



August 16 - 22, 2019

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**SESSION STATUS**

At 12:10 p.m. on Friday, June 28, 2019 the Senate stands in recess until Monday, September 23, 2019 at 1:00 p.m., unless sooner recalled by the President Pro Tempore.

At 10:55 a.m. on Friday, June 28, 2019 the House stands adjourned until Tuesday, September 17, 2019 at 1:00 p.m., unless sooner recalled by the Speaker.

**UPCOMING SESSION DAYS**

House

Sep. 17, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25  
Oct. 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30  
Nov. 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20  
Dec. 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18

Senate

Sep. 23, 24, 25  
Oct. 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30  
Nov. 18, 19, 20  
Dec. 16, 17, 18

**Around the Rotunda**

**GOVERNOR SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER TO REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE**

By Sheri Melnick, Pennsylvania Legislative Services | August 16, 2019

Governor Tom Wolf was joined by Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) Chairman Charles Ramsey; Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) Director Randy Padfield; Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) Commissioner Colonel Robert Evanchick; Dr. Rachel Levine, secretary of the Department of Health (DOH); Teresa Miller, secretary of the Department of Human Services; Representatives Michael Zabel (D-Delaware), Movita Johnson-Harrell (D-Philadelphia), Tim Briggs (D-Montgomery), Jordan Harris (D-Philadelphia), Joanna McClinton (D-Philadelphia), Patty Kim (D-Dauphin), Maureen Madden (D-Monroe), and Dan Frankel (D-Allegheny); Senators Jay Costa (D-Allegheny) and Anthony Williams (D-Philadelphia); and gun safety advocates this morning as he signed an executive order to strengthen gun violence reduction efforts.

Gov. Wolf stated that hours before the first press conference was scheduled to occur, a gunman in Philadelphia shot six police officers and held two others hostage. He commented that on the same day, a 20-year-old was shot and killed in South Philadelphia. He asserted that gun violence is “too much of a part of our communities.”

Gov. Wolf explained that the suspect who shot police officers in Philadelphia had enough weapons and ammunition to “keep dozens of Philadelphia officers at bay for hours.” He said, “Too many Pennsylvanians have died from gun violence...Too many live every day in fear of being shot...We need to protect all of our lives everywhere in Pennsylvania.” He commented on the need to increase the “weak” gun laws in Pennsylvania. He asserted that the executive order signed today is not an impulsive decision and is the result of his administration working with partners to find “tangible” solutions that focus on reducing gun violence. Gov. Wolf stated that the Second Amendment does not “supersede the inalienable right we all have to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

Gov. Wolf announced that Ramsey would be the new special advisor charged with leading gun violence reforms. Gov. Wolf explained that the executive order would also establish the new Office of Gun Violence Prevention within PCCD and the Division of Violence Prevention within DOH. He added that the two new offices would combine efforts to curb gun violence from gun safety and public health perspectives.

Gov. Wolf explained that these new offices would address three key areas. He stated that reduction of community gun violence would be addressed by increasing data sharing between police departments, bolstering evidence-based juvenile justice programs, expanding gun buyback programs, directing police to develop training on community gun violence prevention, and expanding positive behavioral intervention supports to improve school safety.

Gov. Wolf indicated that a second key area focuses on the prevention of mass shootings by holding more active shooter training and using prevention tactics to put a focus on domestic terrorism, enrolling Pennsylvania in the “States for Gun Safety” coalition, expanding the See Something, Send Something program, and directing the US Office of Homeland Security to launch an awareness campaign on safety planning and preparedness.



Gov. Wolf spoke about the third key area of stopping domestic violence and suicides with directing the Suicide Prevention Task Force to make recommendations on steps to reduce suicide by guns, building on current mental health stigma campaigns to provide families with resources, developing a multidisciplinary Suicide Death Review Team to increase data collection and inform prevention efforts, and increasing awareness of and strengthening services within the Student Assistance Program.

Gov. Wolf stated that his executive order also establishes the Special Council on Gun Violence, comprised of representatives from PCCD's advisory committees, members of the General Assembly, and various cabinet secretaries. He asserted that this council would establish a Violence Data Dashboard similar to the Opioid Data Dashboard. He commented that all the actions of the executive order would "strike a balance between freedom and safety."

Gov. Wolf also asked the General Assembly to assist his efforts by enacting legislation to mandate reporting of lost or stolen guns, pursue safe storage legislation, continue the push for the swift passage of extreme risk protection orders, and continue to push for universal background checks on all gun purchases. He said, "We want a good Pennsylvania for everybody; one that recognizes the rights embedded in the Second Amendment, but also one that recognizes all of our right to live free of fear."

Ramsey expressed his honor to serve and focus on the "vital and important issue of dealing with gun violence." He explained that while the issue of mass shootings is often what gets national attention, the reality is that "mass shootings take place every day on the streets." He commented that more people died by suicide than by every other means and stated that he was an active member of law enforcement for 47 years. He said, "Something has to be done to reduce gun violence, whether it is by criminals, accidental, suicide, or whatever it is." He thanked the governor for his efforts at the state level and commented that Pennsylvania could be a model for the rest of the US.

Sen. Williams thanked Sen. Costa for allowing him to circulate a letter to the governor on behalf of the Democratic Caucus. He also thanked the governor, whom he said "has done something that no other elected official in the country has ever done...to recognize that the dignity of human beings is most important."

Sen. Williams spoke about how elected officials met yesterday in Philadelphia to discuss changes in gun laws. He commented about acting on behalf of a "very scared public." He asserted that on average, "there is a human being murdered every day by a gun across Pennsylvania." He said, "We have allowed our perspective on an inanimate object [gun] to be the focus of our attention."

Sen. Williams asserted that he wants the people in his neighborhood to understand that the governor has heard them, is responding, and is putting one of the "most experienced people in charge." He said, "It is my hope and my prayer to one day stand at a microphone before I retire to say that we have done effective work to reduce gun violence."

Sen. Costa thanked Sen. Williams for his commitment and applauded the governor for the executive order. He commented on the essential nature of the executive order and thanked Ramsey for "stepping forward." He discussed how Pittsburgh experiences gun violence, which happens "every day and throughout" Pennsylvania and the US. He stressed the importance of investing in community mental health.

Sen. Costa spoke about continuing to "fight on the Senate floor to complement the work of the governor." He called upon his colleagues to help move gun legislation forward. When discussing the executive order, he said, "It's going to be a model for the rest of the country."

Rep. Harris thanked Gov. Wolf for his work on the executive order. He thanked the governor for previously walking with him in Southwest Philadelphia and meeting with those impacted by the gun violence there.

Rep. Harris commented how "gun violence is one of the most prevalent issues in our country." He stated that the homicide rate has increased by four percent in Philadelphia, with 6,902 people shot in the first seven months of this year. He described numerous shooting incidents in Philadelphia.



Rep. Harris remarked on the recent police standoff in Philadelphia. He said, “We stand with those men and women, but just 24 hours later, there were five people shot only two miles away from that incident.” He commented on the value of all life and asserted that legislators “cannot abdicate responsibility” if they do not get passage on all desired gun legislation.

Rep. Harris spoke about how in Philadelphia a three-year-old was shot and killed on her porch while her mother was braiding her hair. He said, “We have to do something to address the pain and carnage that far too many of our citizens feel.”

Rep. Frankel commented on the importance of the issue of gun violence. He thanked his colleagues and singled out the newest member of the Democratic Caucus, Rep. Johnson-Harrell, co-chair of the PA Safe Caucus, for her work on gun safety. He asserted how Rep. Johnson-Harrell has personal experience in dealing with gun violence and its impact on her community.

Rep. Frankel spoke about the mass shooting at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh on October 27, 2018. He said, “When I go to speak to my constituents, the one thing I hear consistently is, ‘What are you going to do about it?’”

Rep. Frankel commended Gov. Wolf for the issuance of the executive order. He commented on how the collaboration between government agencies will assist with curbing gun violence. He opined that controlling gun violence should be a bipartisan issue and stated that rates of gun deaths are the same in rural and urban areas. He asserted that there are approximately two dozen gun control bills in the House which have not yet been addressed with a committee hearing. He said, “We could make background checks to be universal or could allow municipalities to decide what gun laws are right for their communities.

Rep. Frankel spoke about the recent shootings in Dayton, Ohio, with the murder of nine people and injury to 27 others in 60 seconds. He commented on how the devastation caused by the high-powered weapons is a “public health crisis.”

Rep. Frankel discussed legislation that was passed which prevents those who have protection from abuse orders filed against them from possessing firearms. He commented that the bill passed due to the advocacy of groups like Moms Demand Action and CeaseFirePA. He said, “Gov. Tom Wolf took important steps for a safer world...Tomorrow let us carry this inspiration forward and ask the question again: what are we doing to reduce gun violence?”

Gov. Wolf signed the [executive order](#) and took questions from the press.

**Are you signing the executive order to put pressure on the General Assembly to enact gun control legislation?**

Gov. Wolf responded that he is signing the executive order because of his authority to do so and to coordinate and foster cooperation within his administration. He asserted that although he needs the legislature to act, the executive order addresses the items that he wants. He said, “I am doing this because this is what I can do.” He commented that he still needs the General Assembly to pass legislation.

**How much will this cost?**

Gov. Wolf opined that he did not think there is a “whole lot of cost.” He asserted that costs would be budgetary through PCCD. He explained that if he learns that there will be additional costs, he will provide that information.

**The executive order states that the Special Council on Gun Violence will review the firearms purchase background processes and make suggestions for improvement. What is the goal?**

Gov. Wolf responded by saying that in some instances, such as when there are private sales, there is no background check. He commented that Pennsylvania does not have a universal background check and spoke in favor of implementation.

**Has the Office of Gun Violence Prevention started having conversations with police departments, and will smaller police departments be included in discussions?**

Gov. Wolf responded by commenting on the data-sharing component and how to make information available to local, regional, state, and federal law enforcement to ensure timely and appropriate actions.



Col. Evanchick spoke about conducting additional training for municipal police officers.

**Are gun buybacks conducted now?**

Col. Evanchick responded that police currently permit gun buybacks but asserted that there is not an actual buyback program.

**What will that program look like?**

Col. Evanchick stated that he does not know at this time.

**What can state police do to monitor hate groups?**

Col. Evanchick explained that about 40 different state and federal agencies currently work together daily to do monitoring. He commented on the helpfulness of the See Something, Send Something program and said PSP has analysts who work with troopers.

**Will the monitoring be expanded?**

Col. Evanchick answered that PSP will look into that.

**What do you mean by “data sharing”?**

Gov. Wolf responded that data sharing could include sharing posts on social media that might need police follow-up.

**Would there be profiling using social media?**

Gov. Wolf responded that the issue is not about profiling, but about using information better.

**What will be done under the executive order to help prevent suicide?**

Sec. Levine responded that she would partner with Sec. Miller on the Suicide Prevention Task Force. She commented on how “violence has many different forms” and asserted that gun violence also involves suicides.

Sen. Williams commented that legislators were present at the event not just about enacting legislation. He said, “We are here because people are scared to death.” He asserted that legislators were present to help provide support for people in their districts. He said, “People are being killed by their neighbors.”

## Committee News

**House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee**

*8/21/19, 9:30 a.m., Room G-50, Irvis Office Building*

By Sheri Melnick and Jeff Cox, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee held a public hearing on House Bill 1568.

[HB 1568 Comitta, Carolyn](#) - (PN 2043) The Pipeline Safety and Communication Board Act establishes the Pipeline Safety and Communication Board to collect and disseminate to the public information of commonwealth agencies relative to the planning, construction, operation, sitting, maintenance, management, inspection and safety of and emergency response procedures for pipelines; and to coordinate communications relating to pipeline activities with federal, state and local government agencies and regulatory authorities, pipelines companies and the public. Effective in 60 days.

Majority Chairman Barrar explained that the legislation would establish a Pipeline Safety and Communications Board. He asserted that he is looking forward to hearing from the entities testifying.

Minority Chairman Sainato explained that he is looking forward to hearing testimony.

Rep. Comitta thanked the chairmen for holding the hearings and thanked Rep. Quinn for being the co- prime sponsor. She



shared background on the need and value of the bill. She explained that Marcellus Shale is now the largest source of natural gas in the U.S. She asserted that there are 11 pipelines which run through her district and stated that these pipelines run through «heavily populated areas.»

Rep. Comitta explained that on almost weekly basis there is information about pipeline incidents somewhere in the United States. She commented on the importance of residents having timely and accurate information about the pipelines. She asserted that the stress around the Mariner East project is a «public health concern.»

