



Pennsylvania's **STATE SYSTEM** of Higher Education

January 11, 2021

State Legislative UPDATE

Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education

A new two-year legislative session is underway. After swearing-in ceremonies at the State Capitol last Tuesday, only the House of Representatives is in session this week. The Senate is scheduled to return January 25th.

We are happy to congratulate a total of 40 newly-elected and returning State System alumni. They include Senators Dush, Costa, Arnold, Martin, Baker, Sabatina, and

Tomlinson, as well as Representatives Kinkead, Schlegel-Culver, Millard, Sims, Wentling, Brooks, Oberlander, James, Bizzarro, O'Neal, Pyle, Struzzi, Irvin, Saylor, Rozzi, Guzman, Gillen, Emrick, Mako, Hamm, Dellosa, Schroeder, Fee, Miller, Stephens, Harris, Mustello, Rapp, Mullins, Briggs, Friel Otten, O'Mara, and Kinsey.

The State System looks forward to working with the General Assembly and particularly these System graduates in support of public higher education, including expanding and enhancing student opportunities and improving university affordability.

Senate

Session & Committee Activity

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

The Senate stands in recess until Monday, January 25th, at 1:00 p.m. Senate Republicans have a 28-20 majority in the 2021-22 legislative session, with one Independent member.

The chamber has elected Senator Jake Corman (R-Centre) to serve as Senate President Pro Tempore for the 2021-22 legislative session and welcomed new and returning members, except for the [45th Senatorial district](#). Appointed by Corman, Senator Elder Vogel (R-Beaver) will serve as Deputy President Pro Tempore.

Republican Leadership:

- Leader Kim Ward (R-Westmoreland)
- Appropriations Chair Pat Browne (R-Lehigh)
- Whip John Gordner (R-Columbia)**
- Caucus Chair Bob Mensch (R-Montgomery)
- Caucus Secretary Ryan Aument (R-Lancaster)
- Policy Chair Mario Scavello (R-Monroe)
- Caucus Administrator Camera Bartolotta (R-Washington)**

New [Republican members](#) include:

- Senator Devlin Robinson (R-Allegheny)
- Senator Cris Dush (R-Jefferson)*

Senate Democratic Leadership:

- Leader Jay Costa (D-Allegheny)
- Appropriations Chair Vincent Hughes (D-Philadelphia)
- Whip Anthony Williams (D-Philadelphia)
- Caucus Chair Wayne Fontana (D-Allegheny)
- Caucus Secretary Maria Collett (D-Montgomery)
- Policy Chair Katie Muth (D-Montgomery)
- Caucus Administrator Judity Schwank (D-Berks)

New [Democratic members](#) include:

- Senator Amanda Cappelletti (D-Montgomery)
- Senator Carolyn Comitta (D-Chester)**
- Senator John Kane (D-Delaware)**
- Senator Niki Saval (D-Philadelphia)

Senate standing committee chairs have not yet been announced. There is one notable vacancy, i.e., minority chair of the Senate Education Committee due to the retirement of Senator Andy Dinniman.

* State System alumnus/a

** Legislative District includes a State System university

House of Representatives

Session & Committee Activity

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

The House convenes this afternoon at 12:00 p.m. The Republican-controlled chamber holds the majority, 112-90, with one vacancy. [Representative Mike Reese](#) (R-Westmoreland) died Saturday, January 2nd.

This week, it is expected the chamber will fully organize its legislative standing committees. The chamber has already announced House standing committees for the 2021-22 legislative session. For the Education Committee, [Representative Curt Sonney](#) (R-Erie) and [Representative Mark Longietti](#) (D-Mercer) will serve as Majority and Minority Chairs, respectively. Longietti replaces retired Representative Jim Roebuck.

House Republican Leadership:

- Speaker Rep. Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster)**
- Leader Kerry Benninghoff (R-Centre)
- Appropriations Chairman Stan Saylor (R-York)
- Whip Donna Oberlander (R-Clarion)**
- Caucus Chair Mike Reese (R-Westmoreland)
- Caucus Secretary Martina White (R-Philadelphia)
- Caucus Administrator Kurt Masser (R-Northumberland)
- Policy Chair Martin Causer (R-McKean)

New [Republican members](#) include:

- Representative Mike Armanini (R-Clearfield)
- Representative Carrie DelRosso (R-Allegheny)
- Representative Ann Flood (R-Northampton)
- Representative Joe Hamm (R-Lycoming)*
- Representative Joseph Kerwin (R-Schuylkill)

- Representative Shelby Labs (R-Bucks)
- Representative Milou Mackenzie (R-Lehigh)
- Representative Robert Mercuri (R-Allegheny)
- Representative Tracy Pennycuick (R-Montgomery)
- Representative Jason Silvis (R-Westmoreland)
- Representative Brian Smith (R-Jefferson)**
- Representative Perry Stambaugh (R-Perry)**
- Representative Tim Twardzik (R-Schuylkill)
- Representative Craig Williams (R-Chester)

House Democratic Leadership:

- Leader Joanna McClinton (D-Philadelphia)
- Appropriations Chairman Matt Bradford (D-Montgomery)
- Whip Jordan Harris (D-Philadelphia)*
- Caucus Chair Dan Miller (D-Allegheny)
- Caucus Secretary Tina Davis (D-Buck)
- Caucus Administrator Mike Schlossberg (D-Lehigh)
- Policy Chair Ryan Bizzarro (D-Erie)**

New [Democratic members](#) include:

