



April 15, 2019

Legislative UPDATE

Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education

While both chambers of the General Assembly have two weeks of voting session ahead of them, State System universities are preparing to award degrees during [spring commencement programs](#) to be held on each of the campuses comprising Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education.

Thousands of State System students, the vast majority of whom are Pennsylvanians, will walk across those stages during the first two weekends of May to receive their degrees from the 14 universities. They will join the ranks of the already 500,000 plus State System alumni who reside in the Commonwealth after graduation.

Having had access to high-value, in-demand programs that prepared them to meet the employment needs of the Commonwealth, these students are career-ready! Regardless of zip code or family background, the System has provided our 2019 graduates with every opportunity to achieve success and upward mobility.

Did a State System university prepare you for a successful life as a contributing, responsible citizen? Let the General Assembly know. Tell your legislators their support of the State System is support for the future of Pennsylvania!

[Be informed. Get involved. Take action!](#)

Senate

Session & Committee Activity

[Senate Session Days](#) | [Watch Session Live](#) | [Senate Calendars](#) | [Senate Committee Meeting Schedule](#)

The chamber convenes at 1:00 p.m. today and again Tuesday and Wednesday.

The **Floor Calendar** continues to include these bills of interest:

- [SB 439](#) (Regan): Amends the Enforcement Office Disability Benefits Law (the Heart and Lung Act) further providing for disability benefits and for definitions to include entities not currently protected under the act, i.e., campus police officers employed by a participating university. Provides that any payments required to be made on account of any campus police officers employed by a State-owned university, State-aided university, community college or State-related college or university shall be made from moneys appropriated to the State-owned university, State-aided university, community college or State-related college or university.
- [SR 34](#) (Dinniman): Establishes a Global Education Task Force. The chancellor of the State System would hold a seat on this task force.

In committee activity, the **Senate Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee** meets Tuesday to consider:

- [SB 589](#) (Regan): Amends Title 51 (Military Affairs), in military education programs, creating the "PA GI Bill" to enable men and women in the Commonwealth's National Guard to earn educational benefits for their spouse and/or children by committing to a second enlistment of six years. Overall, the program will provide for ten semesters or five years equivalent at the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education tuition rate.

Also on Tuesday, the **Senate Majority Policy Committee** will hold a public workshop discussion at 10:30 a.m. on the effects of outmigration or "Brain Drain." The workshop discussion will provide statistics and opinions from representatives of the Independent Fiscal Office, Harrisburg Young Professionals, the Commonwealth Foundation, the PA Department of Education, the PA Department of Labor and Industry and demographic experts from Penn State University.

House of Representatives

Session & Committee Activity

[House Session Days](#) | [Watch Session Live](#) | [House Calendars](#) | [House Committee Meeting Schedule](#)

The House also has three days of voting session, starting this afternoon and concluding Wednesday.

The chamber's voting schedule for the week is focused on advancing bills to promote "government efficiency and modern updates. More than a dozen bills repealing out-of-date laws are on the move this week, along with bills that reexamine the effectiveness of some state boards and commissions." [READ MORE >>](#)

The chamber will also consider:

- [HB 826](#) (Marshall): Creates The Sports Raffle Charities Act, allowing an athletic event drawing to be conducted by an affiliated nonprofit organization during a charitable event held within the same arena, stadium, grandstand, bleachers or other facility during a home game, team event or car race of the athletic team. The legislation was amended in committee to clarify that an institution of higher education that is a 501(c)(3) may operate the drawing and use the proceeds for charitable purposes. The legislation also provides for drawings, prize amounts, definitions, use of funds, eligibility, prohibitions and penalties, etc.

During its last week of voting session, the chamber passed a wide-ranging package of bills including "legislation to [protect the rights of victims](#) including when victims testify in court, protecting the statements provided by children and amending the state Constitution with a victims' bill of rights., including:

- [HB 962](#) (Rozzi): Amends the Crimes Code to provide a prospective extension of the statute of limitations for commencing a civil action arising from childhood sexual abuse, eliminating the statute of limitations for criminal offenses of childhood sexual abuse, and waiving the defense of sovereign immunity in childhood sexual abuse claims for damages caused by actions or omissions constituting negligence.
- [HB 1051](#) (Stephens): Amends the Child Protective Services Law to increase the penalties for mandated reporters who continue to fail to report suspected child abuse and broadens the "continuing course of action" provision.
- [HB 1171](#) (Toohil): Prohibits the use of nondisclosure agreements that prevent victims of childhood sexual abuse from disclosing the name of a person suspected of childhood sexual abuse or cooperating with law enforcement investigations into child sexual abuse claims.