Rep. Comitta noted that she realized the limitation of communication which has led to misinformation and that she had offered a solution by proposing the creation of a Pipeline Safety and Communication Board, which would implement and coordinate timely communication regarding pipeline activities in Pennsylvania. She stated that the board would provide information and appropriate safety measures of emergency response procedures for pipelines. Rep. Comitta explained that the board would also be responsible for coordinating communication relating to pipeline issues with federal, state, and local officials. She noted that the board would be composed of state officials from state agencies, the General Assembly, and officials from pipeline companies.

Rep. Comitta asserted that some members of the General Assembly had concerns regarding the Confidentiality Act, or Act 156 of 2012. She stated that there is a lack of consensus on how the act is interpreted. Rep. Comitta noted that the act established a system with a public track and a secure track as they apply to communications.

Rep. Comitta thanked the members of the committee for their consideration of pipeline safety across Pennsylvania.

Rep. Quinn thanked Rep. Comitta for her work on the bill. He noted that this is at least the fifth hearing on pipeline-related issues he has attended. He asserted that his top priority is safety and to ensure that all «residents can live, work, and go to school with safety in mind.» He said that House Bill 1568 oversees oil, gas, and non-gas-related activities. He said, «We cannot afford to simply be reactionary to situations.» He asserted that the importance of welfare of neighbors and children should be at the «forefront.»

[Seth Mendelsohn](#), executive director, Public Utility Commission (PUC), told lawmakers that “the commission currently opposes the legislation unless amended to address the two most serious concerns we will highlight today, including the importance of maintaining Pennsylvania’s Confidential Security Information (CSI) Disclosure Protection Act and clarification of responsibilities and procedures related to Pennsylvania’s Right-to-Know (RTK) Law.” He pointed out the legislation in its current form repeals Pennsylvania’s CSI Act without a plan to replace it. Mendelsohn explained, “CSI is information provided by a public utility that, if disclosed, would compromise security against sabotage or criminal or terrorist acts, and the non-disclosure of which is necessary for the protection of life, safety, public property or public utility facilities.” He testified, “It is important to note that the CSI Act covers not only public utility pipelines, but also electric utilities, natural gas utilities, telecommunication utilities, and water/wastewater utilities.” Mendelsohn encouraged the committee members “to review the CSI Act in its entirety.” He cautioned, “We believe repeal of the CSI Act will result in less protection against public disclosure of CSI and increased risk to the public from persons or entities seeking to harm the commonwealth’s infrastructure.”

Mendelsohn also expressed concerns that “there is a lack of clarity in the act regarding the responsibilities of the board and the commission-or other agencies also subject to the act-when the board receives a RTK Law request.” He noted that section five of the legislation requires the PUC to cooperate in providing information, upon request, to the proposed Pipeline Safety and Communication Board. According to Mendelsohn, “If the board requests information from the commission, there is no provision that allows the commission to decline to release information, nor is there an exemption to refuse dissemination to the board per RTK Law exemptions.” He added, “There is no language in section five to explicitly protect the commission from turning over privileged, confidential, or critical infrastructure information to the board.” Mendelsohn pointed out that “it is unclear whether the board or the commission defends a RTK Law response that is appealed to the Office of Open Records.” He added, “Section five of the act also appears to allow agencies to direct the board to handle RTK Law requests in a manner that does not necessarily require notifying the agency that provided the requested information.”



Mendelsohn went on to outline additional concerns with the proposed legislation. He testified, “Based on the current draft of the act, it is unclear whether the board will attempt to exercise some jurisdiction over interstate pipelines, which generally fall under federal jurisdiction, and if so, under what authority.” Mendelsohn also expressed concern with provisions requiring the PUC chairman to attend quarterly meetings of the board, review information collected for dissemination to the public relating to pipeline activities, and aid in coordinating communications and public and private entities. He pointed out that the legislation does not detail how the proposed board will be funded and staffed. Mendelsohn said the proposed bill is “unclear regarding coordination of communications during emergencies and-if the board is to have a role in this process-how that would interface with the safety-related duties of the PUC, the federal Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), along with local, county and state emergency management agencies and responders.” He also suggested that “there should be greater clarity concerning whether meetings of the board are public meetings, and how they will be noticed/ advertised in order to increase access and transparency.”

Rep. Comitta asked if the PUC sees any concern in the legislation as “intractable.” Mendelsohn responded that at this time, he could not say that there is a specific “deal breaker” with regards to House Bill 1568. He asserted that PUC has concerns and said that they would be happy to work with the committee.

Rep. Comitta commented that there seems to be a need for executive session where people who have a security clearance can have discussions on pertinent issues. She stated that one of the proposed amendments to the bill would be to allow for an executive board that could meet. She asked if an executive component would address the PUC’s concerns. Mendelsohn responded that the PUC could examine the issue of the establishment of an executive board if the bill is amended.

Rep. Quinn asked what suggestions PUC has to improve communications between PUC and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) if the current legislation is not the vehicle to address the issue. Mendelsohn recognized that legislatively there are restrictions on the ability to communicate information. He stated that the restrictions that the PUC operates under ensure that they comply with current law.

Rep. Quinn asked the PUC for recommendations on how to move forward to improve communications.

Chairman Barrar explained the necessity of having future stakeholder meetings with his staff, makers of the bill, and the PUC.

Rep. Gabler asked for the PUC’s input on the goal of the legislation and structure proposed. He asked if the concept of the legislation is the most effective way to deal with pipeline safety. Mendelsohn responded that the PUC does not necessarily have a view on that. He explained that they were asked to take a look at the legislation and said that he does not have an opinion as to the “good” or “bad” concept.

Rep. Gabler asked if PUC feels that the legislation would add capabilities in the realm of pipeline safety that the PUC does not already possess. Mendelsohn responded that he is not sure that he can answer that and said that PUC has concerns with some of the issues in the proposed legislation.

Rep. Ryan commented that the bill is a good beginning and asserted his hopes to find a solution to get out information regarding safety to the community as quickly as possible.

Rep. Comitta asked about modernizing Act 156, which Mendelsohn had commented about in his testimony, and whether anyone is currently working on modernizing the act within the PUC. Mendelsohn responded that he did not know. He asserted that the PUC follows the act and makes sure that they are complying with the law.

Rep. Comitta asked if the act prevents important conversations that can improve public safety. Mendelsohn commented that he just attended a program regarding cybersecurity. He asserted that the PUC is willing to working with the legislature to help disseminate information to the public. He stated that there is a balance between protecting security and providing information to the public.



Rep. Comitta commented about the public track and secure track within the Confidentiality Act. She stated that the interpretation of the Confidentiality Act is prohibiting some important conversations between agencies. She asked if one of the goals of modernizing the Confidentiality Act would be to allow for more transparency between agencies. Mendelsohn responded that the act should be looked at in terms of modernization. He asserted that modernization could involve encouraging communications between agencies.

Rep. Comitta asked if there are currently any multi-stakeholder discussions about the “overarching issues” of pipeline safety and public safety, especially regarding natural gas liquids. Paul Metro, manager of the safety division, PUC independent Bureau of Investigation, noted that there is no entity that is looking at communications between different state agencies. He stated that the PUC is facilitating communications between agencies and various government agencies. He stated that the PUC does not have authorization from the legislature to enact an agency-wide communications board.

Rep. Quinn asked if there are any other states that have a similar board that Pennsylvania could model. Metro stated that he is not aware of any.

Chairman Barrar asked if any of the agencies involved in pipelines communicate with one another. Metro commented that he talks with DEP on a daily and weekly basis. He asserted that PUC is careful about discussing CSI. He stated that PUC also speaks with the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) on a regular basis.

Chairman Barrar asked whether PEMA could access confidential information from the PUC if requested. Metro responded that they would not necessarily share the information unless it was “vital” to emergency response. Robert Young, deputy chief counsel, PUC, said that Act 156 has a procedure to deal with routine requests for information. He noted that in an emergency, PUC has officers that can go to PEMA for information exchange. He noted that because of the consequences of violating the act, the PUC prefers for the utility to disclose to the agency rather than have the PUC do it. He commented that the penalties of violating the act are criminal penalties and loss of jobs. He stated that the procedures are not set up for emergency sharing. Young asserted that if the proposed legislation had an exception for emergency, that would be helpful.

Rep. Gabler asked what the pipeline safety division provides to Pennsylvania. Metro commented that his agency’s mission is to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations as they pertain to public safety.

Rep. Gabler asked about what an update to Act 156 might look like. Young commented that the areas for change are to allow for communications and said that the specific act does not expressly permit or create a mechanism for sharing to occur. He stated that the Confidentiality Act permits a public utility to designate anything it wants as CSI on filing. He noted that the PUC is then obligated to treat that information as CSI that is protected upon filing.

Rep. Gabler asked who would be the ultimate authority to determine whether something should be classified or not. Young stated that the act “sort of” covers the issue at present and said that it is not triggered upon filing but is triggered upon request. He stated that the filing is typically done through the secretary’s bureau, and asserted those dealing with it are not subject matter experts.

Rep. Gabler asked if there might be an administrative issue with changing this procedure. Young noted that the people currently receiving the requests are not the best qualified to make those decisions.

Rep. Gillen questioned how much interaction PUC has with emergency responders. Metro responded that Federal Pipeline Safety Regulations require training with emergency responders. He asserted the PUC had sponsored trainings recently with emergency responders and said that federal government trainers assist with the training where funding might be an issue.

Rep. Comitta asserted that the goal of House Bill 1568 is to have a “table” for stakeholders to have conversations about pipeline safety, especially with the Mariner East pipeline. She noted that in Chester County there has been communication between various agencies to solve issues relating to the Mariner East pipeline. She stated that a previous conversation about the idea that a cell phone would be prohibited during a gas leak led to agencies learning that a cell phone is not an



ignition source. She asked if there is any current opportunity for multi-agency conversations. Metro stated that PUC believed that Chester County is one of the “elite” counties within Pennsylvania with regards to information sharing. He noted that the PUC later discovered that Chester County school districts and emergency responders were not sharing communications. He noted that through the leadership of Rep. Comitta, stakeholders exchanged ideas about pipeline safety issues.

Rep. Comitta asserted that there may be a need for county-by-county conversations, similar to ones that exist in Chester County. She noted that Pennsylvania needs to have the conversation of what the challenges and opportunities are to make the natural gas industry safer for people who live along the pipelines.

Sarah Boateng, executive deputy secretary, Department of Health (DOH) noted that the mission of DOH is to ensure quality health care for the citizens of Pennsylvania. She asserted that DOH is concerned about the impacts of pipeline activities.

Boateng noted that DOH has created an oil and gas registry. She stated that those who have concerns about the oil and natural gas industry can submit their concerns to DOH by email or phone. Boateng explained that information about submitting the concerns can be found on DOH’s website. She asserted that DOH coordinates with DEP to track and investigate the claims. She noted that the board in the proposed legislation would be another way to communicate.

Boateng asserted that people are more likely to listen to messages from a local source. She explained that DOH works strategically to inform communities about current public health issues and how they can respond. She asserted that the board proposed by legislation would help with the communication efforts. She stated that current DOH messaging efforts are modeled after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization using accessibility, actionability, credibility of information, relevancy, and timeliness.

Boateng noted that DOH has a role in reassuring the public by providing information so that it is understandable. She explained that DOH considers how familiar the target agency is with the topic and values the importance of empathy. She stated that DOH plans to bring this strategy to the board to share information with the public in the most effective way.

Boateng affirmed that DOH supports the establishment of the board.

Rep. Comitta noted that communication by the Mariner East pipeline officials has been “terrible.” She stated that people in her district worry about what is happening underground with regards to the pipeline. She asked if DOH has a plan to address that issue. Boateng noted that evidenced-based framework is based upon “timely, transparent, and actionable information-sharing to empower those in crisis.” She said that DOH does that with sister agencies such as PEMA and DEP to be prepared for emergencies. She asserted that transparent information is important to tell the public about what is known and unknown. Boateng explained that DOH is providing communities with action items which can “reduce the feelings of hopelessness.”

Rep. Quinn noted that the idea that a cell phone could cause tragedy has caused stress in the community. He asked if DOH has been involved in trying to put out information regarding the pipeline. Boateng responded that the most specific involvement is the partnership with DEP regarding different environmental and health issues. She stated that DOH works with DEP on a regular basis to “keep lines of communication open and coordinated.”

