



# Health Care Recap

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October 25 - 31, 2019

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## SESSION STATUS

At 1:22 p.m. on Wednesday, October 30, 2019 the Senate stands in recess until Monday, November 18, 2019 at 1:00 p.m., unless sooner recalled by the President Pro Tempore.

At 2:29 p.m. on Wednesday, October 30, 2019 the House stands adjourned until Monday, November 18, 2019 at 1:00 p.m., unless sooner recalled by the Speaker.

## UPCOMING SESSION DAYS

### House

Nov. 18, 19, 20, 21  
Dec. 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18

### Senate

Nov. 18, 19, 20, 21  
Dec. 16, 17, 18



## Around the Rotunda

No Around the Rotunda this week.

## Committee News

### House Transportation Committee

10/28/19, 11:00 a.m., Room B31 Main Capitol

By Mike Howells, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee held an informational meeting on the commonwealth’s shift to a brokerage model for the Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP).

Chairman Hennessey said the committee is interested in what the future might hold for MATP. He said that since the 1970s, Pennsylvania has delivered nonemergency transport as required under federal law and regulations. Since those years, he said, Philadelphia’s system has been handled by a broker, while the remaining counties have overseen their own systems. Chairman Hennessey described the establishment of the shared ride system as a way to manage costs. He said House Bill 1677 was amended in the Senate Appropriations Committee in June to mandate a brokerage system for all of Pennsylvania and passed through the Senate. The bill made it to the Governor’s Office the same day, following House concurrence, and it was signed into law as Act 40 of 2018. Chairman Hennessey said the amendment to the bill also required the Department of Human Services (DHS) to submit an amended plan regarding a full-risk brokerage model. Following its enactment, opposition has surfaced, including legislation to halt the changes, he reported. He said DHS, over his objection, selected Mercer to study the issue and present a [preliminary report](#) by the end of September, which only just came out over the past weekend. Rather than waiting until the end of December, he said he convened the meeting now to explore the impacts of moving to a brokerage model.

In particular, Chairman Hennessey said they want to avoid similar issues to those seen with regard to consulting firm Maximus and the state’s long-term care services.

[Timothy Geibel](#), board chairman of the Pennsylvania Public Transportation Association (PPTA) and general manager of Crawford Area Transportation Authority (CATA) and Venango County Transit, testified on behalf of the association along with board members [Richard Farr](#), executive director of the Central Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, and [Sheila Gombita](#), executive director of the Freedom Transit/ Washington County Transportation Authority.

Geibel said Pennsylvania is a unique state with respect to its public investments in human service transportation, with Medical Assistance a key component to those services. He noted a 2018 Transportation Research Board highlighted Pennsylvania “as a model for efficiency for our coordinated transportation service,” which delivers more MATP trips than any state with a comparable population, while maintaining the fifth-lowest per-trip cost in the nation.

Farr said the brokered model works against the existing system, fragmenting it and impacting service availability and cost. He said under a brokered model the cost of an average ride would increase by 50 percent, from \$32 to \$48. “The problem with this model is it is an incentive to not provide trips,” he told members.



Gombita outlined several other states that have moved to a full-risk brokerage model and seen increased costs combined with declining ridership, including Texas, Maine, and New Jersey. She also corrected several inaccuracies she said have been made on the subject. Specifically, she clarified Pennsylvania is not under a mandate to convert to a broker model. Also, she said, Pennsylvania is currently in compliance with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) under an approved state plan and does in fact meet current federal regulations.

Chairman Hennessey said Pennsylvania has had a succession of approved state plans over the decades, with the latest dating to March 2017. Gombita said the plan allowed for DHS to directly contract with certain counties, among other changes. Chairman Hennessey said various disallowances seemed to predate 2017 going back to previous plans. Gombita said that would be her assumption.

Chairman Hennessey said he has been told by some quarters that the counties are taking money, even though there may only be a slight disadvantage to billing CMS. He added there is “a ton more paperwork” when billing CMS. Gombita said there is a lot more paperwork related to MATP. Farr said the program is fully audited and their rates are designed simply to cover costs.

Chairman Hennessey noted that if there is \$200 million in disallowances pending they may well be prior to 2017 and could be solved without recapture. The panel agreed.

Minority Chairman Carroll cited the rate disparity chart from the panel's testimony and asked where the difference would come from if the brokerage model were to be enacted. Farr said based on their research they discovered that ridership will go down, similar to what happened in Texas where it declined by 50 percent. By only covering their costs, they said they would then have to return to the state and consumers to make up the difference in revenues. Chairman Carroll asked if the Department of Transportation (PennDOT) has a willingness to fill that potential gap. Farr said they believe the gap would not be sustainable and they would have to limit or prioritize trips. Chairman Carroll said the combination of fares, county participation, reduction in service and PennDOT involvement would all be in play under the new model. Farr said if the same thing happens in Pennsylvania as happened in other states that is true.

Chairman Carroll asked the panel's confidence level in the DHS study work group. Farr said they have been invited to participate in a session of the work group. He said they have been concerned the voice of the front-line riders is not being heard. Chairman Carroll asked why the CCAP and PPTA are not in alignment on the issue. Farr clarified that the two groups are aligned and believe the study itself, rather than the counties, need to consult the riders.

Rep. Mullins asked if there are any states that have gotten it right, either through a hybrid model or state-run brokerage model. Geibel said CMS does provide a lot of leeway at the state level on how to structure a program; the fundamental question is how it is paid for. He said in Pennsylvania it is currently a fee-for-service administrative service model and said the suggested model is not the only type possible. He said some states operate under a non-profit model, for example. Geibel reiterated Pennsylvania is very unique in the level of services it offers.

Chairman Hennessey asked, aside from the requirement in Act 40 that there be at least two brokers, if it is possible under current regulations for PennDOT to contract with MATP providers like the counties do and effectively act as the broker. Geibel said he believes so. He added, however, the current model is fully compliant and is working well at a low cost.

[Sally Kozak](#), deputy secretary for the Office of Medical Assistance Programs, DHS, testified along with [Laurie Rock](#), director of Medical Assistance Managed Care, and [Maranatha Perez](#), director of the Bureau of Fiscal Management. Kozak said they provide funding to all 67 counties for MATP and have a variety of methods that the counties use to administer it. She said seven operate as a sole service provider, with full-time staff dedicated to it. Those counties can claim their full administrative cost. She added 38 operate a vendor model, with operation and administration both contracted out by the counties. Those programs typically don't have full-time staff and cannot claim their costs. The hybrid models typically have part-time staff and claim their time, she said. Continuing, Kozak told members 12 counties have elected to have the department do the transportation directly, for which DHS has contracted with two operators. Lastly, she said, Philadelphia has had a brokered



model since 2006, with LogistiCare retained as the broker.

Kozak said that in the counties that are not a brokered model they receive a 50 percent federal match while Philadelphia has a 52.5 percent match. She said moving to a statewide broker model would see the higher level match provided across the board.

Kozak outlined the process of moving forward with the procurement process and explained Act 19 of 2019 required they put that procurement on hold and conduct an investigation into the impact of transitioning to the broker model. She detailed the objectives and complement of the work group, its weekly meetings, and its use of Mercer to do the required analysis. She noted members of the work group met with the county commissioners in early October, with 20 counties in attendance. She said concerns were outlined by the counties related to lost ridership, loss of viability of certain fixed routes, and costs. Commissioners also discussed the impact to older riders and financial standing. A week later PPTA representatives shared many of the same concerns, she went on. She said they are currently looking to schedule a meeting with the Pennsylvania Health Law Project to get feedback from consumers. Kozak told members the final report will address state and federal laws that pertain to the various programs, examine the efficiency and effectiveness of the current non-emergency transportation system, and assess the experiences of other states.

Chairman Hennessey said the report notes Mercer will not make recommendations but rather tell the legislature essentially what options are available. He said Act 40 still gives the authority to simply move ahead and issue a contract to one or two of the applicants. Kozak said Act 40 doesn't require them to cancel the procurement, just put it on hold while they complete the analysis. Chairman Hennessey said the final report due in December will have no bearing on DHS's ability to complete a contract. He asked for assurances DHS will not move ahead until the legislature has time to weigh in. Kozak said they will get the final analysis at the same time as the General Assembly and "clearly we would take time to review that." Kozak said if they were to move forward they would do so in "a thoughtful and considered manner."

