

# LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

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

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## **PRIORITIES SNEAK PEAK: WHAT'S ON THE AGENDA FOR COUNTIES IN 2025**

The legislative priorities selected each fall by CCAP members are not just CCAP priorities – they are truly county priorities chosen by Pennsylvania’s counties. Each fall prior to the CCAP Fall Conference, members of CCAP’s policy committees meet to develop proactive legislative work plans. These plans focus their efforts on a set of actions and objectives to address county issues and goals in the coming year. From those meetings, committees suggest priorities, which are then reviewed by the Resolutions and Policy Committee and ultimately voted on by all members, composed of county commissioners, chief clerks, county administrators, and solicitors, during the Fall Conference hybrid business meeting.

As another year begins, Pennsylvania’s counties have selected three legislative priorities for 2025, each of which highlights CCAP members’ commitment to core county responsibilities and ultimately to the people and communities in Pennsylvania.

CCAP Board members will announce the 2025 priorities on Wednesday, January 29, and a special edition bulletin will be sent out to highlight them following the announcement. Additional information and resources on each priority will also be available at [www.pacounties.org](http://www.pacounties.org) on the Priorities **webpage**.

With the legislative session reconvening next week, counties are poised to actively engage in critical policy discussion that will shape the future of local government. Counties are closely examining a wave of proposals that have the potential to significantly enhance county services. Among these, several election-related bills stand out. Notably, Representative Scott Conklin (D-Centre) introduced **House Bill 37**, a crucial piece of legislation that would empower county boards of elections to pre-canvass all ballots seven days prior to Election Day. This measure would streamline election day operations,

improving efficiency for both county officials and voters alike.

Furthermore, Representative Gleim (R-Cumberland) introduced **House Bill 160**, a bill that seeks to modernize the Prevailing Wage Act. This bill aims to raise the threshold to \$243,000 and establish an annual inflation adjustment, ensuring the Act remains relevant and effective in today's economic climate. The current threshold, unchanged since the 1960s, is outdated and applies to nearly all county public construction projects. As a result, it inflates costs and diverts taxpayer funds from essential county services.

In addition, a flurry of co-sponsorship memos have also been circulated, signaling a host of legislative activity that will directly impact county operations. These memos offer a glimpse into the General Assembly's agenda, highlighting key policy areas, such as uniform property reassessments, Right-to-Know Law reforms, emergency services reforms, and numerous other areas critical to county governments. Recognizing the pivotal role counties play in delivery essential services to their residents, counties will actively engage with the General Assembly to ensure that legislative proposals effectively address county needs and promote the efficient and equitable delivery of county services.

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## **SESSION STARTING, VACANCIES, AND SPECIAL ELECTIONS**

The first full week of the 2025-26 Legislative Session will begin on Monday, January 27. However, neither chamber will be at full complement. In the Senate, there is currently a vacancy for the 36<sup>th</sup> Senate District after the resignation of former Senator Ryan Aument (Lancaster) to serve as State Director for U.S. Senator McCormick.

Regrettably, Representative Matthew Gergely (Allegheny) passed away earlier this month. His untimely passing leaves a vacancy in the 35<sup>th</sup> Legislative District, which also puts the House at 101-101. Special elections have been called to fill these seats, both of which will occur on March 25.

CCAP members and staff extend our sincerest condolences to Representative Gergely's family, friends, and colleagues during this difficult time.

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## **GOVERNOR TO PROVIDE FY 2025-26 BUDGET ADDRESS, BUDGET HEARINGS TO FOLLOW**

The House and Senate will convene during a joint session on Tuesday, February 4, to hear the annual budget address, which will preview Governor Shapiro's proposed FY 2025-2026 budget. The Governor is scheduled to deliver his address around noon in the Capitol. It is typically broadcast live on the Pennsylvania Cable Network, as well as through streaming video on a variety of legislative websites. Following the address, CCAP will analyze the proposed funding levels and provide information to counties on the proposal.

After the address, the House and Senate Appropriations committees will be holding hearings on the Governor's FY 2024-2025 commonwealth budget beginning on February 18 and continuing through early March. The House will begin their hearings with the Department of Community and Economic Development in the morning, followed by the Department of Revenue in the afternoon. The Senate will begin with the Department of Revenue in the morning, followed by the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) and the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) in the afternoon.

More information, including a budget analysis for counties and the complete budget hearing schedule, can be found on CCAP's Budget News [\*\*webpage\*\*](#).

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## CCAP SPRING CONFERENCE & VOTING MATTERS

Save the date for the **CCAP Spring Conference**, March 16-18, at the Hilton Harrisburg. The conference will kick off with CCAP policy committee meetings on Sunday Afternoon, March 16<sup>th</sup>, from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM. All CCAP members are welcome to attend, but only committee members may vote. On Monday, during the Opening General Session, members will have the opportunity to participate in the election of the two CCAP representatives to the NACo Board of Directors.

This year's conference features an exciting new experience to the **conference agenda**-a Hill Day! On the final day of the conference, Tuesday, March 18, members are encouraged to participate in a special advocacy-focused event at the Pennsylvania Capitol. This day provides a unique opportunity for members to engage directly with local legislators and share counties' legislative priorities for the 2025 legislative year. **Conference registration** is now open through Monday, March 3.

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## NACo ACCEPTING INTERIM POLICY RESOLUTIONS

The National Association of Counties (NACo) 2025 Legislative Conference will be held in person in Washington, D.C. March 1-4, 2025. During the conference, NACo's ten policy steering committees will meet to consider adoption of interim policy resolutions that will guide NACo advocacy until the Annual Conference in July. NACo invites submissions for interim policy resolutions via email to [resolutions@naco.org](mailto:resolutions@naco.org). Additional details are available on the NACo Legislative Conference **webpage**.

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