Rep. Comitta asked how the Confidentiality Act has impacted DOH’s ability to be effective communicators and whether it could impact overall communication if it is modernized. Boateng stated that she has not worked specifically with the Confidentiality Act and said that it is not a “roadblock.” She noted that the confidential information of first responders would be “beyond the purview of DOH.”

Ramez Ziadeh, executive deputy secretary for programs, DEP, explained that DEP regulates pipeline construction as it pertains to erosion and sedimentation (E&S) activities, Chapter 102 of the Pennsylvania Code; water obstructions and encroachments, Chapter 105 of the Pennsylvania Code; and floodplains activities and public utilities, Chapter 106 of the Pennsylvania Code.



He noted that these laws deal with project special conditions which provide for the protection of private water supplies. He asserted that for projects that exceed one of the six DEP regions, DEP posts project information electronically on the DEP pipeline portal. He noted that the pipeline portal can be found on DEP's website.

Ziadeh explained that DEP works closely with county conservation districts to ensure compliance. He noted that DEP inspects projects on a regular basis to ensure compliance with law. He stated that DEP investigates complaints from the public and takes action when violations occur.

Ziadeh noted that DEP "will hold permittees to the highest regulatory standards." He stated that DEP regularly coordinates with state, local, and federal agencies. He commented that DEP communicates with PEMA and PUC to coordinate site inspections, especially in the instance of sinkholes. He explained that regulatory agencies have an obligation to notify DEP of issues that arise.

Ziadeh stated that DEP has been engaged in policy development. He asserted that DEP coordinated two stakeholder groups to discuss horizontal drilling. He noted that the meetings have been completed and asserted that DEP has draft documents in preparation.

Ziadeh stated that for Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) regulated projects, the process is on the FERC website. He noted that DEP examines how the projects affect waterways but cannot dictate where a pipeline is installed. He asserted that once installed, the transportation of natural gas liquids is outside of DEP's authority. He stated that the PUC oversees and enforces the issues related to transportation of natural gas.

Ziadeh explained that DEP applauds Rep. Comitta's work on House Bill 1568 and supports the concept of increased communication. He noted that creation of the board would facilitate more communication. He asserted that the administration would be supportive of the bill with some amendments, especially as they apply to pipelines. He stated that DEP supports changing the definition of pipelines in the proposed legislation to cover only transmission oil and gas pipelines.

Ziadeh commented that there needs to be greater clarification regarding the type of communication and information sharing. He asserted that there is currently a gap in state law regarding projects that are not subject to FERC jurisdiction as they regulate interstate pipelines. He noted that intrastate pipelines are not subject to FERC requirements.

Ziadeh explained that Gov. Tom Wolf has called for regulation granting citing authority to the PUC. He noted that under the Clean Streams Law, DEP does respond when private waters have been impacted. He stated that DEP can require termination of the activity and restoration and replacement. He noted that DEP does not have the statutory authority to regulate private water wells. He stated that DEP lacks the legal authority to establish and enforce private water well standards.

Ziadeh stated that the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) has a database regarding private water wells. He noted that though the database is incomplete, "it is the best available." He asserted that pipeline companies have been reaching out to private owners of the wells. He stated that DEP will respond and require restoration of private water wells and asserted that there is "a need for a more comprehensive and effective approach for private water well protection."

Rep. Comitta asked what Ziadeh's experience was in working within the Confidentiality Act and how it impacts DEP's ability to communicate with agencies, especially regarding public health and safety issues. Ziadeh responded that DEP is required to make information available regarding permit applications which show routes of projects. He noted that some information is redacted as it applies to personal individual information. He stated that DEP is in constant coordination and communication with PEMA and PUC. He indicated that there is an electronic response system.

Rep. Comitta asked if the current wording of the Confidentiality Act prevents DEP from having conversations about pipeline safety. Ziadeh responded that DEP takes enforcement action within their authority. He asserted that the Confidentiality Act does not impact the work that DEP does involving waterway sources. He also deferred to the PUC.



Rep. Gillen asked if, relative to resources and personnel, DEP has the capacity to cover issues. Ziadeh responded that it is difficult but that DEP needs to prioritize their work. He stated that staff working on permit reviews also conduct complaint investigations. He stated that DEP is “pretty effective,” especially on critical issues.

[Jonathan Fleming](#), acting director, Bureau of Maintenance and Operations, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), explained to committee members, “Pipelines crossing a state highway are regulated by PennDOT and authorized via a highway occupancy permit similar to the way driveways are regulated and authorized via a highway occupancy permit.” He further explained that the department “regulates the location of the pipeline to ensure the facility is being placed at a location where it minimizes possible interference and impairment to the highway, its structures and highway traffic.” Fleming also told lawmakers, “The construction of the pipeline is regulated to ensure that traffic is not unduly impaired and proper traffic control is in place while under construction for the safety of the traveling public and contractor, as well as to ensure the disturbed highway is restored properly. Without these controls, we jeopardize preserving the safe operation, maintenance, construction and integrity of the highway.”

Fleming pointed out, “Pipelines are the only underground utility for which PennDOT, PEMA, and local emergency management agencies each receive separate information regarding the types of product carried and the depth and location of pipelines running under and parallel to our highway network.” He further explained that pipeline companies are the only utility not required to provide information, mark or locate their infrastructure outside of interstate highway crossings. Fleming also said that with interstate highway crossings, the companies are not required to locate their crossings when the placement of markers is not practical and would not serve the purpose for which the markers are intended. According to Fleming, “This information is not only critical to PennDOT to protect our infrastructure from accidental line strikes, it is also critical for municipal and state officials planning for the safe evacuation of Pennsylvania citizens along our rural and non-interstate highway network during emergency events.”

Fleming expressed support for the legislation, however, he said the department is concerned with “what could be a much wider dissemination of information under the bill.” He also testified that the department would urge the committee to consider points of overlap that might be clarified between the role of the PA One Call Board of Directors and the board created under the legislation. Fleming explained, “The PA One Call Board meets quarterly and has established subcommittees working on specific issues such as compliance, education, mapping and technology, damage prevention, and local government, as well as organizational support committees.”

He continued by saying, “PennDOT believes that it would be helpful to clarify the types of pipelines covered by the bill to avoid overlap with the role of PA One Call, and also to clarify the communication and information sharing that the board would be doing so that we are not duplicating efforts.” Concluding his testimony, Fleming told committee members, “It is in the public interest to regulate the location and construction of utility facilities, and to regulate the location, design, construction, maintenance and drainage of access driveways within state highway right-of-way, for the purpose of security, ensuring the structural integrity of the highway, economy of maintenance, preservation of proper drainage, safe and convenient passage of traffic, and safe and reasonable access. The primary focus is public safety.”

Rep. Comitta noted that the repeal of Act 156 is problematic. She asked if the Confidentiality Act is necessary to protect information and if it could benefit from modernization as outlined by the PUC. Fleming stated that there is always an opportunity to look at past legislation and make it more applicable to today’s activities. He noted that it could benefit from a review.

Rep. Comitta asked if PennDOT’s work would be enhanced by participation in a board of the nature required by House Bill 1568. Fleming noted that PennDOT has a designated space at PEMA for those types of interactions which are “pretty much a daily operation.” Fleming stated that having a direct action with legislation would benefit PennDOT. He noted that the overall issue of transportation as a whole is “incredibly important.”

Chairman Sainato asked about how much of the right of way PennDOT uses for a pipeline. Fleming responded that the right of way varies “right down to the individual property owner.” He asserted that for the most part it is the travelling surface and



three feet past the white line on “most transportation networks.”

Chairman Sainato asked if PennDOT is paid for the right of ways. Fleming responded that there is a fee structure for highway occupancy permits to pay for the review of the permit. He stated that there is more concern about whether proper procedures are followed when replacing pavement. Fleming noted that payment and use of highways depends upon funding of highways, which comes through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Fleming said that FHWA has very specific rules of what can be in the infrastructure of networks. Fleming stated that PennDOT prefers that highways not be used for right of way due to frequent maintenance.

Rep. Gabler asked if, under current law, PennDOT possess CSI and has certain procedures. He also asked how this relates to highway occupancy permits. Fleming said that PennDOT does currently process CSI and has procedures in place to adequately protect it. He asserted that highway occupancy permit issues would need to be referred to chief counsel as it regards to the RTK Law.

Rep. Gabler asked how CSI is used when someone wants to know where to dig. He asked how to balance needs of people needing to know where to dig against the protection of privacy to deter terrorism. Fleming responded that “is a constant struggle.”

Rep. Gabler asked how to modernize current law balancing public policy “imperatives.” He asked Fleming to speak to the need from PennDOT’s perspective as far as information sharing from other agencies. He asked how information sharing currently works and asked if modernization of the current statute could provide for better integration. Fleming noted that from past experiences when there are emergency events, all agencies have some type of communications with PEMA. He stated that because transportation is important, PEMA has a conference room to discuss the issues. He asserted that he has not personally dealt with confidentiality issues on an emergency basis. Regarding current routines, he said that concerns need to be addressed going forward.

Rep. Gabler asked if PennDOT envisions that there is information not currently being shared that would be better shared among agencies. Fleming stated that in planning, having enough information is always better and very beneficial.

Rep. Quinn asked how PennDOT would propose solving the lack of information if the legislation does not proceed, either by making changes to Act 156 or through some other vehicle that PennDOT would propose. Fleming responded that he would need to take some time to think about that. He noted that the proposal of House Bill 1568 is important as “planning partners are huge.” He asserted that ongoing maintenance means that people will be digging frequently.

Rep. Gillen asked if there have been integrity issues regarding highways intersecting with pipeline construction. Fleming responded that PennDOT has not had integrity issues regarding pipeline construction. He asserted that most of those issues are DEP issues. He noted that PennDOT has seen some gasoline pipelines under streams that were compromised and noted that was several years ago.

Rep. Gillen asked if PennDOT had resources to fulfill their mission. Fleming responded that they can always use more people because there are “more potholes than people.” He noted that they would always appreciate more resources.

Chairman Barrar asked if Fleming could forward unanswered information to the committee.

Rep. Comitta thanked testifiers and members of the committee and noted her appreciation to address the importance of public safety regarding natural gas pipelines. She stated that communication in the energy transfer industry has recently improved and expressed her appreciation for that.

Rep. Comitta noted that communication regarding a specific emergency and response system seems to “be moving along really well.” She stated that where the communication is lacking is how emergency response planning is addressed and what new considerations should go into the response planning. She stated that they are not happening at the interagency



level, which is where the bill would provide that requirement.

Rep. Comitta stated that she understands that repealing the Confidentiality Act is “not the best remedy” and that the committee could look into amending it. She referred to Young’s comments from the PUC for Act 156 to make mechanisms for sharing to occur and allow discussion between agencies.

Rep. Comitta stated that the act needs to remove the roadblocks to important conversation. She commented about good suggestions for amendments such as having an executive board that could meet and discuss sensitive information and that would inform the public of safety practices. She noted that another amendment might deal with amending the definition of pipelines.

Rep. Comitta suggested that the committee should take a look at legislative gaps to improve pipeline safety. She asserted that the hearing was “very helpful on many levels to improve the overarching goal to protect public safety along the natural gas liquids pipelines in Pennsylvania.”

Chairman Barrar thanked the testifiers.

Chairman Sainato thanked the testifiers and asserted that everyone wants to make sure that public safety is done properly. He thanked the members for coming to the hearing. He noted that public safety and security are “very critical.”

Rep. Comitta thanked Rep. Quinn for his work on the bill.

Testimony was also submitted by [Lisa Schaefer](#), director of government relations, County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP)

## MAAC

MAAC did not meet this week.

## Bullet.in.Points

### **[DOH: ADOPTION OF SUBPART B OF THE FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES AS LICENSING REGULATIONS FOR LONG-TERM CARE NURSING FACILITIES](#)**

The Department of Health (DOH) has provided notice that in carrying out its licensure responsibilities under the Health Care Facilities Act and the long-term care nursing facility regulations, DOH is operating under Centers for Medicare and Medicaid regulations updated as of November 22, 2017. The department has applied these requirements to all long-term care nursing facilities during the survey process since November, 2017, when the update was adopted. Questions regarding this notice should be directed to Susan Williamson, director, Division of Nursing Care Facilities, Room 526, Health and Welfare Building, 625 Forster Street, Harrisburg, PA 17120, (717) 787-1816.