Chairman Hennessey noted DHS also has the ability to reject all applicants if they do not meet the outlined requirements. He asked if DHS feels it is obliged to accept one or more applicants if they meet requirements. Kozak said the department believes they have to move forward with a broker model under the law.

Chairman Carroll asked the earliest date DHS could issue a contract for a brokered model consistent with the procurement requirements in place. Rock said that is hard to answer because they had to pause the process due to Act 19; they would have to go back and see how far along the process they were. Rock speculated it would be a period of months rather than days or weeks.

Asked about potential savings, Kozak said the savings come from the enhanced federal match and DHS would save \$10 to \$15 million. Chairman Carroll asked if those savings to the department would be offset by any other increasing costs to other parties. Kozak reiterated the savings to the department would be \$10 to \$15 million.

Rep. Lawrence said moving forward with the brokered model would be "an unmitigated disaster." He said the current system in Chester County works well. By contrast a brokerage model, even on a regional basis, would make it harder for people, including legislators, to resolve issues, he opined Kozak said the feedback shared by Rep. Lawrence was shared by other stakeholders and they appreciate those concerns.

On the \$200 disallowance, Chairman Hennessey said there has been an interim payment still submitted by the federal government, leaving around \$100 million outstanding, which could be negotiated to zero. Perez said they had \$200 million in outstanding deferrals and \$14 million in disallowances. She said they have been negotiated on the \$80 remaining deferral. Chairman Hennessey asked if the \$200 million is all from before 2017. Perez said yes.

Chairman Carroll asked if the confidence level is high that the period of at least two months estimated by Rock is a certainty. Kozak said it is a pretty good guess; at least two and probably not more than three months. Chairman Carroll asked if the department is planning to go down the path to agreeing with new brokers. Kozak said the underlying law still stands



requiring that. Chairman Carroll indicated therefore it would need legislative action to undo.

[Jennie Granger](#), deputy secretary for multimodal transportation at PennDOT, offered a history of public transportation and shared ride services in the commonwealth since 1970. She also described the creation of the working group and its activities in meetings with a variety of stakeholders.

Chairman Hennessey asked if PennDOT could be selected to act as a broker under the legislation and if it is in a position to do so. Granger said she would need an attorney to answer that question, but speculated by law it could be done. “Anything is possible,” she remarked.

Chairman Hennessey said he believes the language of Act 40 means DHS could abstain from entering in a contract if they choose.

Chairman Hennessey said it seems that under a broker model, if a broker caused CMS to disallow claims, it would be up to the state to go after the broker. Granger said her interpretation is that the “devil will be in the details” under such a model. Ultimately, she said, whatever the broker agreement winds up being will govern those kinds of issues. Chairman Hennessey said he is concerned that a full-risk broker will still mean Pennsylvania is “on the hook” for certain charges. Granger said her exposure to other federal agencies indicates it will be DHS still having to coordinate with CMS.

Chairman Carroll asked if there are any counties in favor of the proposed broker model. Granger said she is not aware of any. Chairman Carroll noted it is rare that 66 counties all agree on something. He asked where the additional money from PennDOT would be sourced. Granger said until the report comes back outlining and quantifying the costs they do not have a clear answer on that. She added they will be working closely with DHS, transit agencies and others to mitigate any negative impacts and source funds to cover any lapses. Chairman Carroll said it is possible expiring funds from the Pennsylvania Turnpike would be used to plug the holes, which is problematic.

Chairman Hennessey asked what concerns PennDOT has with the long-term stability of transit providers if ridership is taken away. Granger said if they lose riders there will be impacts. Chairman Hennessey said he has heard 30 to 35 percent of the overall ridership in the 66 counties comes from MATP and that will be crippling.

[Robert Torres](#), secretary of aging, offered remarks along with [David Miles](#), aging service specialist and the work group representative for Department of Aging. Sec. Torres said they have been actively engaged in providing information to Mercer as part of the authorized study and are looking forward to the final analysis.

Chairman Hennessey said the MATP riders depend on the free transportation currently available. Going to a broker model would affect other riders however, including the elderly. He asked how they would be impacted. Sec. Torres said the PennDOT-administered shared ride program would be still available for anyone under MATP. Chairman Hennessey asked how providers would be expected to survive with a precipitous decline in ridership. Sec. Torres said they want to make sure there remains reliable and safe transportation available for seniors and that has been made clear in the working group. He said they will have to scrutinize the final report and assess its implications.

Chairman Carroll asked the secretary if he could identify any regions that currently do not have reliable, safe and accessible transit for seniors. Sec. Torres said he could not. Chairman Carroll said people are not shy about calling district and Harrisburg offices with complaints, and he is not aware of any coming in on shared rides. He said the program thus seems like it is working pretty well under the current model. Sec. Torres said they do get some concerns raised, largely relating to on-demand and cross-county lines. Chairman Carroll said that seems like a call for more expanded services rather than a contraction.

Chairman Hennessey opined it seems like a dangerous path the system is going down and he has yet to see any financial incentives that would make a transition worthwhile.



[Wendell Kay](#), Wayne County commissioner, [Mark Hamilton](#), Tioga County commissioner, and [Jack Matson](#), Jefferson County commissioner, offered testimony on behalf of the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania (CCAP).

Kay said thanked Sen. Lisa Baker (R-Luzerne) and Rep. Jonathan Fritz (R-Susquehanna), whose Act 19 “put the brakes” on a brokered model. He discussed Wayne County and the people he represents there who use MATP. Kay said Wayne County has run its system efficiently for a number of years and maintains a productive relationship with residents. He challenged an outside broker will not know the county’s roads or its citizens. “These are not just statistics to our drivers,” he emphasized. Kay asked members to reconsider the way the state is heading with respect to a brokered system.

Matson said transportation services are tricky in rural parts of the state. He noted Jefferson County employs a hybrid model that can provide curb-to-curb service. He said if they are crippled by a loss of ridership they will still find “a way to make it work.” Matson asked members to delay the process before it gets to that point.

Hamilton noted he is chairman of the board of a three-county transit board with a combined population of 110,000 people. He said they have built up a regional system that leverages a number of efficiencies. Hamilton said they have 7,000 shared rides a month, 2,500 of which are MATP. He said the MATP mileages work out to over 45 percent of the total. Speaking to MATP’s efficiencies specifically, he said the three-county board has a single agreement with DHS, reducing paperwork on both sides.

Hamilton also detailed how Tioga County, New York fared following that state’s transition to a brokered model and said they now have no public transit system in place. He asked members to stop Pennsylvania’s own move to a brokered model.

Chairman Hennessey said the panels have given members a lot to think about, and said he and Chairman Carroll appear to be on the same page in considering the transition a mistake. He opined that in no way do the predicted financial benefits appear to outweigh the drawbacks.

Chairman Carroll asked the panel to highlight or refute any previous remarks made at the hearing. Hamilton said the commonwealth is a “one-size-fits-none” operation and emphasized the value in leveraging local knowledge and familiarity with what works in a given location.

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### **Senate Health and Human Services Committee**

*10/28/19, 12:45 p.m., Rules Committee Conference Room, Main Capitol*

By Harrison Cann, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

[SB 841 Martin, Scott](#) - (PN 1151) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety) reauthorizing the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council (PHC4). The Health Care Cost Containment Act reestablishes the PHC4 as an independent council consisting of public officials and representatives from business communities, organized labor, consumers, hospitals, physicians, nurses and the insurance industry to collect and disseminate health care cost data. The legislation codifies PHC4 under Title 35 and does not include a sunset date. Effective immediately. - The bill was unanimously **reported as amended**.

[A03149](#) by Martin, provides that supplemental insurers may not be required to maintain data. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

[A03503](#) by Martin, is a technical change that removes old language from the prior bill from last session. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.



Minority Chairman Arthur Haywood (D-Montgomery) stated that although this bill is important he still has concerns about costs. He added that increasing competition in the market is always good but that he would like to have reduced redundancies to avoid wasted costs in the medical industry. He noted that the bill currently limits data requests to insurance companies to just national sources and that he would not want the state to be limited by the exception. Overall, he concluded, he wants to prioritize cost containment for consumers.

Sen. Scott Martin (R-Lancaster) responded by stating that Chairman Haywood's comments are beneficial and that the concerns can be looked into going forward.