- Representative Jessica Benham (D-Allegheny)
- Representative Amen Brown (D-Philadelphia)
- Representative Nancy Guent (D-Montgomery)
- Representative Manuel Guzman (D-Berks)*
- Representative Diane Herrin (D-Chester)**
- Representative Emily Kinhead (D-Allegheny)*
- Representative Rick Krajewski (D-Philadelphia)
- Representative Napoleon Nelson (D-Montgomery)
- Representative Darisha Parker (D-Philadelphia)
- Representative Nickolas Pisciotano (D-Allegheny)
- Representative Regina Young (D-Delaware)

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Bill Tracking Report

Legislation and co-sponsorship memos of interest:

HOUSE CO-SPONSOR MEMOS:

- **HCO 4 (Ryan):** Requires all state agencies be subject to an initial performance audit conducted by an experienced auditor. 12-01-20 H Filed
- **HCO 155 (Isaacson):** Provides for additional quarantine leave for college faculty during COVID-19. 12-02-20 H Filed
- **HCO 160 (Ryan):** a certain percentage of construction projects to be paid for by public monies before is covered by the Prevailing Wage Act. 12-02-20 H Filed

- **HCO 168 (Grove):** Establishes a process to analyze the state's finances and improve state budgeting. 12-03-20 H Filed
- **HCO 171 (Pashinski):** Allows community college students at any of Pennsylvania's 14 state community colleges a chance to complete their two-year degree and land a steady job before having to begin repaying their tuition. 12-03-20 H Filed
- **HCO 239 (Gleim):** Requires the enactment of a budget covering a two-year period. 12-04-20 H Filed
- **HCO 246 (Miller):** Seeks to improve the transition to post-secondary schools for students with disabilities by incorporating parts of Senator Bob Casey's federal RISE (Respond, Innovate, Succeed and Empower) Act. 12-05-20 H Filed
- **HCO 504 (O'Neal):** Requires public institutions of higher learning to grant academic credit to our military personnel. 12-15-20 H Filed
- **HCO 508 (O'Neal):** Requires that each state agency designate an employee as the agency's regulatory compliance officer. 12-15-20 H Filed
- **HCO 578 (McNeill):** Reduces the residency requirement for veterans and their families applying for the state Educational Gratuities Program to one year. 12-18-20 H Filed
- **HCO 615 (Miller):** Requires state-owned buildings and certain places of public accommodation to install and maintain at least one adult changing station. 12-22-20 H Filed
- **HCO 737 (Schweyer):** Appropriates \$92 million to Pennsylvania's 14 community colleges. 01-06-21 H Filed

[SENATE CO-SPONSOR MEMOS:](#)

- **SCO 96 (Baker):** Provides for limited, temporary and targeted COVID-19-related liability for those who have attempted to comply with state and federal COVID guidelines. 12-02-20 S Filed
- **SCO 128 (Phillips-Hill):** Allows for greater flexibility for substitute teacher certification in order to help the school districts during these uncertain times. 12-02-20 S Filed
- **SCO 167 (Phillips-Hill):** Provides security for individuals and licensees by ensuring immunity from civil and criminal liability and from imposition of administrative sanctions. 12-03-20 S Filed
- **SCO 172 (Boscola):** Establishes an academic excellence scholarship program and provides financial incentives for high-school students to attend college, and stay in Pennsylvania once they have graduated. 12-03-20 S Filed
- **SCO 203 (Ward):** Amends the Police Officer, Firefighter, Correction Employee and National Guard Member Child Beneficiary Education Act to expand the tuition waiver program and establishes a tuition credit program for members of a volunteer fire company. 12-03-20 S Filed
- **SCO 207 (Phillips-Hill):** Grants commonwealth school entities, municipalities, and government authorities the option to choose whether they wish to pursue a moratorium on the existing Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage Act requirements. 12-03-20 S Filed
- **SCO 252 (Blake):** Establishes a statewide Career Readiness Council. 12-07-20 S Filed
- **SCO 283 (Phillips-Hill):** Defines student data, who owns the data, who can correct records, the responsibilities of state and local education entities protecting student data privacy, and the designation and responsibilities of a chief data privacy officer. 12-08-20 S Filed

SCO 292 (Phillips-Hill): Directs the Department of General Services to conduct an inventory of all state department, agency, commission, or institution owned communication towers to leverage state-owned assets for broadband in underserved areas. 12-08-20 S Filed

- **SCO 340 (Phillips-Hill):** Grants commonwealth school entities and municipalities the option to choose whether they wish to follow the existing Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage Act requirements. 12-11-20 S Filed
- **SCO 345 (Schwank):** Requires public employees, all teachers, and licensed medical professionals to receive bias training. 12-14-20 S Filed
- **SCO 399 (Stefano):** Provides public notice of collective bargaining agreements prior to approval. 12-18-20 S Filed
- **SCO 449 (Brooks):** Provides immunity from liability for certain providers and facilities providing medical care to individuals with COVID-19. 12-23-20 S Filed
- **SCO 484 (Schwank):** Eliminates barriers to educator certification and employment for those who are immigrants in Pennsylvania. 12-31-20 S Filed
- **SCO 495 (Collett):** Establishes the Pennsylvania Menstrual Equity Act and requires that Pennsylvania's public agencies that serve those who are young, low-income, homeless, or incarcerated to make these products available at no cost. 01-04-21 S Filed
- **SCO 523 (Yudichak):** Establishes the Pennsylvania Skills Compact. 01-07-21 S Filed
- **SCO 527 (Brooks):** Make a number of changes to the Right-to-Know Law. 01-08-21 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 State Legislative UPDATE is distributed during legislative session weeks.

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