



November 18, 2019

Legislative UPDATE

Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education

Both chambers of the General Assembly return to session this week, Monday through Thursday. "[I]f the rumors of it being the last session week of 2019 turn out to be true, it could be a busy four days," reports Capitolwire.

Otherwise, both chambers are expected to return in December. The House is presently scheduled to convene in session for six more days beginning the week of December 9th, while the Senate would return for only three more days the week of December 16th.

Because it is not a sine die session, legislation will not need to be reintroduced in the new year.

Senate

Session & Committee Activity

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

The Senate convenes today at 1:00 p.m. After concluding its work on Thursday, the chamber will recess

until the week of December 16th, its final session week of the calendar year.

Floor action could occur on these bills of interest, which are aimed to reduce **unused state office space** and **inventory communications assets**:

- [SB 327](#) (Argall): Amends the Administrative Code, in powers and duties of the Dept. of General Services and its departmental administrative and advisory boards and commissions, providing for report of State facilities owned or leased.
- [HB 305](#) (Snyder): An Act providing for an inventory of State-owned assets & county-owned assets for the development of mobile broadband services in unserved areas and underserved areas of this Commonwealth & for the statewide mobile radio & microwave system.

In committee activity, the Senate Aging and Youth Committee meets this afternoon to consider a bill that would **increase penalties for failure to report child abuse** :

- [HB 1051](#) (Stephens): Amends Title 23 (Domestic Relations), in child protective services, further providing for penalties for failure to report suspected child abuse by mandated reporters. Increases the offense of willfully failing to report suspected child abuse by a mandate reporter when it is a "continuing course of action" from a misdemeanor of the first degree to a felony of the third degree. Further provides if the child abuse constitutes a felony of the first degree or higher, the person commits a felony of the second degree.

The Senate Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee meets tomorrow to report out legislation that is aimed to guarantee **in-state tuition for children in reassigned military families**:

- [HB 1050](#) (Burns): Amends an act conferring limited residency status on military personnel, their dependents and civilian personnel assigned to an active duty station in Pennsylvania, further providing for residency of students. The bill establishes that veterans, their spouses and dependent children; military personnel, their spouses and dependent children; and civilian personnel, their spouses and dependent children who are admitted to a public institution of higher learning or a state-related or state-owned institution shall be charged resident tuition rates provided that the student is a resident on the date of enrollment, registers for the corresponding term and remains in continuous enrollment at the institution.

This information from our last Legislative Update is worth sharing again, especially as it might not have made its way to your inbox.

The **Public Higher Education Funding Commission**, co-chaired by Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Pat Browne (R-Lehigh), House Appropriations Committee Chairman Stan Saylor (R-York) and Education Secretary Pedro Rivera held its second meeting on October 23rd. The Commission received testimony from:

- [Patricia Landis, Bureau Director, PDE Bureau of Postsecondary and Adult Education](#)
- [Scott Boelscher, Senior Associate, HCM Strategists](#)
- [Kate Shaw, Executive Director, Research for Action](#)

The 19-member Commission was established in Act 70 of 2019, and is tasked with developing a higher education funding formula and identifying factors that may be used to determine the distribution of funding among the public institutions of higher education in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania Legislative Services reports that Landis provided an overview of the types of higher education institutions in Pennsylvania, which include public institutions, such as community colleges; state-owned or Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education institutions, which include Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology and the Commonwealth Technical Institute; and state-related institutions, which include Temple University, Penn State University, Lincoln University, and the University of Pittsburgh. She also highlighted private not-for-profit institutions and private for-profit institutions.

Boelscher gave an overview of how states historically have provided funding to higher education and explained that outcomes-based funding has become a very common approach for distributing state dollars to public colleges and universities. He indicated 27 states have enacted some form of this policy.

Finally, Shaw explained that Outcomes Based Funding is based on a theory about how several important elements of the postsecondary landscape may work together.

The Funding Commission must issue a report of the commission's findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly (read below about a new extended deadline of November 2020). The new funding formula developed and recommended by the commission, however, will not go into effect unless the formula is approved by an act of the General Assembly and enacted into law.

House of Representatives

Session & Committee Activity

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

The chamber convenes today at 1 p.m. The House will also finish on Thursday after which it will stand adjourned until the week of December 9th.