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### **House Appropriations Committee**

*10/28/19, 2:17 p.m., Room 140, Main Capitol*

By Emily Mistishen, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

[HB 1448 Sturla, Mike](#) - (PN 1796) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety), in volunteer fire company, ambulance service and rescue squad assistance, providing for a referendum to expand loan assistance. The referendum shall read: Do you favor expanding the use of the indebtedness authorized under 35 Pa.C.S. 7367 (relating to authority to borrow) and 7378.1 (relating to referendum for additional indebtedness) for the volunteer loan assistance under 35 Pa.C.S. Ch. 73 Subch. E (relating to volunteer fire company, ambulance service and rescue squad assistance) to include loans to fire companies that provide services through paid personnel for the purpose of establishing and modernizing facilities to house firefighting apparatus equipment, ambulances and rescue vehicles, protective and communications equipment and any other accessory equipment necessary for the proper performance of such organizations' duties. The referendum shall not be constructed as authorizing any additional borrowing for loan assistance to fire companies. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1869 Owlett, Clint](#) - (PN 2566) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety), in emergency medical services system, providing that staffing requirements for basic life support ambulances may be waived or adjusted for counties of the sixth, seventh and eighth classes. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

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### **Senate Appropriations Committee**

*10/28/19, 3:52 p.m., Senate Rules Committee Conference Room*

By Robert Cochran, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

[SB 67 Ward, Judy \(F\)](#) - (PN 60) The Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact Act authorizes the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to join the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact; provides for the form of the compact; and imposes additional powers and duties on the governor, the Secretary of the Commonwealth and the compact. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

Sen. Judy Ward (R-Blair), the legislation's prime sponsor, remarked that the legislation would "increase public access to psychological services by allowing for tele-psychological practice across state lines as well as temporary in-person services." She said Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact would:

- increase access to professional psychological services,
- enhance the ability to protect client-patient health and safety,





- promote cooperation between compact states in licensure and regulations, and
- exchange information between compact states to verify licensure and disciplinary history.

Sen. Ward said 10 states have adopted the compact, the Pennsylvania Psychological Association supports the bill and the State Board of Psychology voted to support the concept of the compact.

Chairman Pat Browne (R-Lehigh) said pending legislation in other states estimates costs to be \$27,000 annually.

[SB 905 Browne, Patrick](#) - (PN 1256) The Capital Budget Project Itemization Act of 2019-20 provides for the capital budget for fiscal year 2019-20, itemizes various public improvement projects, authorizes the incurring of debt without the approval of electors for financing projects, authorizes the use of current revenue for the purpose of financing projects and provides appropriations. Effective immediately. - The bill was unanimously **reported as amended**.

[A03452](#) by Browne, provides for additional capital projects. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

[A03457](#) by Hughes, provides for additional capital projects. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Chairman Browne said the bill provides for public improvement of furniture and equipment along with flood control measures.

Minority Chairman Vincent Hughes (D-Philadelphia) recognized legislative staff's efforts in crafting the legislation. Chairman Browne agreed, and commended legislative staff for their efforts.

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### **Senate Banking and Insurance Committee**

*10/28/19, 4:05 p.m., Rules Committee Conference Room*

By Robert Cochran, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

[SB 857 Vogel, Jr., Elder](#) - (PN 1170) The Telemedicine Act authorizes the practice of telemedicine by health care providers. Requires each licensure board to promulgate regulations within 24 months of the effective date and provides for the publishing of temporary regulations within 60 days. Further provides for evaluation and treatment, insurance coverage, and Medicaid program reimbursement. The provisions regarding insurance coverage and Medicaid program reimbursement shall take effect in 90 days and the remainder shall take effect immediately. - The bill was **reported as amended** with Sen. Dan Laughlin (R-Erie) voting in the negative.

[A03486](#) by Vogel, is a technical amendment that further defines "health care provider" and defines "participating network provider". The amendment was **adopted** with Sen. Laughlin voting in the negative.

Chairman Mario Scavello (R-Monroe) stated that the work added in the legislation is intended to get the bill out of committee.

Sen. Kristin Phillips-Hill (R-York) stated that the definition of «store-and-forward» was amended to not include «certain things» and that the technology should be operable in various application programming interfaces (API). She asked if different formats and structures used by physicians would be applicable with the technology. Chairman Scavello said, «I believe so, yes.»

Sen. Phillips-Hill asked for clarification on whether the legislation does not mandate specific technology. Chairman Scavello indicated that was correct, the legislation does not mandate specific technology to be used by physicians.

Sen. Phillips-Hill asked if the legislation ensures the same standards of care and other measurements are applied to both



in-person and virtual health visits. Chairman Scavello indicated yes.

She asked how privacy is addressed during the sharing of information by health care providers. Sen. Elder Vogel (R-Beaver) said Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 standards are maintained. Chairman Scavello said the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act (HITECH) of 2009 provides protections as well.

Sen. Phillips-Hill said the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact is essential for allowing physicians not in Pennsylvania to be licensed in Pennsylvania. She noted for counties on the state border, physicians in Pennsylvania have patients outside the state. She said even though the compact passed, «it has never been enacted.» Sen. Phillips-Hill asked if any conversations with the attorney general occurred to ensure that the compact is being enacted.

Minority Chairman Sharif Street (D-Philadelphia) clarified that Chairman Scavello referred to the acronym HITECH, not «high tech.» He said that HITECH is a federally-enacted standard for creating uniformity in technology interface. He indicated the legislation provides for the Insurance Department to adopt uniform standards as well. He said the department is working with Sen. Vogel to develop and promulgate regulations based on the standards set forth in the bill.

Sen. Phillips-Hill asked if there is an update regarding the compact. Sen. Lisa Boscola (D-Northampton) said, «The administration is working on it, but they said they were going to have it done in...May or June.» Sen. Phillips-Hill said her understanding is issues exist with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Chairman Street indicated that the administration is working on those concerns. Sen. Boscola said other states are capable of implementing the compact.

Sen. Phillips Hill said she would support the bill, and that the legislation could impact residents in Pennsylvania. She said successful implementation in Pennsylvania is dependent on a couple of things, including patient technology and broadband accessibility. She said that laws and regulations needed updated in Pennsylvania and Washington D.C. for the implementation of telemedicine. She suggested more work may need to be done on the issue.

Chairman Scavello suggested the House will work on the legislation, and agreements could be met then. He added that the bill includes language from the House from last session. Sen. Phillips-Hill thanked the chairman for her time in the committee. Chairman Scavello commended the senator for her questions. Sen. Phillips-Hill said this legislation has implications for rural Pennsylvania. The chairman agreed that the legislation assists rural communities.

Sen. Joe Pittman (R-Indiana) said that the amendment to the bill is not reflective of all the changes included by the House last session. He said last session's legislation was the agreed-to version. He commended the chairman for his effort on the bill, but said that «clear terms» should be met on the bill.

Chairman Street agreed with Sen. Pittman that work still needs to be done on the legislation. He commended the prime sponsor and the chairman for their work on the legislation. He requested a favorable vote from committee, with the understanding that more work needs to be done on the bill.

Sen. Thomas Killion (R-Delaware) agreed that more work needs to be done on the bill.





## House Labor and Industry Committee

10/29/19, 9:30 a.m., Room B-31 Main Capitol

By Matt Hess, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider bills.

[HB 1234 Cox, Jim](#) - (PN 1351) Amends the Workers' Compensation Act, in liability and compensation, further providing for the definitions of "injury," "personal injury" and "injury arising in the course of his employment," providing for diseases with long latency periods between occupational exposure and manifestation of the disease and further providing for liability. The bill states that notwithstanding the limitation otherwise provided with respect to disability or death resulting from an occupational disease having to occur within 300 weeks after the last date of employment in an occupation or industry to which a claimant was exposed to the hazards of disease, claims filed for any disease for which the time period between exposure to the hazard of disease in the workplace and manifestation of disease is greater than 300 weeks must be filed within 300 weeks of the date on which a claimant is diagnosed with the disease or the disease is detectable. Portions apply retroactively. Effective immediately. - The bill was **reported as amended** with Democratic members voting in the negative.

Chairman Cox said the committee has worked with stakeholders to try to find common ground on the legislation but opposition still exists. He indicated that he is willing to still consider amendments on the bill as long as it «isn't something that has been shot down 15 times before.»