### **[DOH: MEDICAL MARIJUANA PROGRAM: AVAILABILITY OF CLINICAL REGISTRANT APPLICATIONS: TIME PERIOD TO SUBMIT APPLICATIONS](#)**

The Department of Health (DOH) has provided notice, as required by 28 Pa. Code § 1211.27(a), that on September 5, 2019, DOH intends to make available on its [website](#) the form of the application required to be submitted to be approved as a clinical registrant. The department will accept applications until October 10, 2019. An applicant must submit an application by mail in an electronic format that is listed in the instructions of the application to the Office of Medical Marijuana, Department of Health, Room 628, Health and Welfare Building, 625 Forster Street, Harrisburg, PA 17120. Interested persons are invited to submit written comments, suggestions or objections regarding this notice to John J. Collins, Office of Medical Marijuana, Department of Health, Room 628, Health and Welfare Building, 625 Forster Street, Harrisburg, PA 17120, (717) 547-3047, [RA-DHMedMarijuana@pa.gov](mailto:RA-DHMedMarijuana@pa.gov).



### **DHS: AVAILABILITY OF AMENDMENTS TO THE OFFICE OF LONG-TERM LIVING'S HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED OBRA WAIVER**

The Department of Human Services is making available for public review and comment the Office of Long-Term Living's proposed OBRA waiver amendments. Interested persons are invited to submit written comments regarding the proposed waiver amendments to the Department of Human Services, Office of Long-Term Living, Bureau of Policy Development and Communications Management, Attention: Marilyn Yocum—OBRA Waiver Amendments, P.O. Box 8025, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8025. Comments may also be submitted to the department at [RA-waiverstandard@pa.gov](mailto:RA-waiverstandard@pa.gov). Use "OBRA Waiver Amendments" as the subject line. Comments received within 30 days of publication of this notice will be reviewed and considered for revisions to the proposed waiver amendments.

### **DHS: MEDICAL ASSISTANCE FEE SCHEDULE REVISIONS IN THE OBRA WAIVER**

The Department of Human Services is announcing a change in the fee schedule rates for Personal Assistance Services (PAS) procedure codes W1793, W1793 TT, W1792 and W1792 TU, and for Residential Habilitation procedure codes W0100 and W0102 in the Medical Assistance (MA) OBRA waiver under 55 Pa. Code § 52.45(a) and (b) (relating to fee schedule rates). The changes in the fee schedule rates for these services will be effective January 1, 2020. Interested persons are invited to submit written comments regarding these fee schedule rates to the Department of Human Services, Office of Long-Term Living, Bureau of Policy Development and Communications Management, Attention: Marilyn Yocum, P.O. Box 8025, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8025. Comments can also be sent to [RA-waiverstandard@pa.gov](mailto:RA-waiverstandard@pa.gov). Comments received within 30 days will be considered in subsequent revisions to the fee schedule.

### **Cosponsor Memos**

HCO2367	Kosierowski, Bridget (F)(D)	Requires all Pennsylvania school districts to publish on their public-accessible website the number of vaccinated and nonvaccinated enrolled students in each school year.
HCO2436	Bernstine, Aaron(R)	Clarifies nurse applicants must receive education from an institution accredited by national and regional agencies.
HCO2441	Struzzi, James (F)(R)	Creates the Tuition Assistance for Active Volunteers Program for first responders.
HCO2443	Howard, Kristine (F)(D)	Requires insurance companies to cover EpiPen injections for children with allergies.
SCO 867	Aument, Ryan(R)	Allows for a full-scale audit of subcontracts with pharmacy benefit managers in Medicaid.
SCO1033	Leach, Daylin(D)	Limits the out-of-pocket costs that health insurance companies may impose on their customers for insulin.
SCO1100	Baker, Lisa(R)	Opens up and expands behavioral health services and coverage in community and school based settings.
SCO1101	Brooks, Michele(R)	Allows small business employers to join together to offer health insurance for their employees.
SCO1111	Leach, Daylin(D)	Decouples Section 280(e) of the Internal Revenue Code from Pennsylvania state tax law for medical cannabis businesses, allowing them to deduct normal business costs like rent, staff wages, security, and marketing.



## Bill Actions

- HB 1739**    **Thomas, Wendi (F)(R)** (PN 2330) The Pennsylvania Family and Medical Leave Insurance Act requires the Department of Labor and Industry to establish the Pennsylvania Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program. Provides that not later than two years following establishment of the program the department shall pay family and medical leave insurance benefits as specified in this act. Provides for the powers and duties of the department, eligibility for benefits, duration of benefits, amount of benefits, contributions, reduced leave schedule, employment protections, coordination of benefits, and administration and procedures. Requires the final form regulations to be promulgated no later than September 1, 2021. Effective in 180 days.
- Bill History:** 07-23-19 H Filed  
08-16-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Labor and Industry
- HB 1740**    **Hershey, Johnathan (F)(R)** (PN 2331) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety) adding a new chapter providing for opioid treatment agreements. Provides for prescriber requirements, treatment agreement form requirements, drug testing, exception, and documentation of exemption. Further provides for regulations. Effective immediately.
- Bill History:** 07-23-19 H Filed  
08-16-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Health
- HB 1741**    **Struzzi, James (F)(R)** (PN 2332) Amends the Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act by amending the definition of "drug paraphernalia" providing the term does not include fentanyl strips for personal use. Effective in 60 days.
- Bill History:** 07-26-19 H Filed  
08-16-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Judiciary
- HB 1743**    **Sonney, Curt(R)** (PN 2334) The Professional and Occupational Licensing Information Disclosure Act provides an individual who has a license, registration, certification or permit from a licensing board or commission to practice in the commonwealth may not be required to disclose information to any entity or person relating to a complaint filed with, or investigation or inquiry by, the Department of State or Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs on behalf of any licensing board or commission, when the complaint, investigation or inquiry was closed without the filing of disciplinary charges or the imposition of any type of civil penalty against the individual or the individual's license, registration, certification or permit. Effective in 60 days.
- Bill History:** 07-30-19 H Filed  
08-16-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Professional Licensure



**HB 1752**    **Davis, Austin(D)**    (PN 2343) Amends the Air Pollution Control Act adding language providing the Department of Environmental Protection shall have the power to require all major facilities to develop and maintain a municipal notification plan designed to give notice to the municipality where the major facility is located and the municipalities directly adjacent to the facility in the event of an industrial equipment breakdown or accident causing air pollution that creates a significant health risk to the municipality and the adjacent municipalities. Further provides for the content of the plan and for civil penalties. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 08-12-19 H Filed  
08-16-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Environmental Resources and Energy

**HB 1767**    **Kosierowski, Bridget (F)(D)**    Amends the Public School Code, in duties and powers of boards of school directors, further providing for publication of rules, regulations and policies.

**Bill History:** 08-20-19 H Filed

**HB 1771**    **Frankel, Dan(D)**    Amends the Public School Code, in pupils and attendance, further providing for immunization required and penalty.

**Bill History:** 08-21-19 H Filed

## Upcoming Events

### State Board of Pharmacy

*August 27, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Board Room B, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7156

### State Board of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators

*August 28, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7155

### Department of Aging

*August 29, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Governor's Residence, 2035 North Front Street, Harrisburg*  
Long-term Care Council Meeting. For additional information: (717) 705-7296

### Press Conference

*August 31, 2019 - 1:00 p.m., Main Capitol Steps, Harrisburg*  
Millions March Against Mandatory Vaccines (unconfirmed)

### Press Conference

*September 3, 2019 - 1:00 p.m., Main Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg*  
DHS Kicks Off Hunger Action Month (unconfirmed)

### State Board of Occupational Therapy

*September 5, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-1389

### Department of Human Services

*September 5, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Department of Education, Honors Suite, 1st Floor, 333 Market St., Harrisburg*  
Managed Long-Term Services & Supports Subcommittee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 772-2549



**PA Health Care Cost Containment Council (PHC4)**

*September 5, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Council Conference Room, 225 Market Street, Suite 400, Harrisburg*  
Council Meeting. For additional information: (717) 232-6787

**House Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.**

*September 5, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Indiana Area Fire Association White Township Station, 1555 Indian Springs Road, Indiana*

Public hearing on college tuition credits & loan forgiveness for emergency responders

**State Board of Examiners in Speech-Language and Hearing**

*September 6, 2019 - 9:30 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-1389

**House Health**

*September 9, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., East Stroudsburg University, 562 Independence Road, East Stroudsburg*  
Public hearing on Lyme Disease and Tick Borne illnesses

**Press Conference**

*September 9, 2019 - 11:00 a.m., Main Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg*  
FASD Awareness Month (unconfirmed)

**Press Conference**

*September 9, 2019 - 1:00 p.m., Main Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg*  
Annual EMS Memorial Service (unconfirmed)

**State Board of Medicine**

*September 10, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-1400

**Department of Health**

*September 11, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Best Western Premier, 800 East Park Drive, Harrisburg*  
HIV Community Prevention Planning Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-0572

**Department of Human Services**

*September 11, 2019 - 1:00 p.m., Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey, 4650 Lindle Road, Harrisburg*  
PA Developmental Disabilities Council Meeting. For additional information: (717) 787-6058

**State Board of Nursing**

*September 12, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., One Penn Center, 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Monthly Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7142

**State Board of Physical Therapy**

*September 12, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7134

**Department of Health**

*September 12, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Room 129, Health and Welfare Building, 625 Forster Street, Harrisburg*  
Health Research Advisory Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 231-2825

*September 12, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Best Western Premier, 800 East Park Drive, Harrisburg*  
HIV Community Prevention Planning Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-0572



**Department of Human Services**

*September 12, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey, 4650 Lindle Road, Harrisburg*  
PA Developmental Disabilities Council Meeting. For additional information: (717) 787-6058

**State Board of Dentistry**

*September 13, 2019 - 8:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Regulatory Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7162

*September 13, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7162

**State Board of Veterinary Medicine**

*September 13, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7134

**Governor's Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities**

*September 13, 2019 - 9:30 a.m., 333 Market Street, Heritage Rooms A & B, Lobby Level, Harrisburg*  
Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 787-4287

**Department of Human Services**

*September 13, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Commonwealth Tower, 12th Fl., Clothes Tree Rm., 303 Walnut St., Harrisburg*  
Drug Utilization Review (DUR) Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 346-8164

**House Human Services**

*September 18, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Room 60, East Wing*

To consider: [HB 730](#) Cruz, Angel Amends Newborn Child Testing Act re screenings [HB 1220](#) Cruz, Angel Act re cytomegalovirus education & screening [HB 1704](#) Bernstine, Aaron Amends Human Services Code re BHMCO [SB 675](#) Brooks, Michele Act re licensing prescribers of suboxone

**Senate Democratic Policy Committee**

*September 20, 2019 - 11:00 a.m., Upper Providence Township Bldg, 1286 Black Rock Road, Phoenixville*  
Addressing the institutional and societal rape culture epidemic

**Senate Judiciary**

*September 24, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Hearing Room 1, North Office Building*

Public hearing on behavioral health, second amendment rights, and other gun related issues

**Center for Rural PA**

*September 25, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Keystone Building, PUC Hearing Room 5, Harrisburg*

Public hearing on heroin/opioids and PA's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, followed by a meeting to conduct regular business affairs

**Senate Judiciary**

*September 25, 2019 - 1:00 p.m., Hearing Room 1, North Office Building*

Public hearing on behavioral health, second amendment rights, and other gun related issues



## In the News

- 08-22-2019 **Representatives Frankel and Kosierowski introduce legislation to increase vaccination**  
With only weeks left until the commonwealth's children head back to school, flanked by medical professionals and Rep. Dan Frankel (D-Allegheny) and Rep Bridget Kosierowski (D-Lackawanna) introduced legislation they hope will increase vaccination in the commonwealth Tuesday.... - [Pennsylvania Legislative Services](#)
- 08-22-2019 **Most Philadelphians think people with opioid addiction brought it on themselves, survey finds**  
More than half of Philadelphians surveyed by the Pew Charitable Trusts this spring said that they believe people with opioid addiction have brought their condition upon themselves, and that addiction is not like contracting a disease. In a poll of 1,303 city residents conducted between March and May, 58... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-22-2019 **White House to business: Help stop fentanyl trafficking**  
The White House Wednesday sought to enlist the private sector in its effort to thwart the trafficking of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids, which have become the main drivers of fatal overdoses nationally and locally. Last year in the 10-county southwestern Pennsylvania region, fentanyl was a... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-22-2019 **Erie County seeks bids for prison medical care**  
Three interested providers attended a walk-through of the Erie County Prison earlier this month. Erie County is exploring its options for medical care at the Erie County Prison. With one year remaining on its contract with the prison's current medical provider, the county put out a request for proposals earlier this... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 08-22-2019 **Feces-related bacteria abundant in Harrisburg waterways, as much as 10 times higher than safe levels: environmentalists**  
Seated behind a table at a Harrisburg coffee shop earlier this week, Tom Pelton held up a photo. It showed three small children playing in the waters just off City Island's shore. It's a beach that's been closed to recreation, and Pelton, a spokesman for the Environmental Integrity Project, pointed out that's... - [Penn Live, Patriot-News](#)
- 08-22-2019 **Sewage from pipes near Pa. Capitol, governor's mansion deluging river with E. coli: report**  
York-based Lower Susquehanna Riverkeeper Ted Evgeniadis said he found off-the-charts levels of E. coli near popular Harrisburg river recreation spots during water testing this summer. Untreated human waste is literally flowing from Pennsylvania's capital into the Susquehanna River because of the city's antiquated combined sewer... - [York Daily](#)
- 08-22-2019 **White Haven Center closing tough call for some**  
Officials from an area nonprofit organization that assists intellectually, developmentally and physically disabled people said they cannot yet take a position on the impending closure of the White Haven State Center. "We believe we need answers to some key questions that ensure that... - [Hazleton Standard-Speaker](#)



