

# LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

## COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA THE VOICE OF PENNSYLVANIA COUNTIES

### IN THIS EDITION:

- **General Assembly Set to Return Later this Month**
- **House Transportation Committee Statewide Tour**
- **Biennial Pennsylvania Youth Survey Released**
- **IFO Issues August Revenue Update**
- **September is National Recovery Month**

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## GENERAL ASSEMBLY SET TO RETURN LATER THIS MONTH

The legislative summer recess is coming to an end, as the state Senate and House are scheduled to return to session on September 16 and 23, respectively. As Pennsylvania approaches the end of this two-year session, several bills and topics important to counties remain before the General Assembly.

In late July, the resignations of former Rep. Donna Bullock and former Rep. Stephen Kinsey triggered special elections in the 201<sup>st</sup> and 195<sup>th</sup> districts, both set for September 17. The two representatives chaired key committees, leaving leadership vacancies in the House Children and Youth and House Human Services Committee. Currently, the House is divided, with 101 Republicans and 100 Democrats. However, with Rep. Joseph Kerwin (R-Dauphin) on National Guard deployment, the chamber would be tied 100-100 if it convened before the vacancies are filled.

Counties continue to actively advance their legislative priorities this fall. Among them is reform of the Right-to-Know Law (RTKL), particularly **Senate Bill 525**, introduced by Senator Cris Dush (R-Jefferson), which aims to address the ongoing issue of the increasing number of RTK requests that county governments face. As the bill sits in the Senate floor, counties continue to advocate for the balance between public access, privacy, and security.

Additionally, counties urge quick action on updating provisions of the 911 statute in line with NG911 standards, best practices and additional requirements. Specifically, counties continue to work with stakeholders pushing for final passage of **HB 1854** (Rep. Jared Solomon, D-Philadelphia), which would clarify provisions related to GIS information, call routing and addressing and ensure caller personal information can be protected.

Counties remain steadfast in their advocacy for additional legislative action to establish

robust and sustainable funding mechanisms for transportation. As Pennsylvania enters a new era of transportation demands, counties are supportive of the need to explore sustainable and innovative funding solutions across all modes and aspects of transportation. Increased funding allows counties to not only maintain but also improve and expand our transportation infrastructure, making our communities more resilient.

With more than 1,500 bills introduced in the House and more than 800 in the Senate, CCAP will continue to provide updates during the fall session on legislation important to counties through the [Legislative Bulletin](#), member notes and calls to action.

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## HHOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE STATEWIDE TOUR

The House Transportation Committee kicked off its statewide tour, "Moving PA Forward by Investing in Roads, Bridges, and Transit," on August 21 in Indiana County. This initiative includes seven informational meetings across various locations across the commonwealth to explore the state's transportation challenges and opportunities.

Governor Shapiro initially proposed \$280 million in funding for mass transit in his FY 2024-2025 budget; however, the final state budget allocated only \$80.5 million in new funding. Counties across the commonwealth are seeking additional financial support to meet the evolving transportation needs of their communities.

Mifflin County Commissioner and CCAP Community and Economic Development Committee chair Robert Postal provided written testimony urging the Committee to pursue further legislative action to increase funding, enabling counties to maintain, improve, and expand vital infrastructure. Counties are responsible for managing more than 4,000 bridges and two-thirds of them are involved in operating more than 30 fixed-route mass transit systems. These systems, along with demand-response and shared-ride programs, provide crucial transportation services for employment, education, healthcare, and other essential needs.

While Act 89 secured funding for county bridges and transportation infrastructure, the solutions it provided have not fully met the needs over the past decade. As Pennsylvania faces a new era of transportation demands, counties are increasingly focused on sustainable and innovative funding strategies to support all modes of transportation, emphasizing the urgent need for stable and increased funding to address the growing backlog of infrastructure projects.

Details on the remainder of the House Transportation Committee statewide tour can be found on the [Committee's public website](#).

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## BIENNIAL PENNSYLVANIA YOUTH SURVEY RELEASED

The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency has released its biennial Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS), which tracks substance use and behavioral trends among students in grade 6, 8, 10 and 12. The survey focuses on alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and antisocial behaviors, while also gathering insights on students' attitudes, knowledge, social-emotional health, and their perceptions of school and community safety. As a key component of Pennsylvania's prevention strategy, PAYS provides data-driven insights that enables schools and communities to address the root causes of concerning behaviors, rather than responding reactively. The report highlights both risk and protective factors, offering a comprehensive understanding of the challenges facing today's youth. Counties have a fundamental responsibility of managing drug and alcohol programs, including the development and implementation of comprehensive prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery services.

The survey used risk factor scales to evaluate various concerns among Pennsylvania students, revealing that the highest scores were in three critical areas: low commitment to school, parental attitudes favorable toward antisocial behavior, and low neighborhood attachment. These elevated scores indicate that the largest number of students are at risk in these categories. Specifically, low commitment to school is associated with potential academic and behavioral problems, while parental attitudes that condone antisocial behavior can lead to the normalization of risk actions at home. Additionally, weak neighborhood attachment can foster youth isolation and risky behavior. These findings underscore the importance of targeting prevention efforts toward these high-risk, low-protection areas to effectively support and benefit youth.

The 2023 PAYS report is available on the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency [website](#).

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## IFO ISSUES AUGUST REVENUE UPDATE

The State's Independent Fiscal Office (IFO) released the monthly revenue [update](#) for August, showing that general fund collections for the month exceeded expectations, totaling \$2.93 billion, marking a \$141 million (5.1%) above the IFO's official estimate. The increase was driven by collections from inheritance tax and escheats but offset by lower-than-expected personal income tax collections.

Collections for August totaled \$33 million, an increase of 1.1% compared to the same month the previous year. Year-to-date revenues for FY 2024-2025 reached \$5.92 billion, which is \$160 million (or 2.8%) higher than predicted.

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## SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH

September marks National Recovery Month, a time for individuals, families, groups and organizations across the country to share their stories and raise awareness of substance use conditions, celebrate individuals in recovery and acknowledge the work of prevention, treatment and recovery support services.

In addition, the Pennsylvania Association of County Drug and Alcohol Administrators (PACDAA), a CCAP affiliate, will host its ninth annual [Courage to Change Recovery Advocacy Day](#) at the state Capitol in Harrisburg on September 24. A media event will take place in the Capitol's main rotunda from 1-2 P.M. that day, featuring members of the recovery community and remarks from several legislators. More information about the event can be found on the Recovery Advocacy Day Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/recoveryadvocacy](http://www.facebook.com/recoveryadvocacy).

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