[A03213](#) by Cox, clarifies that a liability for latent diseases for the group of claims for the last day of the employment or the exposure occurred prior to the effective date will be paid as follows: self insured employers will pay claims as they pay all other workers compensation claims, insurers will not be required to pay or defend compensable claims that were not compensable prior to the effective date; insured employers who receive those uninsured claims may refer those to the Workers Compensation Security Fund (WCSF); makes clarifying changes. The amendment was **approved** with Democratic members voting in the negative.

Rep. Gerald Mullery (D-Luzerne) said the most recent annual report from the WCSF is from 2017-18 and asked if the 2018-19 annual report is available. Republican Executive Director John Scarpato said the report is not available and is unsure when it will be released but noted that a financial audit report covers the end of the most recent fiscal report.

Rep. Mullery said the WCSF had a balance of approximately \$850 million and asked what the balance is currently. Scarpato said the fund balance as of June 30 was \$964,477,227.

Rep. Mullery indicated that the most recent annual report found that there were 1,280 claims were being adjusted and asked what the current number is. Scarpato said he didn't have the exact figure but opined that it would be a similar number of claims. Rep. Mullery said WCSF was adjusting claims from 49 companies and the most recent company that was liquidated was Guarantee Insurance Company and questioned if any other insurance companies were liquidated since November 27, 2017. Scarpato said WCSF has not issued an annual report since 2017-18 and the yet-to-be-released report would have that information. Rep. Mullery said WCSF was tasked with adjusting Guarantee Insurance Company's 493 applicable claims and asked if that is a typical number of claims that is transferred during a liquidation. Scarpato explained that the number varies.

Rep. Mullery said the amendment has the potential to create «tremendous amount of exposure» to the WCSF and asked if there will be increase on the assessment that funds the WCSF and what impact that would have on Pennsylvania employers. Scarpato said an assessment would occur by the Insurance Department if the fund balance drops below \$500 million and if that would occur, insurers would be assessed. He added that the most recent assessment was ten years and it was a one-time fee. «This has been negotiated with business groups that represent insured employers, including the Chamber and NFIB, and they are comfortable with this approach and are supportive of the legislation,» he stated.

Rep. Mullery said the amendment would allow the insurance companies to shift claims to the WCSF despite collecting the



premiums. He asked if the third party administrator will also handle the claim. Scarpato said the intention will be that WCSF will act as the insurer. Rep. Mullery stated «not only are insurers dodging the payment, they are dodging the handling of the claim.» Scarpato said the concern was that many of the claims would be denied by the insurers because the policy didn't cover latent diseases. Rep. Mullery said workers have the ability to file a claim for latent occupational disease and argued that the legislation shifts liability from a civil suit to a workers' compensation claim. Chairman Cox said the purpose of the bill is to provide a level of certainty for workers as opposed to leaving it up to a civil action. Rep. Mullery said he has handled workers compensation claims for 20 years and there is no guarantee that the worker will win a claim.

Rep. Mullery asked why the Department of Labor and Industry opposes the bill. Chairman Cox said he has not seen anything from the department on the bill.

Minority Chairman Pat Harkins (D-Erie) said he appreciates the chairman's efforts to address stakeholder concerns but urged a negative vote on the amendment because it raises additional concerns.

[A03292](#) by Cox, removes language applying the exclusive remedy provisions of the Workers Compensation Act to other entities within the corporate structure. The amendment was unanimously **approved**.

Chairman Harkins urged an affirmative vote on the amendment.

On the bill, Rep. Mullery said the language as amended contradicts itself and asked if the bill is supposed to be retroactive. Chairman Cox stated "the bill is designed to apply to claims filed after the effective date and for existing civil claims for which no compensation as yet been paid or awarded." Rep. Mullery said the bill is retroactive.

Chairman Mullery appreciated that compromises that were made but he and other stakeholders still have concerns about the legislation and urged a negative vote on the bill. "I hope that by the time it reaches the House Floor we can come together with some of the stakeholders that have concerns, I think we're very close," he stated. Chairman Cox reiterated that he is open to adding amendments. "I think the solution is one where everyone feels an equal amount of pain," he stated.

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### **Senate Labor and Industry Committee**

*10/29/19, 10:00 a.m., Room 461 Main Capitol Building*

By Jeff Cox, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider six bills.

[SB 922 Bartolotta, Camera](#) - (PN 1309) Amends the Workers' Compensation Act, in liability and compensation, removing the word installments from the statute. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was **passed over**.

Chairman Camera Bartolotta (R-Washington) announced that Senate Bill 464 and Senate Bill 922 were being held over for today. She explained her staff issued a sunshine notice for this meeting last week which included these two bills. Chairman Bartolotta reported, "Unfortunately, there were stakeholders with strongly held opinions about both bills that did not make their positions known until the eleventh hour." She commented, "I take very seriously the responsibility of this committee to carefully consider the merits of every bill and to understand the positions of the people and organizations who will be affected by the legislation." Regarding Senate Bill 464, Chairman Bartolotta stated that Senator Christine Tartaglione's (D-Philadelphia) staff attempted to discuss the subject of workplace safety with organizations representing local governments. She said those organizations failed to make their positions known until yesterday afternoon. Regarding Senate Bill 922, Chairman Bartolotta explained that the legislation addresses language in the Workers' Compensation Act that was interpreted by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in April 2018 and legislation has been discussed since the Supreme Court decision was issued but "we heard opposition from certain organizations yesterday and still do not have any detailed understanding of their position." She said, "To say this is frustrating would be an understatement. In order to



perform the important duty of this committee, we will go over these two Senate bills for today, but I call on everyone with an interest in these bills to contact my staff immediately.” Chairman Bartolotta added, “We will do our best to accommodate all perspectives on this legislation, but we won’t delay action indefinitely nor we will reward last minute efforts to derail a bill.”

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### **House Insurance Committee**

*10/29/19, 12:10 p.m., Room B-31 Main Capitol Building*

By Jeff Cox, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

[HB 1862 Pickett, Tina](#) - (PN 2795) Amends The Insurance Company Law of 1921, in quality health care accountability and protections, establishing protections for consumers receiving surprise balance bills for health care services from out-of-network providers. If an out-of-network provider renders a health care service to an insured, the out-of-network provider may bill the insurer and be reimbursed directly for a covered service at the commercially reasonable rate directly for that service, unless the insurer has a contract that addresses payment for an out-of-network provider or the insurer and out-of-network provider agree otherwise. An out-of-network provider may not bill the insured for the difference between the out-of-network provider’s charge and the amount of the commercially reasonable rate paid by an insurer for the covered service and the out-of-network provider may bill the insured for no more than the in-network cost-sharing amount. The legislation establishes procedures for insurers and health care providers when health care services from out-of-network providers are provided. The legislation indicates that out-of-network providers may not advance a surprise balance bill to collection. Effective in 180 days. - The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

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### **House Health Committee**

*10/29/19, 12:15 p.m., Room G-50, Irvis Office Building*

By Harrison Cann, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

[HB 1880 Gillespie, Keith](#) - (PN 2615) Amends the Health Care Facilities Act removing the requirement for surnames to be displayed on health care employees’ identification badges. Provides a notation, marker or indicator included on an identification badge that differentiates employees with the same first name shall, as determined by the facility, be considered acceptable in lieu of displaying an employee’s last name. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[HB 1890 Ryan, Frank](#) - (PN 2623) The Final Disposition of Fetal Remains Act provides that upon the fetal death of an unborn child, if a parent of the unborn child selects a location for the final disposition of the fetal remains other than a location that is usual and customary for a health care facility, the parent shall be responsible for the costs relating to the final disposition of the fetal remains. Provides for the duties of health care facilities; identification requirements; simultaneous cremation; and certificate of birth. Further provides a person who violates the act shall be subject to the penalties imposed under Article IX of the Vital Statistics Law of 1953. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was **reported as committed** along a party-line vote, with Democrats voting in the negative.

Rep. Frank Ryan (R-Lebanon) explained the purpose of his bill. He stated that the bill should be considered in context of a family that just lost a child, sharing his own story of losing his first child at birth. He noted that by the time he was told he could ask the hospital for the remains, the hospital had already disposed of them. He added that he still wonders where that baby went and that this bill would give people closure if they need it.



Rep. Mike Schlossberg (D-Lehigh) asked if, as it stands now, the medical facility is responsible for taking care of fetal remains. Whitney Metzler, executive director, responded that right now fetal remains are treated as medical waste at facilities.

