comes from a CCAP member and is adopted by the majority of CCAP voting members. Any member of the Association can propose a resolution for consideration by the voting members.

## **County Governance**

County commissioners are elected to four-year terms and are vested with both administrative and policy-making powers. In the home rule counties, a governing body is established by a local charter. Currently, the counties of Allegheny, Delaware, Erie, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Northampton, and Philadelphia are home rule counties.

County officials are required to adopt a balanced budget, and the county fiscal year is congruent with the calendar year. Counties budget for normal service expenses, as well as capital outlays. The primary source of local general fund revenue for counties is the county property tax.

Pennsylvania's counties are responsible for the delivery of human services programs on behalf of the state and federal government, including children and youth agencies, mental health and developmental disability services, drug and alcohol prevention and treatment and long-term care services. County corrections and prison management also account for a large portion of the county budget.

In addition, counties are responsible for all aspects of running elections in Pennsylvania, provide funding for the lower judiciary and related support services, and operate assessment offices to maintain property values that are the basis of property taxation for the counties, municipalities and school districts. They are involved in other functions such as land use planning, transportation infrastructure, operation of 911 centers and emergency response planning, environmental issues and recycling, property and civil records management and agricultural conservation and preservation.

### **Affiliates**

CCAP also provides legislative representation and staff support services for the following affiliate associations which cover many facets of the work of counties: Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators (PCYA); Pennsylvania Association of County Administrators of Mental Health and Developmental Services (PACA MH/DS); Pennsylvania Coalition of Affiliated Healthcare & Living Communities (PACAH); Pennsylvania Association of County Drug and Alcohol Administrators (PACDAA); Pennsylvania Association of County Human Services Administrators (PACHSA); Assessors Association of Pennsylvania (AAP); Society of County Human Resource Professionals of Pennsylvania (SCHRPP); and County Planning Directors Association of Pennsylvania (CPDAP).

### **Legislative Initiatives and County Government Priorities**

Apart from schools and roads, counties are responsible for the implementation of nearly all federal and state policies here in Pennsylvania. The work of county government touches every single Pennsylvanian. Whether through administration of the courts and corrections system, provision of human services to people in need in our communities, emergency management and 911 services, elections, environmental and land use planning and protection of open space, maintenance of county bridges, or the county property assessment rolls, counties directly impact Pennsylvanians' quality of life each and every day.

Due to the scope and nature of the wide variety of services counties provide, CCAP is often involved in lobbying many different policy issues. The Pennsylvania County Platform provides the basis for all of the Association's lobbying activities. In addition, CCAP policy committee members select their legislative priority issues for the coming year each November. The [2023 County Government Priorities](#) include:

- 911 Funding and Reauthorization
- County Inmates with Mental Health Issues
- County Mental Health Base Funding Increase
- Addressing the Needs of Children and Youth Who Have Complex Behavioral Health Issues
- Broadband Access and Development

- Promote Election Integrity

Counties, as a key deliverer of services on the state's behalf, can be a valuable partner to General Assembly to provide critical background and context for how state-funded programs are operationalized locally, as well as suggestions for how available dollars can be used more effectively to provide needed programming. Strong relationships between state and county government has historically yielded positive results that benefits residents across all 67 counties, regardless of rural or urban, population size and geography. We strive to continue our close ties with members of the General Assembly to achieve common goals and strengthen our partnerships across state government in order to building long-term and sustainable programming to benefit our mutual constituents, the people of Pennsylvania.

More information about CCAP, the Pennsylvania County Platform and current county priorities is available at [www.pacounties.org](http://www.pacounties.org).

We would like to thank you again for the opportunity to submit these comments and would be happy to address any additional questions.