- 08-22-2019 **Site for White Haven Center hearing changed to closer location**  
HAZLETON — State Rep. Tarah Toohil, R-Butler Township, announced Wednesday the Department of Human Services has granted her change of venue request for next month's public hearing regarding the pending closure of White Haven State Center. The Sept. 12 hearing will now take place at St. Patrick's Church, 411... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 08-22-2019 **Need your medical records? Time may be short as Hahnemann closure looms**  
PHILADELPHIA (KYW Newsradio) — The son of a former Hahnemann University Hospital patient says with the imminent closure of the hospital, getting a hold of his father's medical records has been nearly impossible. "This is something that should have been thought out much further in... - [KYW News Radio 1060](#)
- 08-22-2019 **Medical marijuana dispensary opens in Brookville**  
BROOKVILLE — Jefferson County's first medical marijuana dispensary has opened in Brookville. A Wednesday ribbon cutting ceremony marked the opening of the Herbology facility at 240 West Main Street in Brookville, below the Medicine Shoppe. The new firm's hours of operation will be 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday through... - [DuBois Courier-Express](#)
- 08-22-2019 **How workers found the medical marijuana industry**  
BROOKVILLE — A common thread among all the Grassroots employees present at the Herbology ribbon cutting is that they found their way to the medical marijuana industry through a passion for health. Community Marketing Manager Ian Gibbs, has been in the industry for a... - [DuBois Courier-Express](#)
- 08-22-2019 **Speakers set to headline Peniel center graduation**  
A Johnstown-area drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility will celebrate the graduation of a class from its long-term treatment program on Saturday and Sunday. Officials from Peniel Residential Treatment Center, 760 Cooper Ave., billed the event, which is free and open to the public, as "an unforgettable... - [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#)
- 08-22-2019 **'It's not safe for the patients'**  
Frustrated obstetrics nurses and staff warned of risks from understaffing at Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center during a Health Department inspection last spring, The Tribune-Democrat has confirmed. "There are times that I've done 12-hour shifts and have not gotten... - [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#)
- 08-22-2019 **Opioid Treatment Is Used Vastly More in States That Expanded Medicaid**  
States that expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act have seen a much bigger increase in prescriptions for a medication that treats opioid addiction than states that chose not to expand the program, a new study has found. The study, by researchers at the Urban Institute, a nonprofit research... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-22-2019 **Vaping Sicknesses Rising: 153 Cases Reported in 16 States**  
Sixteen states have now reported 153 cases of serious, vaping-related respiratory illnesses in the past two months, and many of the patients are teenagers or young adults. In a statement on Wednesday, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said that all of the cases occurred in people who acknowledged vaping... - [New York Times](#)



- 08-22-2019 **[U.S. Puts Sanctions on Chinese Nationals Over Fentanyl Trafficking](#)**  
The Trump administration on Wednesday imposed sanctions on three Chinese nationals accused of trafficking synthetic opioids, stepping up efforts to curb the flow of fentanyl from China into the United States. The move comes just weeks after President Trump accused China of not doing... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-22-2019 **[Sen. Bernie Sanders changes how Medicare-for-all plan treats union contracts in face of opposition by organized labor](#)**  
Sen. Bernie Sanders announced a key change to his Medicare-for-all insurance plan Wednesday, a move meant to assuage fears on the part of organized labor, whose support is being heatedly sought by all of the candidates for the Democratic presidential nomination.... - [Washington Post](#)
- 08-22-2019 **[Analysis | Power Up: White House ponders new proposal to identify links between mental health and violence](#)**  
.. INSLEE IS OUT: And then there were 22. "Washington Gov. Jay Inslee, who entered the 2020 contest by making the case that climate change is the central issue of our time, dropped out of the Democratic presidential race on Wednesday," our colleague Eli Rosenberg reports. The former congressman,... - [Washington Post](#)
- 08-22-2019 **[Gee, Kasich to push opioid settlement toward hospitals](#)**  
West Virginia University President Gordon Gee and former Ohio Gov. John Kasich are creating a nonprofit that will fight to steer cash from any national opioid settlement to hospitals, rather than to local and state governments already sparring for control of the dollars... - [AP](#)
- 08-22-2019 **[Ohio Supreme Court won't hear appeal by Dayton-area abortion clinic fighting to stay open](#)**  
The Ohio Supreme Court narrowly refused Wednesday to hear an appeal from a Dayton-area abortion clinic fighting to stay open. The court voted 4-3 not to review the case, with Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor, a Republican, and Democratic Justices Michael Donnelly and... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 08-22-2019 **[Maryland's new dental insurance program for low-income residents pays to remove teeth — but not replace them](#)**  
Bridget Morlan called the number on her first-ever dental insurance card and held her breath. After more than 30 years of dealing with broken teeth, gum infections and toothaches that landed her in the emergency room dozens of times, the Baltimore woman hoped the new coverage would make everything... - [Baltimore Sun](#)
- 08-22-2019 **[Two more state centers close in Pennsylvania | PennLive letters](#)**  
The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS), and DHS Secretary Teresa Miller announced plans to close the Polk and White Haven State Centers. These closures represent great opportunities for increased community integration for many people with intellectual and developmental... - [Penn Live, Patriot-News](#)
- 08-22-2019 **[Planned Parenthood looks for money after dropping out of federal program over abortion rules](#)**  
SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Planned Parenthood clinics in several states are charging new fees, tapping financial reserves, intensifying fundraising and warning of more unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases after its decision to quit a \$260 million federal family planning program... - [AP](#)



- 08-22-2019 **[Open Streets Carnegie promotes health and wellness](#)**  
Carnegie will open up its main streets for bikers, skateboarders and even those looking to learn how to pogo stick as the community members come together for a day of fitness in the streets. The fourth annual Open Streets Carnegie will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-22-2019 **[Need your medical records? Time may be short as Hahnemann closure looms](#)**  
Need your medical records? Time may be short as Hahnemann closure looms Need your medical records? Time may be short as Hahnemann closure looms - [KYW News Radio 1060](#)
- 08-22-2019 **[CDC: Hundreds Of Cases Of Lung Disease In 16 States, Including Pa., May Be Linked To Vaping](#)**  
(CNN) — The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is now aware of 153 possible cases of severe lung disease in 16 states that could be caused by vaping, the agency said Wednesday in an update to a multi-state investigation. The cases — reported from June 28 to Aug. 20, 2019 — have popped up... - [KDKA](#)
- 08-22-2019 **[WHO Study Finds No Evidence Of Health Concerns From Microplastics In Drinking Water](#)**  
The World Health Organization says there's not enough evidence to conclude that microplastics — which exist nearly everywhere in the environment and show up in drinking water — pose any risk to human health, but it cautions that more research is needed to draw firm conclusions.... - [National Public Radio](#)
- 08-22-2019 **[Planning for end-of-life and HippoCamp for writers](#)**  
Talking about death and dying is difficult. It becomes exponentially more difficult when death is near, and decisions need to be made during a very emotional and stressful time. Planning for end-of-life care is about deciding now how you want to be cared for during the final hours or days of life. Or in the case of a... - [WITF](#)
- 08-22-2019 **[CBD chain opens first Lehigh Valley location in Bethlehem](#)**  
A national chain aiming to relieve muscle pain, reduce anxiety and stress and improve overall health has opened its first Lehigh Valley location. CBD American Shaman, which opened Aug. 3 at 9 E. Third St. in south Bethlehem, is dedicated to “bringing wellness to the world through... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 08-22-2019 **[Got a question about your child’s education? Allentown Parent Network has answers](#)**  
Juan Dipini believes Allentown parents want to be involved in their children’s education — they just don’t know where to begin. “Parents see the Allentown School District as this big, huge monster,” said Dipini, a father of an 8-year-old Sheridan Elementary student. “They’re afraid to even walk in there because they... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 08-22-2019 **[Hahnemann closure a reminder physicians need unions to fight for-profit takeover of healthcare | Opinion](#)**  
On September 6, Hahnemann University Hospital will officially close. The shutdown is another tragic story of “the big guy vs. the little guy,” and in health care the little guy always loses. We see it all too often — a hospital that serves working class families lost, hundreds of... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



- 08-22-2019 **Vaping without nicotine still harms blood vessels, Penn study finds**  
A growing body of research suggests that electronic cigarettes can damage blood vessels in the short term, causing them to become inflamed and stiff, even when the vaping liquid does not contain nicotine. What's not yet clear, though is which of the various inhaled components of e-liquids are... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-22-2019 **Sojay Haze or Sour Tangie? Philly research seeks to find the best marijuana strain for pain.**  
Increasingly, medical marijuana is being considered as an alternative treatment to manage chronic pain. But with so many strains of cannabis available at Pennsylvania dispensaries, which is the most effective? A partnership between the University of the Sciences, regional marijuana... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-22-2019 **Pennsylvania OKs \$3.8M to treat toxic compounds in drinking water**  
Pennsylvania is marshaling more money to improve water treatment in suburban Philadelphia communities where testing has shown tap water contaminated with toxic industrial compounds used in products like nonstick cookware, carpets, firefighting foam and fast-food wrappers... - [AP](#)
- 08-22-2019 **Smiles From Sean brings emojis to UPMC Children's Hospital**  
These emojis are aimed at creating real smiles. Bright yellow pillows, cinch bags, stress balls and key chains decorated with smiling faces will be given to kids at UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh in Lawrenceville. Sean Rovers, 11, of Bethel Park came up with the idea to create happiness... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-22-2019 **Cannabis 'drought' strikes Philadelphia region as the number of marijuana patients spikes**  
A sudden spike in the number of registered patients and the addition of more dispensaries serving them may be causing a drought of medical marijuana available in the Philadelphia region. There's definitely been a palpable shortage of product in recent weeks,... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-21-2019 **Childhood vaccinations promoted in two state bills to keep parents informed**  
As children are heading back to school, two state legislators Tuesday announced efforts to ensure that they won't be put at risk of getting childhood diseases that once were widespread, but now are under control because of vaccines. State Reps. Dan Frankel (D-Squirrel Hill) and Bridget Kosierowski... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-21-2019 **Allegheny County Council supports health department's enforcement actions against U.S. Steel**  
Allegheny County Council on Tuesday endorsed enforcement actions taken by the county health department to curb air pollution at U.S. Steel's Edgar Thomson Plant in Braddock and Clairton Coke Works in Clairton. The endorsement was intended to support the Allegheny County Health... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-21-2019 **Red Cross closes overnight shelter, continues to help people displaced by West Oakland fire**  
The American Red Cross and other social service agencies stepped up to help those displaced by an apartment complex fire in Pittsburgh's West Oakland neighborhood, the president of the tenants' council said Tuesday. "They have brought us clothes, brought us food, gave us medical... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)