Rep. Schlossberg stated that the bill is putting legislators' views onto families that are dealing with tragedy. He added that fetal tissue can be valuable in medical research and vaccination development. He claimed that the bill would put a financial burden on families who choose to make the charitable act to donate fetal remains. He noted that there are people who want to choose burial or cremation, which should be supported, but the people who choose to donate fetal tissue should be supported as well.

Erika Fricke, executive director, clarified that any miscarriage post-16 weeks is considered a fetal death and is required to be ritually disposed of through cremation or burial. She added that fetal tissue and medical tissue is required to be examined prior to any decision. Chairman Kathy Rapp (R-Warren) commented that the bill was deemed constitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Rep. Jerry Knowles (R-Schuylkill) stated that many people have lost children during development, and that there used to not be a choice for parents. He asserted that he cannot understand anyone against letting the parents have the decision regarding the remains.

Rep. Aaron Bernstine (R-Lawrence) asked if parents are mandated to choose the location of the ritual. Metzler responded that the parents are given the option and the medical facility takes care of the remains by ritual if the parents decide to not exercise their option. Rep. Bernstine asked how that would put any additional financial burden on a parent. Metzler responded that there would only be a fee if the parents choose a location other than the medical facility.

Rep. Schlossberg commented a financial barrier would be made for parents who would want to donate the remains for scientific research. Rep. Bernstine stated that he is «shocked and amazed» there is not full support for something that gives parents the choice regarding the remains of their baby. He claimed that he is «pro-choice» when it comes to letting parents decide what happens to the remains of their baby.

Rep. Mary Jo Daley (D-Montgomery) stated that the objections come from the definition of fetal death being 16 weeks but the bill defining it as post-fertilization. She added that the law would apply to any produce post-conception, including a fertilized egg lost before implantation in the uterus during menses. She noted that the definition is a significant change that does not exist in current law.

Rep. Daley stated that the decision to have an abortion and the event of a miscarriage are very personal, and that the definition is difficult for families going through that. She discussed a statement from a doctor, stating that patients going through difficult hurdles in pregnancies do not need the state interfering in their process. She added that fetal tissue can be taken care of by the medical facility if that is what the parents wish, and that burials and cremation are also supported. She reiterated that it is difficult for everyone to go through a miscarriage, and that she feels for Rep. Ryan, but the bill would hurt some women rather than help them.

Rep. Stephanie Borowicz (R-Clinton) asked how the abortion law relates to the fetal death definition at 16 weeks. Fricke responded that abortions are allowed up to 23 weeks and six days. Rep. Borowicz stated that she is baffled by that discrepancy.

Rep. Wendy Ullman (D-Bucks) shared comments from someone that experienced a miscarriage, stating that they would have wanted to donate the fetus to science so that the life could be of use. She added that the bill gives two alternatives to women that are dealing with physical and psychological pain, but that many people would like a third choice without financial burden. She stated that many early miscarriages are just «a mess on a napkin» and that many people would not want to go through with a ritual burial or cremation in that scenario. She reiterated that she wants to honor the choice of women and families to be able to choose burial and cremation but this bill is too broadly drawn.



Rep. Knowles commented that he considers it a baby and that the decision should always be up to the parents. Rep. Jim Cox (R-Berks) asked if parents are prevented from asking for a child's remains to be donated to research. Metzler responded that they are given the choice to determine how the remains are disposed of. Rep. Cox stated that it sounds like parents are given the opportunity to give the child's remains to research while also getting other options. Metzler noted that the child's remains would go through normal hospital procedure for medical waste if no decision is made, and that parents are given the ability to choose the final disposition.

Fricke stated that there needs to be clarification for with dispositions and fetal death certificates. She noted that fetal death certificates would be required for any post-fertilization tissue at a medical facility, but if a parent were to choose the path of a ritual not at the hospital, would they be required to get a fetal death certificate. She stated that through her reading of the bill, someone would need to get a fetal death certificate in the process of a ritual burial or cremation.

Chairman Rapp commented that it could be addressed before the bill comes to the floor.

[A03548](#) by Fiedler, provides for paid family leave following a miscarriage. The amendment **failed** along a party-line vote, with Democrats voting in the positive.

Minority Chairman Dan Frankel (D-Allegheny) explained Rep. Elizabeth Fiedler's (D-Philadelphia) amendment, stating that it provides financial and mental and physical health security for women that just experienced a miscarriage. He added that it would require 12 weeks paid family leave following a miscarriage, and that it would allow them to grieve and recover as they seem fit.

[A03549](#) by Frankel, requires a medical practitioner give standard practice information to patients without repercussions. The amendment **failed** along a party-line vote, with Democrats voting in the positive.

Rep. Frankel explained Rep. Fiedler's amendment, stating that it protects providers from legislative interventions based on religious beliefs. He stated that providers should not be required by law to go against the best practices when treating a patient, and that the amendment allows them to share accurate information to patients without worrying about repercussions.

[HR 537 Hill-Evans, Carol \(F\)](#) - (PN 2661) Resolution recognizing November 21, 2019, as The Great American Smokeout Day in Pennsylvania. - The resolution was **reported as committed**.

[HR 557 Oberlander, Donna](#) - (PN 2653) Resolution designating the week of November 10 through 16, 2019, as Diabetes and Cardiovascular Disease Awareness Week in Pennsylvania. - The resolution was **reported as committed**.

[HR 561 Pashinski, Eddie Day](#) - (PN 2663) Resolution recognizing November 3, 2019, as One Health Day in Pennsylvania. - The resolution was **reported as committed**.

[HR 566 Matzie, Robert](#) - (PN 2715) Resolution designating the month of November 2019 as "Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania. - The resolution was **reported as committed**.

[HR 570 Bizzarro, Ryan](#) - (PN 2718) Resolution recognizing the month of November 2019 as "National Epilepsy Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania. - The resolution was **reported as committed**.

[HR 580 Delozier, Sheryl](#) - (PN 2726) Resolution designating the month of October 2019 as "Cardiac Arrest Awareness" Month in Pennsylvania. - The resolution was **reported as committed**.

[HR 581 Bullock, Donna](#) - (PN 2749) Resolution recognizing the week of October 20 through 26, 2019 as "National Lead Poisoning Prevention Week" in Pennsylvania. - The resolution was **reported as committed**.

[HR 595 Mullins, Kyle \(F\)](#) - (PN 2793) Resolution designating the month of November 2019 as "Complex Regional Pain



Syndrome Awareness Month” in Pennsylvania. - The resolution was **reported as committed**.

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### **Senate Appropriations Committee**

*10/29/19, 3:45 p.m., Rules Committee Conference Room*

By Jeff Cox, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider bills.

[SB 836 Regan, Mike](#) - (PN 1145) Amends the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act to include electrocardiogram testing and require information be provided to student athletes regarding electrocardiogram testing. The legislation also provides that the athletes be notified of the option to request the administration of an electrocardiogram in addition to the standard physical examination. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[SB 841 Martin, Scott](#) - (PN 1151) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety) reauthorizing the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council (PHC4). The Health Care Cost Containment Act reestablishes the PHC4 as an independent council consisting of public officials and representatives from business communities, organized labor, consumers, hospitals, physicians, nurses and the insurance industry to collect and disseminate health care cost data. The legislation codifies PHC4 under Title 35 and does not include a sunset date. Effective immediately. - The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[SB 857 Vogel, Jr., Elder](#) - (PN 1170) The Telemedicine Act authorizes the practice of telemedicine by health care providers. Requires each licensure board to promulgate regulations within 24 months of the effective date and provides for the publishing of temporary regulations within 60 days. Further provides for evaluation and treatment, insurance coverage, and Medicaid program reimbursement. The provisions regarding insurance coverage and Medicaid program reimbursement shall take effect in 90 days and the remainder shall take effect immediately. - The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

[SB 906 Yudichak, John](#) - (PN 1259) Amends the Mental Health and Intellectual Disability Act, in preliminary provisions, providing a technical change; and in responsibilities of the state, providing for a moratorium on the closure of state facilities. This legislation provides for no closure of a state facility until all Medicaid-waiver eligible persons have been granted waivers. Once waivers have been granted, the bill provides for the establishment of a task force to conduct an evaluation and provide recommendations to the Department of Human Services (DHS) prior to closure. The legislation also provides that if the task force votes for closure, DHS will prepare a plan for the closure and transition of individuals receiving care in the state facility to a home or community-based support system. Effective immediately. - The bill was **reported as committed** with Senators John Blake (D-Lackawanna), Art Haywood (D-Montgomery) and Pam Iovino (D-Allegheny) voting in the negative.

