



May 4, 2020

## Legislative UPDATE

### Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education

In the System's [latest news](#), the Board of Governors has for the first time in its 38-year history froze basic in-state tuition for a second consecutive year, even while confronting financial challenges brought on in part by the coronavirus pandemic.

Basic in-state tuition for undergraduate students at the system's 14 universities will remain at \$7,716 for the 2020-21 academic year. Also remaining the same will be the system's technology fee for students, which stands at \$478 for the academic year. The Board voted to freeze tuition and the technology fee unanimously.

"Pennsylvania will recover from this pandemic, and our outstanding universities will have a role in leading the recovery," Chancellor Dan Greenstein said. "To be a leader will take courage, and the Board showed that kind of courage...by choosing to be on the side of students and affordability. [System universities] will be here to educate the business, healthcare, education, and community leaders of tomorrow by maintaining our place as the affordable higher education option for students of the Commonwealth."

Meanwhile, "[f]acing plummeting revenues, increased demand for public assistance, and a July 1 budget deadline, Gov. Tom Wolf and state lawmakers are trying to piece together how they can spend federal stimulus dollars and simultaneously manage a massive budget hole," [PennLive](#) reports.

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## Senate

# Session & Committee Activity

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

The Senate is on a 12-hour call of the President Pro Tempore.

These bills of interest await consideration by the full Senate:

- [HB 1050 \(Burns\)](#): Guarantees that veterans, their spouses and dependent children; military personnel, their spouses and dependent children; and civilian personnel, their spouses and dependent children shall be considered residents of the Commonwealth for purposes of receiving the in-state tuition rate at public institutions of higher learning or state-related/state owned institutions and the local sponsor rate at community colleges if the prospective student: Deposits funds confirming their intent to enroll; 2) Begins enrollment within the corresponding term for which the deposit was made; and 3) Remains in continuous enrollment at the institution.
- [SB 331](#) (Brooks): Amends the School Code to establish the Secondary Education Fire Training Pilot Program to provide high school students with firefighter training through partnerships between institutions of higher education and school districts or career and technical schools, or both.

There is no committee activity scheduled, except a joint public hearing between the Senate Local Government and Health and Human Services Committees on the process to reopen Pennsylvania.

The Senate Rules and Executive Nominations Committee still has yet to report these Trustee nominations:

- **Bloomsburg University**: Dan Klingerman
- **California University of Pennsylvania**: Sandra Guthrie and Justin Nwokeji, Monroeville
- **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 and Albert Jones
- **Mansfield University**: Max Gannon, II, and Karen Russell
- **Millersville University**: Richard Frerichs, Rick Rodgers, and Saul Fink
- **Shippensburg University**: William Gindlesperger
- **Slippery Rock University**: Alfonso Angelucci, Dan Lavalley 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 returns to voting session at 1 p.m. today and is expected to vote on legislation that would require state agencies to begin responding to Right-to-Know requests:

- [HB 2463](#) (Grove): Amends the Administrative Code, providing for access to public records during disaster declaration

And in budget-related action, the chamber anticipates considering:

- [HB 2441](#) (Saylor): Appropriates \$242,096,000 to Penn State for general support and \$26,736,000 for the Pennsylvania College of Technology
- [HB 2442](#) (Saylor): Appropriates \$151,507,000 for general to the University of Pittsburgh for support and \$3,346,000 for rural outreach education.
- [HB 2443](#) (Saylor): Appropriates \$158,206,000 to Temple University for the fiscal year July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021.
- [HB 2444](#) (Saylor): Appropriates \$15,166,000 for general support to the Trustees of Lincoln University for the fiscal year July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021.
- [HB 2445](#) (Saylor): Appropriates \$31,660,000 for veterinary activities and \$295,000 for the Center for Infectious Diseases to the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania for the fiscal year July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021.

Third consideration and final passage of these General Fund and supplemental appropriations bills also await action by the full House:

- [HB 2387](#) (Saylor): An Act to provide from the General Fund for the expenses of the Executive, Legislative & Judicial Departments, the public debt and the public schools, including the State System, for the fiscal year July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.
- [SB 1108](#) (Browne): A supplemental federal appropriations bill that would, among other things, appropriate from the General Fund to the Department of Education \$628,550,000, including a federal appropriation of \$104,743,000 for "[COVID - Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund](#)."

Other bills that could potentially see floor action include the System's three reform bills that would revise the System's enabling statute, Act 188; these bills were reported last week by the House Education Committee:

- [HB 2171](#) (Sonney): Updates the governance structure, for board of governors, for the chancellor, for powers & duties, for councils of trustees.
- [HB 2172](#) (Topper): Provides for financial and legal reforms, such as defining and separating state resources and affirming the System's sovereign and official immunity status.
- [HB 2173](#) (Schroeder): Eliminates outdated language, repeals the Snyder Report, and other charges and for annual report and clarifies student records are exempt from the Right-to-Know Law.

In committee activity this week, the House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee is set to meet Wednesday to take up legislation that would enable the legislature to exercise budgetary oversight duties over the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund, among other funds:

- [HB 2004](#) (Ortitay): Amends the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund Act, establishing the General Assembly may annually appropriate money for grant programs. The legislation repeals the allocation schedule and related provisions found in the Conservation and Natural Resources Act.

The Officer of the Chancellor has raised these concerns about the bill with committee staff:

- Repealing the allocation schedule could potentially result in a \$20M budget cut. Meanwhile, the System has a deferred maintenance/capital renewal backlog of \$1.85B. And 52% of the System's E&G facilities have not had a significant renovation in the last 25 years. At 25 years, facilities maintenance and repair costs increase dramatically. If the General Assembly's discretion would result in distributing fewer funds to the System for this purpose, the deferred maintenance backlog would significantly grow.
- In addition to a potential \$20M budget cut, the bill language limits the System to funding deferred maintenance on buildings it owns; that is a small percentage of the buildings for which the System is responsible. So if the General Assembly appropriated funds per the Act, the System would not be able to use it on most of our E&G like the System does currently.

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## Bill Tracking Report

The following information is updated during legislative session weeks.

**In the House:**

[HB 360](#) (Topper): Provides provisions for individuals in contact with children to obtain recertification during the disaster emergency relating to COVID-19. The provisions eliminating the in-person requirement and recertification requirements shall take effect immediately. *Last Action*: 4-29-20 H Signed in the House

[HB 2387](#) (Saylor): An Act to provide from the General Fund for the expenses of the Executive, Legislative & Judicial Departments, the public debt and the public schools for the fiscal year July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. *Last Action*: 4-20-20 H Rereferred to House Appropriations

[HB 2415](#) (Lewis): Amends The Administrative Code, providing for COVID-19 emergency statutory and regulatory suspensions and waivers reporting requirements. *Last Action*: 4-28-20 H Final Passage (Vote Y: 128/N: 74)

[HB 2418](#) (O'Neal): Amends The Administrative Code, providing for COVID-19 debt cost reduction review. *Last Action*: 4-28-20 H Final Passage (Vote Y: 128/N: 74)

[HB 2419](#) (Grove): Amends The Administrative Code, providing for COVID-19 Cost and Recovery Task Force. *Last Action*: 4-28-20 H Final Passage (Vote Y: 128/N: 74)

[SB 1108](#) (Browne): A Supplement to the General Appropriations Act, adding Federal appropriations to the Executive Department of the Commonwealth for the fiscal year July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020. *Last Action*: 4-21-20 H First consideration

[HCO3517](#) (Roebuck): Providing forbearance on student loans and guaranteed mortgages. *Last Action*: 04-30-20 H Filed

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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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