- 08-21-2019 **Parents who don't vaccinate children would get yearly medical counseling under proposed state law**  
State Reps. Dan Frankel, D-Squirrel Hill, and Bridget Kosierowski, D-Lackawanna, announced Tuesday the introduction of legislation to increase the vaccination rate of Pennsylvania children. The bill would require parents who seek nonmedical exemptions for their... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-21-2019 **Planned Parenthood Keystone rejects funding**  
Melissa Reed, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Keystone, said a Trump administration gag rule that forbids referrals for abortions is "unethical and dangerous" and the organization will not subject patients to it. "We refuse to let the Trump administration bully us into withholding... - [Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice](#)
- 08-21-2019 **Advocacy project looks to eliminate millions in medical debt for Western Pennsylvanians**  
Mizell Henderson can't even remember the name of the infection that attacked his immune system and put him in the hospital for months, but he is constantly reminded of its financial burden because it saddled him with \$42,000 of medical debt. "When they finished [the operation], I had holes in my body, rips and... - [Pittsburgh City Paper](#)
- 08-21-2019 **As Planned Parenthood withdraws from Title X, the Western Pa. branch loses access to \$400,000 of funds**  
On Mon., Aug. 19, Planned Parenthood officially withdrew from the federal family-planning program Title X. While the withdrawal is technically voluntary, Planned Parenthood representatives say they were forced out of the program due to new restrictions from the Trump Administration's... - [Pittsburgh City Paper](#)
- 08-21-2019 **How State College plans to address challenges with mental health, race and policing**  
The Centre County Board of Commissioners hosted a community conversation about the mental health services in the county on June, 27, 2019. To begin the conversation several presentations were made before opening the floor to public comment. By State College Borough Council approved a resolution Monday night convening and funding a... - [State College Centre Daily Times](#)
- 08-21-2019 **St. Luke's Miners receives \$1M grant to fight opioid crisis**  
The Health Resources and Services Administration has awarded St. Luke's Miners Campus a \$1 million grant to help combat the opioid crisis. St. Luke's was one of 80 grantees in the country and one of only five organizations in the state of Pennsylvania to receive the award. These... - [Lehighon Times News](#)
- 08-21-2019 **Family: 'None of us had any idea'; Friedens couple accused of faking baby's birth, death**  
Relatives of a Friedens couple accused by police of faking the birth and death of a child say they fear this isn't the first time they were fooled. Geoffrey Lang, 27, and Kaycee Leigh Lang, 23, were charged by state police last week with theft by unlawful taking, theft by deception and receiving... - [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#)
- 08-21-2019 **State asks judge to deny Schaeffer's request for DNA testing**  
SUNBURY — The state Attorney General's Office is asking a judge to deny Scott Schaeffer's request for DNA testing which the Sunbury man said would prove his innocence in the 1986 homicide of Rickey Wolfe. Deputy Attorney General Christopher Schmidt asked Dauphin County Senior... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)



- 08-21-2019 **Opinion | She Beat Cancer. Now, She's in Another Fight for Her Life.**  
ImageErika Zak desperately needs a new liver. Erika Zak desperately needs a new liver. Erika Zak beat Stage IV metastatic colon cancer. She survived more than 70 rounds of chemotherapy and at least 19 hospitalizations to treat infections, severe bleeding and other medical complications. She.s stayed... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-21-2019 **Analysis | The Health 202: Fewer Americans are abusing opioids. But the improvements vary dramatically by state.**  
A new government survey shows opioid abuse is declining by double digits . welcome data to public health advocates and policymakers who are wrestling with an epidemic that has crippled communities across the nation. And the improvements come as more people gain access to addiction-fighting... - [Washington Post](#)
- 08-21-2019 **Analysis | The Energy 202: Here.s why Newark.s lead crisis is different**  
For more than a week, thousands of Newark, N.J. residents have been lining up, enduring midday summer heat, and waiting for free bottled water. Their tap water contains extremely high levels of lead. For years, the city has failed to reduce them. In reporting the complexity of Newark.s problem, the... - [Washington Post](#)
- 08-21-2019 **Ohio gets OK to expand Medicaid program to remove lead from homes**  
Gov. Mike DeWine says Ohio's Department of Medicaid has received federal approval for its plan to enhance and expand Medicaid's lead abatement program. DeWine said in a release Tuesday that the Children's Health Insurance Program initiative was recently approved by the Centers for Medicare and... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 08-21-2019 **Lancaster Behavioral Health Hospital opens adolescent inpatient unit**  
Lancaster Behavioral Health Hospital's adolescent inpatient unit is now open. Spokesman Michael Stevens said in an email that the unit serving patients age 14 to 17 is starting with eight of its eventual 24 beds open. "Our doors are open to any individual needing care," he wrote, saying the... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 08-21-2019 **Hepatitis A case prompts Philly health department to urge some to get vaccinated**  
PHILADELPHIA (KYW Newsradio) — The Philadelphia Department of Public Health is dealing with a case of hepatitis A in Kensington, and the agency is offering free vaccines this week. People and some beat cops lined up to get their shots at a table the health department set up at the edge of McPherson Park Tuesday. Some said they... - [KYW News Radio 1060](#)
- 08-21-2019 **Couple awarded \$8.5 million in medical malpractice suit against St. Luke's Health Network**  
Two Germansville residents were awarded \$8.5 million in damages Tuesday after a Lehigh County jury found that two St. Luke's University Health Network doctors failed to effectively tell a patient about a potential tumor in his bladder. Robert Kline visited the St. Luke's Allentown campus in 2015 because of... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 08-21-2019 **Vaccines and patient education help protect all**  
Pennsylvania stood at the forefront of combating disease in the 1950s when Pittsburgh physician Jonas Salk created the first effective vaccine for polio. It.s a good history lesson for our state lawmakers when they consider legislation this fall that could damage our ability to fight off... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)



- 08-21-2019 **[Austin Davis: A plan to protect Pennsylvania's air and its communities](#)**  
The Clairton Coke Works fire in December was an accident. But the negligence and reluctance to rectify issues leading up to and in wake of the fire have nothing short of a complete disregard for public safety. In addition to surpassing the exceedance threshold following the fire, U.S.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-21-2019 **[As Others See It: Include measles vaccine on your checklist of back-to-school supplies](#)**  
Worry about measles fades over the summer. Kids scatter to parks and beaches instead of congregating in classrooms and cafeterias, where a cough or sneeze can leave the virus hanging in the air for up to two hours. By late August, with school back in session or nearly so, the scarring pox... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-21-2019 **[Couple awarded \\$8.5 million in medical malpractice suit against St. Luke's Health Network](#)**  
Two Germansville residents were awarded \$8.5 million in damages Tuesday after a Lehigh County jury found that two St. Luke's University Health Network doctors failed to effectively tell a patient about a potential tumor in his bladder. Robert Kline visited the St. Luke's Allentown campus in 2015 because of... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 08-21-2019 **[Hahnemann University Hospital: 171 years of Philadelphia medical history](#)**  
The legal battle is continuing, but in the wake of its bankruptcy filing in June, Hahnemann University Hospital, a fixture on Broad Street for more than 90 years, is clearly phasing out. It discharged its last inpatient on July 26. Original plans called for the facility to close entirely early... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-21-2019 **[Supervised injection site hearing brought clarity. How come our most skeptical politicians didn't show up? | Editorial](#)**  
The eyes of public health professionals and advocates all over the country were on Philadelphia on Monday during the first hearing in U.S. v. Safehouse. The case, which originated in February when U.S. Attorney William M. McSwain sued to stop a nonprofit from being able to open a... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-21-2019 **[Pennsylvania must act faster on PFAS regulations | Opinion](#)**  
People across Pennsylvania are drinking water containing highly toxic chemicals while the state takes its time studying it. Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), a group of synthetic chemicals, are found in nonstick papers such as food containers, stain-and... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-21-2019 **[Couple awarded \\$8.5 million in medical malpractice suit against St. Luke's Health Network](#)**  
Two Germansville residents were awarded \$8.5 million in damages Tuesday after a Lehigh County jury found that two St. Luke's University Health Network doctors failed to effectively tell a patient about a potential tumor in his bladder. Robert Kline visited the St. Luke's Allentown campus in 2015 because of... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 08-21-2019 **[The FDA's new graphic cigarette labels are smart | Opinion](#)**  
Can a new regulation be something to celebrate? If it stands to save lives, absolutely. Here's one that does: the Food and Drug Administration's proposal to require warnings, including graphic images, on cigarette packages and in cigarette advertisements. The regulation, now out for a 60-day comment... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



- 08-21-2019 **West Nile Virus sample tests positive in Harrisburg**  
A second sampling of West Nile Virus has been collected in Harrisburg. The Dauphin County Conservation District collected the infected sample on August 14, according to a statement released by Dauphin County. No individual in the county has contracted West Nile Virus to date.... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)
- 08-21-2019 **Representatives Frankel and Kosierowski introduce legislation to increase vaccination**  
With only weeks left until the commonwealth's children head back to school, flanked by medical professionals and Rep. Dan Frankel (D-Allegheny) and Rep Bridget Kosierowski (D-Lackawanna) introduced legislation they hope will increase vaccination in the commonwealth Tuesday.... - [Pennsylvania Legislative Services](#)
- 08-21-2019 **Most Philadelphians think people with opioid addiction brought it on themselves, survey finds**  
More than half of Philadelphians surveyed by the Pew Charitable Trusts this spring said that they believe people with opioid addiction have brought their condition upon themselves, and that addiction is not like contracting a disease. In a poll of 1,303 city residents conducted between March and May, 58... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Planned Parenthood will stop taking Title X funding rather than comply with abortion 'gag rule'**  
NEW YORK — Planned Parenthood said Monday it's pulling out of the federal family planning program rather than abide by a new Trump administration rule prohibiting clinics from referring women for abortions... - [AP](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Speaker opposes legal marijuana**  
DUNCANSVILLE — Toward the end of a presentation before about 20 people, the chief of staff of Smart Approaches to Marijuana talked about the seeds of his opposition to legalizing recreational use of the drug. Luke Niforatos and his wife used to push their daughter in a stroller near... - [Altoona Mirror](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Magistrate calls for dealer's resentencing**  
The alleged leader of a drug organization that peddled large amounts of cocaine in Blair, Huntingdon and Cambria counties is entitled to be resentenced on 10 of the charges for which he was convicted because the maximums on the sentences imposed by a Blair County judge were illegal,... - [Altoona Mirror](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Philadelphia's supervised injection site plan faces a contentious day in federal court**  
The push to open the nation's first supervised injection site in Philadelphia got its day in federal court Monday, pitting the region's top law enforcement official against the president of a nonprofit founded to help stem one of the country's deadliest opioid crises.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-20-2019 **King of Prussia firm gets first drug approval from FDA**  
A drugmaker that has its U.S. base in King of Prussia received federal approval Monday for a new drug to treat a common form of pneumonia. Nabriva Therapeutics said its drug is the first of its products to be approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, signaling that the drug... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



- 08-20-2019 **Ex-ambulance service treasurer indicted on embezzlement counts**  
Ex-ambulance service treasurer indicted on embezzlement counts A former ambulance service treasurer in Fayette County stole \$136,000 from the not-for-profit company, a federal grand jury said. Edward T. Stevenson, 62, was indicted last week under seal on 21 counts of... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Bus drivers receive CPR and first-aid training**  
LOCK HAVEN — UMPC recently partnered with Susquehanna Transit and Keystone Central School District to ensure that all bus staff has CPR and first-aid training. The training took place at the Dunnstown Fire Hall, instructed by staff at UPMC. “The district strives to create and maintain a safe and healthy... - [Lock Haven Express](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Vet school teams up with game commission**  
HARRISBURG — A Pennsylvania veterinary school has teamed up with the Pennsylvania Game Commission in an effort to protect wildlife. The state game commission executive director announced Monday at a press conference that there has never been a more critical time in the history of... - [Lewistown Sentinel](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Fate of relinquished medical marijuana dispensary permit unknown**  
The fate of a medical marijuana dispensary permit relinquished last week in Shamokin is unknown at this time. On Friday, Harvest of North Central PA LLC, which had finished building its Northumberland County facility at 520 N. Shamokin St., Shamokin, and Harvest of Northwest PA LLC in New Castle, Lawrence County, relinquished... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Mom: He has such a wonderful life at White Haven Center**  
HAZLETON — Nielene Bogansky gave birth to her youngest child in 1977. And while David Naulty turns 42 next month, he has the mentality of a 4 year old. He also has anger issues and can lash out unexpectedly. There’s no way that he can live on his own. And there’s no way that... - [Hazleton Standard-Speaker](#)
- 08-20-2019 **SCI Greene inmates and their relatives charged for alleged drug smuggling**  
Several inmates at the State Correctional Institution at Greene, as well as some of their relatives outside of the prison, are facing charges in an alleged scheme to sell drugs to other inmates. The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections (DOC) charged inmates Lamont... - [Uniontown Herald-Standard](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Iodide potassium pills available on Thursday at the Beaver Valley Mall**  
CENTER TWP. — Beaver County residents who live or work within 10 miles of the Beaver Valley Nuclear Power Station in Shippingport can receive free potassium iodide pills on Thursday. The pills, also known as KI pills, will be available from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Center at the Mall inside the Beaver Valley Mall in Center Township.... - [Beaver County Times](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Here's how doctors get disciplined in Delaware**  
It all starts with a complaint. It can be from a patient, a health care provider, a state agency or another state. This is the starting point in Delaware to determine if doctors, or any profession that requires a license, have violated a state code. From January 2015 to July 2019, at least 80 doctors have been disciplined... - [Wilmington News Journal](#)