Today, the chamber is expected to take up [HB 49](#) (Brown) on concurrence in Senate amendments. In addition to its original provision to allow for course credit to be awarded for the successful completion of a personal financial literacy course during grades 9 through 12, the legislation as amended in the Senate also:

- Extends the deadline for the **Public Higher Education Funding Commission** to issue a report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly from July 2, 2020, to November 30, 2020.
- Requires students seeking a **fostering independence waiver** to apply for all available federal and state grants as a qualification for the program.

An affirmative concurrence vote would advance the bill along to the governor for his consideration.

There is no committee activity of particular interest scheduled as of yet.

Bill Tracking Report

The following information is updated during legislative session weeks.

Executive Action:

[HB 265](#) (Staats): Amends The Public School Code, in preliminary provisions, for career info. & recruitment; in terms & courses of study, for commission; in vocational education, for career & technical education equipment grants; and for transfer. *Last Action:* 10-30-19 Approved by the Governor (Act: 76)

In the House:

[HB 2010](#) (Frankel): Amends Public School Code, in Safe2Say Program, in postsecondary institution sexual harassment and sexual violence policy and online reporting system, providing for definitions, for online reporting system and editorial changes. *Last Action:* 10-30-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Education

[HB 2046](#) (Murt): Amends the Public School Code, in certification of teachers, further providing for instructional certificate grade spans and age levels and duties of department. *Last Action:* 11-14-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Education

[HR 610](#) (Kinsey): A Resolution honoring the legacy of Cheyney University as the oldest historically black university in the U.S. and supporting its reaccreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. *Last Action:* 11-14-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Education

[SB 456](#) (Bartolotta): Amends the Private Licensed Schools Act, further providing for definitions, for State Board of Private Licensed Schools, for powers & duties of Board, for application for license, for license fees & for requirements for licensure. *Last Action:* 10-30-19 H Final Passage (Vote: Y:198/N: 0)

[SB 905](#) (Browne): An Act providing for the capital budget for fiscal year 2019-2020; itemizing public improvement projects; authorizing the incurring of debt; authorizing the use of current revenue; and making appropriations. *Last Action:* 10-31-19 H Received in the House and referred to House Appropriations

In the Senate:

[HB 1773](#) (Struzzi): Establishes the Tuition Assistance for Active Volunteers Program through which "an

active member of a volunteer fire company or EMS agency, who attends an approved institution of higher learning, would be eligible to receive tuition assistance." *Last Action:* 10-31-19 S Received in the Senate and referred to Senate Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness

[HB 1786](#) (Sainato): Amends Title 35 (Health & Safety), in incentives for municipal volunteers of fire companies & nonprofit emergency medical services agencies, establishing the First Responder Loan Forgiveness Program; and making editorial changes. *Last Action:* 10-31-19 S Received in the Senate and referred to Senate Education

[HB 1803](#) (Toepel): Amends the PennWATCH Act, further providing for searchable budget database and for administration, to include information on each settlement paid to an individual or employee of a commonwealth agency as a result of an action taken by an employee of a commonwealth agency. *Last Action:* 10-25-19 S Received in the Senate and referred to Senate State Government

[SB 938](#) (Schwank): Amends Public School Code, further providing for dating violence education; and in sexual violence education at institutions of higher education, providing for definitions and for education program. *Last Action:* 10-31-19 S Introduced and referred to Senate Education

[SB 945](#) (Costa): Amends the Public School Code, in Safe2Say Program, providing for definitions; in postsecondary institution sexual harassment & sexual violence policy & online reporting system, for definitions., for online reporting system; and making an editorial change. *Last Action:* 11-15-19 S Introduced and referred to Senate Education

[SB 949](#) (Williams, A.): Amends Title 24 (Education), in higher education, providing for intercollegiate athletics. *Last Action:* 11-15-19 S Introduced and referred to Senate Education

Co-sponsorship Memos:

[HCO2769](#) (Rabb): Bans the use of Native American/American Indian mascots or logos in public schools and colleges. *Last Action:* 11-01-19 H Filed

[SCO1245](#) (Williams, A.): Allows student athletes to retain their right of publicity in seeking endorsement deals. *Last Action:* 10-30-19 S 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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