In committee activity, the **House State Government Committee** meets Tuesday to consider:

- [HB 163](#) (Everett): Amends Title 62 (Procurement) to modernize Pennsylvania's Separations Act, specifying the delivery systems from which a public agency can choose. The options include: Design-Bid-Build with Multiple Primes (current system); Design-Bid-Build with Single Prime; Construction Management At Risk; and, Design Build.

The **House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee** also meets Tuesday. It will consider [HB 1324](#) (Barrar), a companion bill to Senator Regan's [SB 589](#).

The legislation amends Title 51 (Military Affairs), adding language expanding the Pennsylvania National Guard Military Education Program to include a member of the National Guard's spouse and/or child in the program. The bill also provides for eligibility, grants, limitations, recoupment of grant payments, regulations, and administration. It also establishes the Military Family Education Program Fund as a special non-lapsing fund in the State Treasury.

The Governor's proposed 2019-20 state budget seeks an increase of \$265,000 for the Education Assistance Program, from \$13 million to \$13,265,000. For the Military Family Education Program, he's proposed \$2.7 million.

Bill Tracking Report

The following information is updated during legislative session weeks.

In the House:

[HB 283](#) (Simmons): Amends the Right-to-Know Law will be considered. Under the bill, a written request for the duplication of a record must include a statement indicating whether or not the requester intends to use the record for a commercial purpose. In responding to a request for records that will be used for a commercial purpose, an agency may charge a requester additional standard fees for the search, review and duplication of the records. The fees for records to be used for a commercial purpose must be reasonable, must be approved by the Office of Open Records and may not be established with the intent or effect of excluding persons from access to records or duplicates thereof or of creating profit for the agency. *Last Action:* 04-16-19 H Passed over in House State Government.

[HB 518](#) (Ortitay): Amends the Private Licensed Schools Act further providing for definitions and for license fees. The bill removes the requirement that facilities be located in the same county. Further provides for multi-branch training schools. *Last Action:* 04-17-19 H Reported as amended House Education.

[HB 785](#) (Klunk): Amends the Public Employee Relations Act, further providing for definitions; in employee rights, providing for payments to employee organizations; and making related repeals. The bill establishes that a public employer shall notify a nonmember in writing that there is no statutory obligation by nonmembers to make any payments to the employee organization that serves as the nonmember's exclusive representative. *Last Action:* 04-29-19 H Set on the House Calendar

[HB 1096](#) (Ortitay): An Act making appropriations from the General Fund to the General Assembly for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2019, & for the payment of bills incurred & remaining unpaid at the close of fiscal year ending June 30, 2020. *Last Action:* 04-08-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Appropriations

[HB 1141](#) (Ortitay): An Act making appropriations from the General Fund to the Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2019, and for the payment of bills incurred & remaining unpaid at the close of fiscal year ending June 30, 2020. *Last Action:* 04-08-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Appropriations

[HB 1184](#) (Saylor): Amends the Fiscal Code, in general budget implementation, providing for block grants and further providing for Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency. *Last Action:* 04-10-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Appropriations

[HB 1284](#) (Moul): Amends the Right-to-Know Law, in procedure, further providing for exceptions for public records. *Last Action:* 04-25-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House State Government

[HB 1308](#) (Murt): Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, for continuing education; in safe schools, for reporting & for policy relating to bullying & for powers and duties of Department of Education. *Last Action:* 04-25-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Education

Co-sponsorship Memos:

[HCO1845](#) (Sims): Requires school districts and postsecondary institutions to submit information annually to the Department of Education regarding the number of sexual violence and harassment incidents that occurred there. *Last Action:* 04-17-19 H Filed

[HCO1872](#) (Keller, M): Raises thresholds in the Separations Act and provides for annual adjustment. *Last Action:* 04-22-19 H Filed

[HCO1882](#) (Keller, M.): Raises the public project cost threshold of the Separations Act from \$4,000 to \$250,000. *Last Action:* 04-22-19 H Filed

This update is provided as a courtesy of the Office of the Chancellor as a preview of upcoming legislative activity and a review of action on legislative issues of interest to the State System. The Legislative UPDATE is distributed during legislative session weeks.

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