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### **Senate Judiciary Committee**

*10/29/19, 4:00 p.m., Rules Committee Conference Room*

By Jeff Cox, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider bills.

[SB 924 Farnese, Lawrence](#) - (PN 1310) Amends Title 20 (Decedents, Estates and Fiduciaries, in incapacitated persons, establishing subchapter G for Guardianship for Medically Disabled Adult Children. If a court, no less than 20 days after receipt of the petition, affidavit of medical disability, affidavit of accountability by the proposed guardian and notice to the individual alleged to be a medically disabled adult child and other party, finds by a clear and convincing standard an individual to be a medically disabled adult child, the court may appoint a guardian or guardians of the medically disabled adult's person or estate. The petitioner may be any individual the court has determined is providing at least 50 percent financial





responsibility or 50 percent physical custody for the medically disabled adult child. The legislation indicates petition contents and establishes notification guidelines. The petitioner shall provide the court evidence of medical disability. If there has been no change in the capacity of the medically disabled adult child, the court may require an updated affidavit of medical disability in lieu of a hearing if no change to the guardianship is sought. The court shall annually file with the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts a statistical and descriptive report to assist in evaluating the operation and costs of the guardianship system. The legislation establishes the duty of the guardian of the medically disabled adult child to assert the rights and best interests of the medically disabled adult child. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was unanimously **reported as amended**.

[A03528](#) by Farnese, described as a technical amendment. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

household member of the complainant. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

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#### **Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee**

*10/30/19, 9:30 a.m., Room 261, Main Capitol*

By Robert Cochran, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

[SB 640 Boscola, Lisa](#) - (PN 771) The Physical Therapy Licensure Compact Act authorizes the commonwealth of Pennsylvania to join the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact; and provides for the form of the compact. Effective immediately. - The bill was unanimously **reported as amended**.

[A03263](#) by Tomlinson, allows the governor to execute the compact. The amendment was unanimously **adopted**.

Minority Chairman Lisa Boscola (D-Northampton) explained her bill and requested member's support for her legislation.

Sen. Lisa Baker (R-Luzerne) commended the legislation, noting that the bill removes a barrier for employment for physical therapists. She indicated that higher education institutions have been advocating for Pennsylvania to join the compact for "many" years.

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#### **Senate Community, Economic and Recreational Development Committee**

*10/30/19, 10:00 a.m., Room 461 Main Capitol*

By Mike Howells, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

[HB 1325 Ortity, Jason](#) - (PN 1973) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses), in burglary and other criminal intrusion, further providing for the offense of criminal trespass. The bill provides the court with an additional sentencing provision when an individual's name appears on the Gaming Control Board self-exclusion list and the person is convicted of criminal trespassing in an establishment licensee, licensed facility, licensed gaming entity or a video gaming area and the person is admitted to an Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition or other pretrial diversion program. Allows the court to direct the person to be evaluated to determine if the person has a gambling disorder and whether there is a need for counseling or treatment as part of the sentence or prejudication disposition. Requires the evaluation to be conducted by a clinician appointed by the court and to include recommendations for levels of care, continuing care and monitoring. Effective in 60 days. (Prior Printer Number: 1542) - The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

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## **Senate Labor and Industry Committee**

*10/30/19, 12:00 p.m., Senate Rules Committee Conference Room*

By Robert Cochran, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider legislation.

[SB 922 Bartolotta, Camera](#) - (PN 1309) Amends the Workers' Compensation Act, in liability and compensation, removing the word installments from the statute. Effective in 60 days. - The bill was **reported as committed** with all committee Democrats voting in the negative.

Chairman Camera Bartolotta (R-Washington) alluded to yesterday's [committee meeting](#), stating that it was necessary to pass over bills for further discussion with stakeholders. She said she had a "very productive discussion" with trial lawyers yesterday evening on her workers' compensation bill.

Chairman Bartolotta said the main concern was that settlements often include a sum of money for pain and suffering, and if the commonwealth returns to previous practices, the trial lawyers are concerned that reimbursement of employers for medical benefits paid to employees would not intrude on amounts intended solely for pain and suffering. She indicated she pledged to work on that language for a floor amendment.

She continued, saying that the intent of the bill is "simple and largely technical." Chairman Bartolotta said the Pennsylvania Supreme Court found the word "installments" to be a "curious" way to describe how reimbursements to employers will happen. She said the commonwealth would return to practices which were established in 1915.

Minority Chairman Christine Tartaglione (D-Philadelphia) said that yesterday, the majority chairman spoke "passionately" about stakeholders approaching her "at the 11th hour" regarding concerns with the bill. She said the bill being considered today, along with [Senate Bill 464](#), was scheduled to be voted on yesterday. Chairman Tartaglione said Chairman Bartolotta "implored all the stakeholders to get to her office so there could be conversations regarding this controversial bill."

Chairman Tartaglione continued, saying that Senate Bill 464 was introduced in March and the language was available for the last seven months prior to being passed over yesterday. "Senate Bill 922 was introduced on Thursday of last week, with language being available for all of us to see on Friday," she said. Chairman Tartaglione said today the committee is only considering Senate Bill 922. She added that Senate Bill 464 would protect public sector workers with the same protections provided for private sector workers. Chairman Tartaglione spoke on asbestos and mesothelioma issues in Philadelphia. She described her legislation as a "bill of urgency." She called the situation of passing over her legislation "shameful" and requested a negative vote on Senate Bill 922.

Chairman Tartaglione claimed that the only reason issues were discussed with trial lawyers was because she raised the issue with them first. Chairman Bartolotta said "ongoing" conversations were held with the trial lawyers and that emails were sent to all offices regarding the bill. Chairman Tartaglione stated that committee Democrats did not receive that message. Chairman Bartolotta said she would produce the timestamps.

Chairman Bartolotta said meetings were set up with stakeholders in November regarding Senate Bill 464. She indicated conversations would continue to be held with stakeholders regarding the language in Senate Bill 922, and said that Senate Bill 464 encompasses a "much larger issue" that many stakeholders would want to remark on. She said that the issue with the word "installments" needs addressed promptly. She claimed that she held conversations with Sen. Lisa Baker (R-Luzerne) regarding remedies for those ill in Philadelphia. She spoke on her concern for the issue but indicated that the problem should be addressed correctly. "My intent is that we move rapidly forward, satisfy, the best we can, the stakeholders, and bring something to the table that will pass," she said. "That is my intent."

She concluded that the committee would move Senate Bill 922 today and continue to work on Senate Bill 464.



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### **House Appropriations Committee**

*10/30/19, 12:05 p.m., Room 140 Main Capitol*

By Matt Hess, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider bills.

[HB 1459 Schlossberg, Mike](#) - (PN 2569) Amends Titles 35 (Health and Safety) and 75 (Vehicles) adding a chapter providing for emergency responder mental wellness and stress management; establishing the Statewide Critical Incident Stress Management Program; providing for duties of the Secretary of Health and the Department of Health; in emergency medical services (EMS) system, further providing for support of emergency medical services; in operation of vehicles general provisions, further providing for EMS costs; and, in driving after imbibing alcohol or utilizing drugs, further providing for Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition. The addition of 35 PA.C.S. 75a02(b) is effective in 180 days; the remainder of the bill is effective immediately. (Prior Printer Number: 1826) - The bill was unanimously **reported as committed**.

### **MAAC**

MAAC did not meet this week.

### **Bullet.in.Points**

#### **[DOH: HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS \(HIV\) COMMUNITY PREVENTION PLANNING COMMITTEE: CHANGE OF DATES FOR NOVEMBER PUBLIC MEETINGS](#)**

The Department of Health's Statewide HIV Planning Group public meetings originally scheduled for Wednesday, November 13, 2019, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Thursday, November 14, 2019, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. are being moved to Wednesday, November 20, 2019, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Thursday, November 21, 2019, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Best Western Premier the Central Hotel, 800 East Park Drive, Harrisburg. For additional information, contact Jill Garland, acting bureau director, Department of Health, Bureau of Communicable Diseases, 625 Forster Street, Health and Welfare Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120, (717) 547-3428.