- 08-20-2019 **Planned Parenthood Refuses Federal Funds Over Abortion Restrictions**  
Planned Parenthood said Monday that it would withdraw from the federal family planning program that provides birth control and other health services to poor women rather than comply with a new Trump administration rule that forbids referrals to doctors who can perform abortions.... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Why Warning Pregnant Women Not to Drink Can Backfire**  
In many areas of health policy, the best of intentions can lead to more harm than good. Such is the case with America's approach to alcohol and pregnancy. The best evidence shows that punitive policies . such as equating drinking while pregnant as child abuse and threatening to involve child protective... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Opinion | It Just Got Harder to Get Birth Control in America**  
This has been an ominous year for reproductive rights in America, with states including Georgia, Alabama and now Tennessee in a race to the bottom to pass the most extreme anti-abortion law in the nation. But while those high-profile abortion bans make their way through the... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Democrats back off once-fervent embrace of Medicare-for-all**  
Leaning back on a black leather sofa as her campaign bus rumbled toward Fort Dodge, Kamala D. Harris tried to explain why she spent months defending a plan to replace private health insurance with Medicare-for-all, only to switch to a more modest proposal that would allow private insurance... - [Washington Post](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Analysis | The Health 202: Planned Parenthood's exit from family planning program checks off a box for Trump**  
Planned Parenthood is voluntarily exiting the federal family planning program under new restrictions from the Trump administration. And its decision helps the president cement his popularity with abortion opponents ahead of 2020. Yesterday, the women's health and abortion provider said it's leaving Title... - [Washington Post](#)
- 08-20-2019 **UPMC's 'IBD Connect' Helps Patients Battling Inflammatory Bowel Diseases Lead A Normal Life**  
PITTSBURGH (KDKA) — There's a local support network in our area that helps patients battling inflammatory bowel diseases like Crohn's and colitis lead a normal life. It's the only program in Pittsburgh and one local man decided to tell his story of how he went from patient to volunteer.... - [KDKA](#)
- 08-20-2019 **US attorney's lawsuit to stop Philly safe injection site goes before judge; witnesses say it would save lives**  
PHILADELPHIA (KYW Newsradio) — A federal judge took testimony Monday in a lawsuit that will determine whether a safe injection site can open in Philadelphia as one measure to address the opioid epidemic. All three witnesses testified the site would save lives.... - [KYW News Radio 1060](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Grieving Drexel scientists complete murdered colleague's study of assaults on first responders**  
Drexel University scientist Jasmine Y. Wright was dedicated to helping first responders who are assaulted while trying to help others. Physical attacks on first responders is a felony in Pennsylvania. Yet justice, Philadelphia firefighters and medics have said, is hard-won. So in... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



- 08-20-2019 **LVHN's planned mega-campus in Lower Nazareth moves closer to final approval**  
The interior road serving Lehigh Valley Health Network's proposed mega-campus in Lower Nazareth Township doesn't include sidewalks — at least for now. The township's planning commission Monday recommended final approval for LVHN's revised land development plan for the sprawling property,... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Marijuana haze: Police struggle to keep up with new laws on pot**  
A judge in Lehigh County has handed down an all-too-rare decision upholding a citizen's constitutional rights — one that signals law enforcement's need to better understand the laws around medical marijuana. Instead of appealing the decision, which they have the option to do,... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Binge-drinking boomers: Excessive alcohol consumption by seniors on the rise**  
Binge-drinking boomers: Excessive alcohol consumption by seniors on the rise Recent studies have discovered a spike in binge drinking among Americans 65 and older Baby boomers thought they'd be young forever. And now, as senior citizens, they are leading a dangerous health trend usually associated with... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Brand-name drug prices rising at slower pace, lower amounts**  
TRENTON, N.J. . Drug companies are still raising prices for brand-name prescription medicines, just not as often or by as much as they used to, according to an Associated Press analysis... - [AP](#)
- 08-20-2019 **King of Prussia firm gets first drug approval from FDA**  
King of Prussia firm gets first drug approval from FDA - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Philadelphia Planned Parenthood groups stay open after Title X loss, but seek donations**  
Local Planned Parenthood patients may not notice a difference for now, but New Jersey and Pennsylvania residents who have donated to the organization likely are being asked to give more as it prepares to live without Title X funding. Planned Parenthood.s national leadership announced Monday that it was... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-20-2019 **LVHN's planned campus in Lower Nazareth moves closer to final approval**  
The interior road serving Lehigh Valley Health Network.s proposed campus in Lower Nazareth Township doesn.t include sidewalks . at least for now. The township.s Planning Commission on Monday recommended final approval for LVHN.s revised land development plan for the sprawling property, which will... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 08-20-2019 **Endo pharma agrees to \$11 million settlement to avoid opioid trial**  
Endo International Plc agreed to an \$11 million settlement to avoid going to trial in the first federal court cases targeting opioid makers and distributors over the public-health crisis caused by the painkillers. Endo said Tuesday it will pay \$10 million and donate \$1 million worth of... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-19-2019 **What the doctor ordered: Duquesne's med school could make big difference**  
The new institution can have an influence that well exceeds the number of doctors it graduates each year Duquesne University's plans to open a school of osteopathic medicine will be a boon for a country facing a shortage of doctors. But the school's impact shouldn't be measured simply by the number... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)



- 08-19-2019 **[Erie fire bureau offering detectors, tours to day care facilities](#)**  
The free offers come as the investigation continues into the cause of an Aug. 11 fire that killed 5 children. Erie and state officials have highlighted the lack of smoke detectors in a westside residence that also housed a day care facility in calling for more... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 08-19-2019 **[Cal U awarded \\$1.3 million grant involving opioid crisis](#)**  
California University of Pennsylvania has been awarded a \$1.3 million federal grant to help graduate students in programs that deal with the nation's opioid crisis. The money from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will provide 27 stipends of \$10,000 to students seeking careers in drug... - [Uniontown Herald-Standard](#)
- 08-19-2019 **[Terrapin Pennsylvania addresses social equity in cannabis industry](#)**  
HARRISBURG – For the second year, Terrapin Pennsylvania, with a medical marijuana facility in South Avis, has sponsored a two-day educational conference held at the Pennsylvania State Capitol to counter the social disparities that exist in the emerging medical cannabis industry.... - [Lock Haven Express](#)
- 08-19-2019 **[Chester County Health Department schedules KI distribution at Kimberton Fire Company](#)**  
KIMBERTON — As part of Chester County's ongoing emergency preparedness efforts, and in support of the PA Department of Health's Potassium Iodide initiative, staff and volunteers from the Chester County Health Department will be offering free Potassium Iodide (KI) tablets to... - [Norristown Times Herald](#)
- 08-19-2019 **[Plymouth Council recognizes police, medics for life-saving efforts](#)**  
PLYMOUTH — If not for a team of quick-acting Plymouth Township Police, Det. Andrew Moretti would likely have died on May 6. Det. Moretti suffered a sudden cardiac event in the parking lot of the Plymouth Township municipal building. Luckily, officers on scene engaged in... - [Norristown Times Herald](#)
- 08-19-2019 **[Lebanon County sold Cedar Haven nursing home to private company, which is now in bankruptcy](#)**  
After the company that bought a formerly county-owned nursing home filed for bankruptcy earlier this month, at least one county commissioner wants to buy the facility back. But that idea isn't going anywhere with Republican commissioners Bill Ames and Bob Phillips, who don't agree with Democratic commissioner Jo Ellen... - [Lebanon Daily News](#)
- 08-19-2019 **[UPMC Memorial Hospital opens in West Manchester Township](#)**  
The new UPMC Memorial Hospital just opened — and it's already seeing plenty of action. Eleven new emergency room patients were admitted to the hospital within 10 hours of its grand opening at 6 a.m. Sunday. After construction lasting more than three years, UPMC unveiled its newest... - [York Dispatch](#)
- 08-19-2019 **[Harvest Health & Recreation gets green light for marijuana dispensary](#)**  
An Arizona-based medical marijuana company's affiliates have the green light to move forward with its downtown Johnstown dispensary, now that a legal battle over its application issues have been sorted out with the state Department of Health. But for Harvest Health & Recreation, it comes at a price.... - [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#)



- 08-19-2019 **To avoid deportation, Hahnemann international residents scramble to find new places to work**  
PHILADELPHIA (KYW Newsradio) — Hahnemann University Hospital's impending closure could have serious consequences for some medical students who planned on completing their residency there, and the fate of dozens of residents with J-1 Visas was uncertain until a Philadelphia nonprofit... - [KYW News Radio 1060](#)
- 08-19-2019 **Fitzpatrick calls for DNA testing at southern board to help combat human trafficking**  
PHILADELPHIA (KYW Newsradio) — Bucks County Republican Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick visited the southern border this week to get a firsthand look at conditions inside the migrant detention facilities there. He says he wants to make sure border patrol agents have the resources they need.... - [KYW News Radio 1060](#)
- 08-19-2019 **Local group takes steps to raise awareness for veteran suicide**  
Jeremy Brandon, of Titusville, and Kerrick Caldwell, of Cambridge Springs, are walking to make a difference in the lives of veterans. Brandon, a son and grandson of veterans, and Caldwell, a veteran who served as a sergeant in the United States Army, are members of the Veteran walkers... - [Corry Journal](#)
- 08-19-2019 **Suicide loss support group meets at Penn State DuBois monthly**  
Losing a loved one to suicide can be an isolated and quiet struggle, but a group that meets monthly, the Clearfield-Jefferson Suicide Prevention Team, offers help. The “Healing After Suicide Loss Support Group,” sponsored by the CJSPT, meets from 5:15-7:15 p.m. on the fourth Monday of each month in the... - [DuBois Courier-Express](#)
- 08-19-2019 **Sickle Cell Disease Still Tends to Be Overlooked**  
Sickle cell disease affects about 100,000 Americans, most of them African-Americans. There are few treatments for it, and experts say not enough is being done to prevent complications. Just recently, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services declined to put in quality measures that... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-19-2019 **Opinion | Ebola Could Be Eradicated . But Only if the World Works Together**  
The global health community got a few pieces of hopeful news this week. On Monday the World Health Organization announced that two newly developed intravenous drug therapies appear capable of curing Ebola. The medications could help end a continuing epidemic in the Democratic Republic of Congo,... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-19-2019 **A Nun, a Doctor and a Lawyer - and Deep Regret Over the Nation.s Handling of Opioids**  
Years before there was an opioid epidemic in America, Sister Beth Davies knew it was coming. In the late 1990s, patient after patient addicted to a new prescription painkiller called OxyContin began walking into the substance abuse clinic she ran in this worn Appalachian town. A local physician, Dr. Art Van Zee,... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-19-2019 **Vaping Craze Prompts New State Taxes**  
With young people taking up electronic cigarettes in epidemic numbers, numerous states are slapping hefty taxes on vaping products and raising the legal age to purchase them to 21. The twin actions are designed to reduce vaping among young people and to bring in revenue for the states.... - [Stateline.org](#)



