



March 16, 2020

Legislative UPDATE

Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education

The General Assembly is scheduled to return to voting session this week, but the Capitol is closed to the public due to concerns about the transmission of COVID-19 in public spaces. As a result of the Capitol complex being closed to visitors, several committee meetings, hearings and informational sessions have been postponed. Some of those bills upon which the chambers might act could be related to efforts to address the COVID-19 situation. [Read more...](#)

In the interest of the health and safety of all Pennsylvanians, Chancellor Greenstein has [directed](#) that no in-person instruction occur at the State System's 14 universities during that same two-week period.

Senate

Session & Committee Activity

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

The Senate is on a 12-hour-call and, at this time, plans to be in session on March 17 and 18.

The Senate Appropriations Committee is presently scheduled to meet Tuesday to consider advancing budget-related bills:

- [SB 1050 \(Browne\)](#): An Act to provide from the General Fund for the expenses of the Executive, Legislative & Judicial Departments, the public debt & the public schools for the fiscal year July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. In its current form, this General Fund bill would level-fund the State System at its FY 2019/20 level.
- [SB 1060 \(Browne\)](#): Supplement to the act to accept grant of Public Lands, by the US, to several states, for endowment of Agricultural Colleges, making appropriations for carrying the same into effect; & providing for basis for payments of appropriation.
- [SB 1061 \(Browne\)](#): Supplement to the University of Pittsburgh - Commonwealth Act making appropriations for carrying the same into effect; & providing for a basis for payments, for method of accounting & for certain fiscal information disclosure.
- [SB 1062 \(Browne\)](#): Supplement to the Temple University - Commonwealth Act making an appropriation for carrying the same into effect; providing for a basis for payments; for method of accounting & for certain fiscal information disclosure.
- [SB 1063 \(Browne\)](#): Supplement to the Lincoln University - Commonwealth Act making an appropriation for carrying the same into effect; & providing for a basis for payments, for method of accounting & for certain fiscal information disclosure.
- [SB 1064 \(Browne\)](#): An Act making appropriations to the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania.
- [SB 1093 \(Browne\)](#): An Act providing for the capital budget for the fiscal year 2020-2021.

Last month, on February 20th, Chancellor Greenstein discussed the [System's FY 2020/21 appropriation request](#) with the committee. [View archived video...](#)

The System is seeking:

- A modest increase of 2 percent (\$9.5 million) for a total general appropriation increase of \$487 million.
- A \$20 million investment--part of a five-year \$100 million request--to support three one-time System Redesign-related initiatives.

The chancellor pointed out how Pennsylvania ranks 48th in the nation in funding public higher education, calling it a public policy "choice" made by elected leaders for years. A lack of public investment leads to higher tuition, levels of student debt, and struggles to attract public and private investment.

Reviewing executive nominations, the following nominees still await confirmation by the chamber:

- **Bloomsburg University**: Dan Klingerman
- **California University of Pennsylvania**: Sandra Guthrie
- **East Stroudsburg University**: Frank Epifano; Marcus Lingenfelter; Tameko Patterson; and L. Patrick Ross
- **Edinboro University**: Danny Jones
- **Indiana University of Pennsylvania**: Joyce Fairman

- **Kutztown University:** Linda Cliatt-Wayman
 - **Lock Haven University:** Krystjan Callahan
 - **Mansfield University:** Max Gannon, II, and Karen Russell
 - **Millersville University:** Richard Frerichs; Rick Rodgers; and Saul Fink
 - **Slippery Rock University:** Alfonso Angelucci; Dan Lavallee; and William McCarrier
 - **West Chester University:** Chris Franklin and Jonathan Ireland
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House of Representatives

Session & Committee Activity

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

The House convenes this afternoon, Monday, March 16, at 1:00 p.m., at which time state Representative-elect Roni Green (D-Philadelphia) of the 190th district will be sworn-in.

"The session schedule could be shortened if legislation to address the virus is agreed upon. There will be no guests in the House chamber or in the gallery." [Continue reading ...](#)

The chamber's calendar includes possible consideration of [SB 327](#) (Argall), legislation amending 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.

Tomorrow, March 17, special elections will occur in Mercer, Westmoreland and Bucks counties for the 8th, 18th and 58th House Districts. The elections in Western Pennsylvania were called to fill vacancies in the state House left by members who won judgeships.

In committee activity, the House State Government Committee is scheduled to meet today to consider:

- [HB 978 \(Hickernell\)](#): Amends the Right-to-Know Law, requiring that Social Security numbers be redacted by agencies before being made public and that any Social Security numbers that have already been made public be redacted by the agencies who made them public.
- [HB 1931 \(Topper\)](#): Amends the Right-to-Know Law, establishing that an agency can petition the Office of Open Records for relief from a requestor that the agency alleges is a vexatious requestor. The bill also provides for penalties and procedures for determining if a requestor is a vexatious requestor. The legislation also directs the court to award reasonable attorneys fees and costs of the agency receiving the request if found to be abusing this system.

The House Health Committee also meets today. Bills under consideration include:

- [SB 633 \(Costa\)](#): An Act providing for the declaration of a public health emergency, for duties of the Department of Health, for temporary regulations and for immunity from liability.

Earlier this month, the chancellor appeared before the House Appropriations Committee, at which he reiterated the System's request of \$487 million in state appropriations for 2020-21, a 2 percent increase over the current fiscal year, and a new, separate \$20 million investment in a 5-year, \$100 million project that will redesign some operations, leading to substantial cost savings and new potential revenues. [View archived video...](#)

Bill Tracking Report

The following information is updated during legislative session weeks.

In the Senate:

[SB 1042](#) (Aument): Amends Title 24 (Education), establishing the Student Loan Retirement Agreement Program and the Student Loan Retirement Agreement Advisory Committee. Last Action: 02-19-20 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Education

[SB 1043](#) (Aument): Amends Title 24 (Education), providing for the Higher Education Income Share Financing Pilot Program. Last Action: 02-19-20 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Education

In the House:

[HB 2287](#) (Pashinski): Amends the Public School Code, providing for Delayed Payment Plan Program; and establishing the Delayed Payment Plan Program Fund. *Last Action:* 02-18-20 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Education

[HB 2298](#) (Frankel): Amends the Clean Indoor Air Act, further providing for title of act, definitions, prohibition, signage, enforcement, annual reports, administration, preemption of local ordinances and for repeal; and making editorial changes. *Last Action:* 02-24-20 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Health

[HB 2308](#) (Rozzi): Amends the Public School Code, in preliminary provisions, providing for homeless and foster youth at institutions of higher education. *Last Action:* 02-24-20 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Education

[HB 2320](#) (Kosierowski): An Act establishing the School Counselor Loan Forgiveness Program and providing for the powers and duties of the PA Higher Education Assistance Agency. *Last Action:* 02-24-20 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Education

Co-sponsorship Memos:

[HCO3241](#) (Ciresi): Requires the Department of Education to create a student tenant bill of rights and a one-time online course about living off-campus. *Last Action:* 02-24-20 H Filed

[HCO3262](#) (Warren): Allows dependents of H-1B visa holders residing in Pennsylvania, and who have attended and received a diploma or equivalent from a Pennsylvania high school, to pay in-state tuition at our community colleges and State System universities. *Last Action:* 02-27-20 H Filed

[HCO3286](#) (O'Mara): Establishes a "Student Borrowers' Bill of Rights" and provides increased state oversight of lenders. *Last Action:* 03-03-20 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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