#### **[DOH: MEDICAL MARIJUANA ADVISORY BOARD MEETINGS](#)**

The Department of Health's Medical Marijuana Advisory Board gives notice that the board will meet on the following days and times:

- Thursday, February 13, 2020, from 10 a.m.-noon.
- Tuesday, May 12, 2020, from 10 a.m.-noon.
- Tuesday, August 11, 2020, from 10 a.m.-noon.
- Tuesday, November 10, 2020, from 10 a.m.-noon.

The location for the meeting on Thursday, February 13, 2020, will be in Hearing Room 1, Keystone Building, Harrisburg. All additional meetings previously listed will take place in the Forest Room, Keystone Building, Harrisburg.

For additional information, contact Holli Senior, special assistant, Office of Medical Marijuana, 625 Forster Street, Room 628, Health and Welfare Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120, (717) 547-3047. Additional information can be found on the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

#### **[PHC4: MEETING SCHEDULED](#)**

The Health Care Cost Containment Council has scheduled the following meeting by conference call: Thursday, November 7, 2019 at 10 a.m. The meeting by conference call will be held at 225 Market Street, Suite 400, Harrisburg.



**[DOI: INSURANCE DEPARTMENT AND HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE AUTHORITY GUIDANCE REGARDING COMPLIANCE IN MARKETPLACE ACTIVITIES: NOTICE 2019-07](#)**

The Department of Insurance and the Pennsylvania Health Insurance Exchange Authority are jointly issuing this guidance to insurance producers and exchange assisters. For the 2020 coverage year, including the open enrollment period beginning November 1, 2019, Pennsylvania will be operating as a state-based exchange on the federal platform.

Questions concerning this guidance may be directed to either: the Pennsylvania Insurance Department, Licensing Service Division, Office of Market Regulation, or the Pennsylvania Health Insurance Exchange Authority, at 1326 Strawberry Square, Harrisburg, PA 17120, or [RA-IN-healthexchasst@pa.gov](mailto:RA-IN-healthexchasst@pa.gov). Additional information can be found on the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*.

**Cosponsor Memos**

- HCO2751 [Gaydos, Valerie \(F\)\(R\)](#) Provides a mechanism for employers to join together to offer quality health insurance as a benefit for their employees, some for the first time.
- HCO2752 [Frankel, Dan\(D\)](#) Directs the Department of Insurance and the Department of Human Services, in collaboration with the State Based Exchange, to develop a proposal for Pennsylvania residents to buy into Medicaid plans.
- HCO2753 [Frankel, Dan\(D\)](#) Establishes a Prescription Drug Affordability Board. The board would determine whether certain drugs pose affordability burdens and cap the amount that pharmaceutical companies can charge for necessary drugs.
- HCO2765 [Bernstine, Aaron\(R\)](#) Requires a health care professional or health care facility to notify parents prior to placing a do-not-resuscitate order for any patient under the age of 18, without written or oral consent of at least one parent or guardian.
- SCO1237 [Dinniman, Andrew\(D\)](#) Requires that school nurses and professional employees be educated on seizure recognition and first aid.
- SCO1241 [Muth, Katie \(F\)\(D\)](#) Mandates a commonsense warning system to ensure people's safety during incidents of excessive emissions and increases fines for facilities found to exceed established pollution thresholds.

**Bill Actions**

- HB 419 [Donatucci, Maria\(D\)](#) (PN 408) Amends the Pennsylvania Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Screening Act stipulating that eligibility for the Pennsylvania Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Screening Program is women age 30 to 65 (changed from 40 to 49) Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 10-30-19 Laid out for discussion 1:21pm  
10-30-19 H 1 Floor amendment(s) adopted  
10-30-19 Second consideration 1:23pm  
10-30-19 H Over in House  
10-30-19 H Rereferred to House Appropriations



- HB 941      Heffley, Doyle(R)      (PN 1748) Amends the Human Services Code, in public assistance, providing for financial disclosures for pharmacy services. The legislation provides for transparency in pharmacy benefit manager pricing in Medicaid and addresses inadequate reimbursement rates for pharmacies. Effective in 60 days.
- Bill History:** 09-17-19 H Reported as committed from House Rules  
09-17-19 H Laid on the table  
10-30-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar  
10-30-19 H Removed from the table  
11-18-19 H Set on the House Calendar
- HB 942      Grove, Seth(R)      (PN 2088) Amends the Human Services Code, in public assistance, establishing the Pharmaceutical and Therapeutics Committee. Provides for membership of the committee. Effective in 60 days. (Prior Printer Number: 1841)
- Bill History:** 09-17-19 H Reported as committed from House Rules  
09-17-19 H Laid on the table  
10-30-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar  
10-30-19 H Removed from the table  
11-18-19 H Set on the House Calendar
- HB 943      Gaydos, Valerie (F)(R)      (PN 2089) The Consumer Prescription Drug Pricing and Freedom Disclosure Act provides for consumer prescription drug pricing disclosure and pharmacy freedom to communicate. The bill states a pharmacy or pharmacist shall have the right to provide a covered individual with information concerning the cost of a prescription drug, including the individual's cost share. A pharmacy, pharmacist or contracting agent of a pharmacy or pharmacist may not be prohibited from or penalized by a pharmacy benefits manager or pharmacy services administration organization for discussing said information, disclosing the availability of therapeutically-equivalent alternative medications or selling to the covered individual a more affordable alternative if an affordable alternative is available. A pharmacy benefits manager or pharmacy services administration organization shall not prohibit, restrict or limit written or oral disclosure of contract information by a pharmacist or pharmacy to any state, county or municipal official or before any state, county or municipal committee, body or proceeding. Effective in 60 days. (Prior Printer Number: 1587)
- Bill History:** 09-17-19 H Reported as committed from House Rules  
09-17-19 H Laid on the table  
10-30-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar  
10-30-19 H Removed from the table  
11-18-19 H Set on the House Calendar



HB 944 Fritz, Jonathan(R) (PN 2090) Amends the Human Services Code, in public assistance, authorizing the Department of the Auditor General to conduct an audit and review of a pharmacy benefits manager that provides pharmacy benefits management to a medical assistance managed care organization under contract with the department. The Department of the Auditor General may review all previous audits completed by the department and shall have access to all documents necessary to complete the review and audit. Effective in 60 days. (Prior Printer Number: 1588)

**Bill History:** 09-17-19 H Reported as committed from House Rules  
09-17-19 H Laid on the table  
10-30-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar  
10-30-19 H Removed from the table  
11-18-19 H Set on the House Calendar

HB 1220 Cruz, Angel(D) (PN 1426) The CMV Education and Newborn Testing Act provides for cytomegalovirus education and newborn testing.

**Bill History:** 09-18-19 H First consideration  
09-18-19 H Laid on the table  
10-30-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar  
10-30-19 H Removed from the table  
11-18-19 H Set on the House Calendar

HB 1234 Cox, Jim(R) (PN 1351) Amends the Workers' Compensation Act, in liability and compensation, further providing for the definitions of "injury," "personal injury" and "injury arising in the course of his employment," providing for diseases with long latency periods between occupational exposure and manifestation of the disease and further providing for liability. The bill states that notwithstanding the limitation otherwise provided with respect to disability or death resulting from an occupational disease having to occur within 300 weeks after the last date of employment in an occupation or industry to which a claimant was exposed to the hazards of disease, claims filed for any disease for which the time period between exposure to the hazard of disease in the workplace and manifestation of disease is greater than 300 weeks must be filed within 300 weeks of the date on which a claimant is diagnosed with the disease or the disease is detectable. Portions apply retroactively. Effective immediately.