- 08-19-2019 **How much in taxes could Maryland make off legal weed? It's hard to say.**  
If Maryland decides to legalize marijuana — and that's a big if — officials may have a difficult time figuring out how much money the state will bring in from taxing the drug. Some states with legal marijuana have vastly underestimated the amount of tax revenue they would collect. Others overestimated revenues, forcing... - [Baltimore Sun](#)
- 08-19-2019 **Allegheny Health Network expansion continues with Grove City affiliation**  
Grove City Medical Center is preparing to join Allegheny Health Network. Details of the affiliation agreement between the Mercer County hospital and the large health-care network are set to be announced at 11 a.m. Monday. AHN has been expanding rapidly in the last few years, with plans to build... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 08-19-2019 **For hangovers and more, IV infusion therapy comes to Pittsburgh**  
Celebrities are doing it. Reality stars are, too. And so is Jeremy Larkin of Mount Washington, who recently sat on his living room couch, an IV in one arm and a “detox serum” flowing through his veins. The “IV therapy” industry has arrived in Pittsburgh, expanding... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-19-2019 **Allegheny Health Network reaches affiliation pact with Grove City hospital**  
Allegheny Health Network reaches affiliation pact with Grove City hospital Highmark's Allegheny Health Network has reached an affiliation agreement with Grove City Medical Center, a 90-bed hospital with a recent history of financial problems. Details of the agreement were scheduled to be released at a news conference... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-19-2019 **Planned Parenthood will stop taking Title X funding rather than comply with abortion 'gag rule'**  
Planned Parenthood said Monday it's pulling out of the federal family planning program rather than abide by a new Trump administration rule prohibiting clinics from referring women for abortions... - [AP](#)
- 08-19-2019 **Pennsylvania lawmaker wants to kick 'unseemly characters' out of drug abuse treatment business**  
State Rep. Steve Santarsiero, which state Reps. Tina Davis and Perry Warren immediately to his right and left, talks about proposed legislation to curb drug abuse treatment scams while standing on the porch of the now-defunct Liberation Way, a Bucks County-based treatment center whose operators have... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 08-19-2019 **'It's like drowning': Minute by minute, a physician tells a courtroom how you die from an overdose | Mike Newall**  
'It's like drowning': Minute by minute, a physician tells a courtroom how you die from an overdose | Mike Newall - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-18-2019 **Big Pharma's racket: Congress, Trump must bring sanity to drug prices**  
The high cost of prescription drugs and that market's maddening complexity have become almost more than the private sector can bear. A fight taking place in Washington right now is over how much control the federal government should exert over the prices of drugs that Medicare buys... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)



- 08-18-2019 **Sexually active teens and young women report pressure to get pregnant, UPMC study finds**  
Troubled relationships between men and women can veer into reproductive coercion. When a person pressures a partner to become pregnant when they don't want to be. Coercion is prevalent among sexually active teen girls and young women, according to a study from UPMC Children's Hospital of... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-18-2019 **Doctors associate vaping with four lung-injury cases in Pittsburgh**  
Pittsburgh doctors suspect four recent cases of lung injury may be associated with vaping, joining more than 50 similar cases in 10 states. Although the cause of the injury is not proven, the young-adult patients came to the hospital with symptoms of nausea, fever and weakness. Similar... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 08-18-2019 **Marijuana giant Harvest agrees to relinquish two dispensary permits after Pennsylvania probe**  
Two affiliates of Harvest Health & Recreation will relinquish their medical marijuana dispensary permits in Pennsylvania after the Arizona-based cannabis conglomerate came under scrutiny from state regulators. Harvest of Northwest PA LLC and Harvest of North Central PA LLC will no... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 08-18-2019 **CHRIS KELLY: Healing hearts, one at a time**  
I've heard there was a secret chord/ That David played and it pleased the Lord .... from Hallelujah, by Leonard Cohen McKayla White clutched her pillow and sobbed. She wasn't ready to let go of Grandpa. When Joe Strok died in June, McKayla lost her best friend and fishing... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 08-18-2019 **New model for key drugs**  
The Food and Drug Administration approved a new anti-tuberculosis drug, which is a major development not only against deadly TB but in terms of getting around market forces and bringing more drugs to market. Tuberculosis kills about 1.6 million people every year worldwide and the... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 08-18-2019 **Mechanicsburg-area tampering case includes food products, state Department of Health officials say**  
State and federal officials have joined the investigation into a Mechanicsburg-area product tampering case that they said includes food products. "The Wolf administration, as well as local and federal agencies, are investigating multiple instances of product tampering involving health and... - [Carlisle Sentinel](#)
- 08-18-2019 **CASA camp brings healing, coping strategies to youths**  
This week 13 children ages 6 to 17 participated in a special camp free of charge at the Lands at Hillside Farms through Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Luzerne County. The children participating in this camp have experienced a range of loss related to death, abuse, drugs, alcohol, divorce, and more. The camp... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 08-18-2019 **Editorial: Veterans office loses one strong leader, gains another**  
It's been a most eventful summer at the Berks County Department of Veterans Affairs. The agency's longtime executive director has retired, and a replacement has taken charge of its all-important work. The good news is that despite the risk of turmoil amid turnover that comes... - [Reading Eagle](#)



- 08-18-2019 **Karen Wiggers, R.N.: 5 reasons to vaccinate your child**  
Vaccination is one of the best ways to protect your children. You want to do what is best for your children. You know about the importance of car seats, baby gates and other ways to keep them safe. But did you know that one of the best ways to protect your children is to... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 08-18-2019 **Our view: Erie Gives shows that people care**  
Reaching deep: Erie Gives day is a good time to take the measure of the spirit of community and giving that infuses Erie and the region. There.s no mistaking after Tuesday that it.s alive and well. The single day of online giving, which was launched by the Erie Community... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 08-18-2019 **Tampering case includes food returned to West Shore stores, according to Pa. Department of Health**  
The Pennsylvania Department of Health has joined local and federal authorities investigating product tampering that occurred at several West Shore stores. The health department joined the investigation saying food products were part of the inquiry, including items such as ketchup, mustard and chocolate... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)
- 08-18-2019 **Dauphin County sample tests positive for West Nile Virus**  
Add Dauphin County to the growing list of Pennsylvania counties that has tested positive for West Nile virus in 2019. Dauphin County Conservation District staff collected the county.s first infected mosquito sample in Washington Township on August 9. No human cases... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)
- 08-18-2019 **Medical marijuana company opening Harrisburg dispensary to operate fewer locations around state**  
The large medical-marijuana company set to open a dispensary in Harrisburg, among other cities, will be opening fewer locations than originally expected. Two of the affiliates of Harvest Health & Recreation will relinquish their medical marijuana dispensary permits in Pennsylvania, the Philadelphia... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)
- 08-18-2019 **In Q&A, John Nespoli talks about St. Luke.s plans for Carbon County hospitals**  
As president of St. Luke University Health Network.s Gnaden Huetten/ Palmerton campuses, John Nespoli is overseeing St. Luke.s changes in Carbon County. About two years ago, St. Luke.s acquired the two Carbon County hospitals and since then, announced plans to build a hospital between the... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 08-18-2019 **Lehigh Valley residents rationing insulin, going without, as prices skyrocket, report says**  
Mitchell Lenett remembers driving at 10 o'clock at night to bring a bottle of insulin to a friend who had been rationing insulin between herself and her two children several years ago. Without insurance, his friend was desperate, a situation that other people... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 08-18-2019 **Philadelphia hospital shuts down emergency department**  
A longtime teaching hospital in Philadelphia has officially closed its emergency department, the latest in a series of moves as it heads toward fully shutting down... - [AP](#)



- 08-18-2019 **Dire need for child psychiatric help in Md.'s rural areas**  
I remember one Saturday in the middle of winter using my body as a barrier to keep the door shut while calling the after-hour crisis hotline for help. My adolescent daughter, in a psychotic episode, was attempting to get out the door, into the snow, half undressed, wanting to die. The hotline.s... - [Baltimore Sun](#)
- 08-18-2019 **Anti-abortion Democrats, pro-abortion-rights Republicans feel ostracized in their parties**  
As recently as a generation ago, both major political parties had office holders in Ohio with diverse views on abortion. As the parties became monolithic on the issue, Democrats opposed to abortion and Republicans who support abortion rights find themselves uncomfortable and unenthusiastic.... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 08-18-2019 **Op-Ed: A drug called buprenorphine saved me from heroin addiction. It could save millions more . if we let it**  
While my wife and 2-year old daughter watched TV in the living room, I was in the kitchen, measuring the distance from the tip of my index finger to my armpit. I needed to know I could pull the trigger with a shotgun barrel in my mouth. Twenty-six inches. 32 years old. 30 months since my last relapse.... - [Los Angeles Times](#)
- 08-18-2019 **\$1 Million Penalty Brings Record Nursing Home Default Near an End**  
The biggest default in the history of a federally insured mortgage program for nursing homes is approaching a resolution. Nearly a year after the Department of Housing and Urban Development wrested control of the Rosewood Care Centers from its owners for defaulting on \$146... - [New York Times](#)
- 08-18-2019 **Naloxone, a drug that reverses overdoses, can save lives. Here.s why you should learn how to use it.**  
Someone you know just overdosed on opioids. So what do you do? If you don.t know, keep reading. Don.t think it could happen to you? Think again: During 2017, nearly 48,000 people died of opioid overdoses. They didn.t have to. Naloxone, a drug that reverses overdoses, can save... - [Washington Post](#)
- 08-18-2019 **Opinion | This antibiotic breakthrough could save thousands of lives a year**  
TUBERCULOSIS IS the world.s deadliest infectious disease. In 2017, the World Health Organization reported that about 10 million people globally developed active tuberculosis, which is caused by the bacterium Mycobacterium tuberculosis, and that 1.6 million died from the disease.... - [Washington Post](#)
- 08-16-2019 **Anti-marijuana crowd gathers against Senate proposal**  
After Joe Stains heard that two Philadelphia-area senators introduced a bill that would make recreational marijuana legal statewide, he and a few Forest Hills Ministerium colleagues began circulating a petition against the idea. On Thursday, that petition turned into an anti-pot forum that drew a... - [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#)
- 08-16-2019 **UPMC Memorial Hospital: Dates to know as one hospital closes, another opens**  
UPMC Memorial Hospital is ready to open. The switch from the Belmont Street facility to the new one at 1701 Innovation Drive in West Manchester Township takes place on Sunday, Aug. 18. Here is what you need to know about the change. Dates to remember Aug. 11: Direct admissions were no longer accepted at the Belmont Street.... - [York Daily](#)



- 08-16-2019 **DHS: Community-based settings goal for White Haven center residents**  
When announcing the 2022 closure of the White Haven State Center, officials from the Department of Human Services said the goal is to place residents in community-based settings. Those options might include staffed group homes, lifesharing programs or community homes, spokeswoman Erin James said.... - [Hazleton Standard-Speaker](#)
- 08-16-2019 **Stilp offers to rebuild WB monument; council OKs insurance deal**  
WILKES-BARRE — Two speakers came to city council Thursday night to talk about slinging mud. While resident Linda Joseph disapproved of it in a city council race, activist Gene Stilp offered to get dirty slinging mud building a new monument for the one removed from Public Square.... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 08-16-2019 **Geisinger halts 90-day prescription supply mandate**  
Geisinger Health System temporarily halted a mandate that required Medicaid patients receive a 90-day supply of certain prescription medications after local independent pharmacists complained reimbursement rates were so low they were in danger of closing. Mark Gilger, spokesman for Geisinger, said it lifted the mandate until Dec.... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 08-16-2019 **Facing Opposition, E.P.A. Backtracks on Use of 'Cyanide Bombs' to Kill Wild Animals**  
The federal Environmental Protection Agency on Thursday withdrew its support for the continued use of so-called cyanide bombs to protect livestock from predators, reversing course amid strong opposition to the practice. - [New York Times](#)
- 08-16-2019 **PennEnvironment Says Incoming Allegheny County Health Director Must Prioritize Air Quality**  
Environmental activists are asking the Allegheny County Health Department to step up air quality monitoring and enforcement. Advocacy group PennEnvironment released a sweeping report Thursday looking at several decades of enforcement actions. Previous Health Department Director Dr. Karen Hacker stepped down from her... - [WESA 90.5](#)
- 08-16-2019 **Rural America Has a Maternal Mortality Problem. Midwives Might Help Solve It.**  
HUNTINGDON, Tenn. — The sun is setting just as midwife Sheryl Shafer wraps up a long Thursday on the road visiting families in west Tennessee and Kentucky. She knows the patient on her last stop, a 21-year-old Amish woman in a two-story farmhouse without electricity, is a week and a half past her due... - [Stateline.org](#)
- 08-16-2019 **Teen and young adult e-smokers much more likely to use marijuana, study finds**  
Adolescents and young adults who vape electronic cigarettes are far more likely to also use marijuana, according to research released this week. The study, published online in JAMA Pediatrics, said the odds of marijuana use among young people who used e-cigarettes was 3.5 times greater than... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



Health Care Recap is a comprehensive daily report on legislative and executive actions in the Pennsylvania capitol and is compiled and edited by PLS.

For subscription information, questions or more information contact PLS at [mypls@mypls.com](mailto:mypls@mypls.com) or 717-236-6984. Thank you, Lynn, Jeff, Mike, Matt Hess, Matt Hykes, Deborah, Kara, Cheryl, Aaron, Becky, Amyra, Nick, Nicole, Robert, Emily, Andrew, Shaun, Justin, Sheri and Harrison.

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