**Bill History:** 10-29-19 H First consideration  
10-29-19 H Laid on the table  
10-30-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar  
10-30-19 H Removed from the table  
11-18-19 H Set on the House Calendar



HB 1325 Ortitya, Jason(R)

(PN 1973) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses), in burglary and other criminal intrusion, further providing for the offense of criminal trespass. The bill provides the court with an additional sentencing provision when an individual's name appears on the Gaming Control Board self-exclusion list and the person is convicted of criminal trespassing in an establishment licensee, licensed facility, licensed gaming entity or a video gaming area and the person is admitted to an Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition or other pretrial diversion program. Allows the court to direct the person to be evaluated to determine if the person has a gambling disorder and whether there is a need for counseling or treatment as part of the sentence or prejudication disposition. Requires the evaluation to be conducted by a clinician appointed by the court and to include recommendations for levels of care, continuing care and monitoring. Effective in 60 days. (Prior Printer Number: 1542)

**Bill History:** 10-30-19 S Meeting set for 10:00 a.m., Room 461, Main Capitol, Senate Community, Economic & Recreational Dev -- Senate Community, Economic & Recreational Dev  
10-30-19 S Voted favorably from committee on Senate Community, Economic & Recreational Dev  
10-30-19 S Reported as committed from Senate Community, Economic & Recreational Dev  
10-30-19 S First consideration  
11-18-19 S Set on the Senate Calendar

HB 1448 Sturla, Mike(D)

(PN 1796) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety), in volunteer fire company, ambulance service and rescue squad assistance, providing for a referendum to expand loan assistance. The referendum shall read: Do you favor expanding the use of the indebtedness authorized under 35 Pa.C.S. 7367 (relating to authority to borrow) and 7378.1 (relating to referendum for additional indebtedness) for the volunteer loan assistance under 35 Pa.C.S. Ch. 73 Subch. E (relating to volunteer fire company, ambulance service and rescue squad assistance) to include loans to fire companies that provide services through paid personnel for the purpose of establishing and modernizing facilities to house firefighting apparatus equipment, ambulances and rescue vehicles, protective and communications equipment and any other accessory equipment necessary for the proper performance of such organizations' duties. The referendum shall not be constructed as authorizing any additional borrowing for loan assistance to fire companies. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 10-28-19 H Reported as committed from House Appropriations  
10-28-19 Laid out for discussion 4:54pm  
10-28-19 Third consideration 4:54pm  
10-28-19 H Final Passage (Vote: Y:195/N: 0)  
10-31-19 S Received in the Senate and referred to Senate Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.



HB 1457 Schroeder, Meghan (F) (R) (PN 1825) Amends the Insurance Company Law, in casualty insurance, further providing for coverage of mastectomy and breast cancer reconstruction. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 10-30-19 H Set on the House Calendar  
10-30-19 Laid out for discussion 1:20pm  
10-30-19 Second consideration 1:21pm  
10-30-19 H Over in House  
10-30-19 H Rereferred to House Appropriations

HB 1459 Schlossberg, Mike(D) (PN 2569) Amends Titles 35 (Health and Safety) and 75 (Vehicles) adding a chapter providing for emergency responder mental wellness and stress management; establishing the Statewide Critical Incident Stress Management Program; providing for duties of the Secretary of Health and the Department of Health; in emergency medical services (EMS) system, further providing for support of emergency medical services; in operation of vehicles general provisions, further providing for EMS costs; and, in driving after imbibing alcohol or utilizing drugs, further providing for Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition. The addition of 35 PA.C.S. 75a02(b) is effective in 180 days; the remainder of the bill is effective immediately. (Prior Printer Number: 1826)

**Bill History:** 10-30-19 H Reported as committed from House Appropriations  
10-30-19 Laid out for discussion 1:38pm  
10-30-19 Third consideration 1:38pm  
10-30-19 H Final Passage (Vote: Y:198/N: 0)  
10-31-19 S Received in the Senate and referred to Senate Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.

HB 1705 Gabler, Matt(R) (PN 2297) Amends Title 35 (Health & Safety), in incentives for municipal volunteers of fire companies and nonprofit emergency medical services (EMS) agencies, expanding the definition of governing body to include the governing body of a school district, authorizing school districts to enact a tax credit against the property tax liability of active volunteers of a fire or EMS company, and increasing the current property tax credit allowance from 20 percent of an active volunteer's liability to 100 percent of their tax liability. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 10-22-19 H Reported as committed from House Appropriations  
10-22-19 Laid out for discussion 2:40pm  
10-22-19 Third consideration 2:40pm  
10-22-19 H Final Passage (Vote: Y:200/N: 0)  
10-31-19 S Received in the Senate and referred to Senate Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.





**HB 1786**     **Sainato, Chris(D)**     (PN 2376) Amends Title 35 (Health & Safety), in incentives for municipal volunteers of fire companies and nonprofit emergency medical services agencies, establishing the First Responder Loan Forgiveness Program to provide up to \$16,000 in debt forgiveness for individuals who serve in eligible positions for four years. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 10-23-19 H Reported as committed from House Appropriations  
10-23-19 Laid out for discussion 1:43pm  
10-23-19 Third consideration 1:43pm  
10-23-19 H Final Passage (Vote: Y:196/N: 0)  
10-31-19 S Received in the Senate and referred to Senate Education

**HB 1816**     **Culver, Lynda(R)**     (PN 2473) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety) increasing loan limits of the Volunteer Loan Assistance Program (VLAP) and establishing annual inflation adjustments of loan limits based on the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers in the Northeast Region. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 10-23-19 H Reported as committed from House Appropriations  
10-23-19 Laid out for discussion 1:46pm  
10-23-19 Third consideration 1:47pm  
10-23-19 H Final Passage (Vote: Y:196/N: 0)  
10-31-19 S Received in the Senate and referred to Senate Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.

**HB 1862**     **Pickett, Tina(R)**     (PN 2795) Amends The Insurance Company Law of 1921, in quality health care accountability and protections, establishing protections for consumers receiving surprise balance bills for health care services from out-of-network providers. If an out-of-network provider renders a health care service to an insured, the out-of-network provider may bill the insurer and be reimbursed directly for a covered service at the commercially reasonable rate directly for that service, unless the insurer has a contract that addresses payment for an out-of-network provider or the insurer and out-of-network provider agree otherwise. An out-of-network provider may not bill the insured for the difference between the out-of-network provider's charge and the amount of the commercially reasonable rate paid by an insurer for the covered service and the out-of-network provider may bill the insured for no more than the in-network cost-sharing amount. The legislation establishes procedures for insurers and health care providers when health care services from out-of-network providers are provided. The legislation indicates that out-of-network providers may not advance a surprise balance bill to collection. Effective in 180 days.

**Bill History:** 10-29-19 H Reported as committed from House Insurance  
10-29-19 H First consideration  
10-29-19 H Laid on the table  
10-29-19 H Removed from the table  
11-18-19 H Set on the House Calendar



HB 1869 Owlett, Clint(R) (PN 2566) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety), in emergency medical services system, providing that staffing requirements for basic life support ambulances may be waived or adjusted for counties of the sixth, seventh and eighth classes. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 10-28-19 H Reported as committed from House Appropriations  
10-28-19 Laid out for discussion 4:57pm  
10-28-19 Third consideration 4:57pm  
10-28-19 H Final Passage (Vote: Y:195/N: 0)  
10-31-19 S Received in the Senate and referred to Senate Veterans Affairs & Emergency Prepared.

HB 1880 Gillespie, Keith(R) (PN 2615) Amends the Health Care Facilities Act removing the requirement for surnames to be displayed on health care employees' identification badges. Provides a notation, marker or indicator included on an identification badge that differentiates employees with the same first name shall, as determined by the facility, be considered acceptable in lieu of displaying an employee's last name. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 10-29-19 H Voted favorably from committee on House Health  
10-29-19 H Reported as committed from House Health  
10-29-19 H First consideration  
10-29-19 H Laid on the table  
11-18-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar

HB 1890 Ryan, Frank(R) (PN 2623) The Final Disposition of Fetal Remains Act provides that upon the fetal death of an unborn child, if a parent of the unborn child selects a location for the final disposition of the fetal remains other than a location that is usual and customary for a health care facility, the parent shall be responsible for the costs relating to the final disposition of the fetal remains. Provides for the duties of health care facilities; identification requirements; simultaneous cremation; and certificate of birth. Further provides a person who violates the act shall be subject to the penalties imposed under Article IX of the Vital Statistics Law of 1953. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 10-30-19 H Set on the House Calendar  
10-30-19 Laid out for discussion 1:52pm  
10-30-19 Second consideration 2:03pm  
10-30-19 H Over in House  
10-30-19 H Rereferred to House Appropriations



**HB 1918 Mullery, Gerald(D)** (PN 2681) Amends the Mental Health and Intellectual Disability Act, in preliminary provisions, providing a technical change; and in responsibilities of the state, providing for a moratorium on the closure of state facilities. This legislation provides for no closure of a state facility until all Medicaid-waiver eligible persons have been granted waivers. Once waivers have been granted, the bill provides for the establishment of a task force to conduct an evaluation and provide recommendations to the Department of Human Services (DHS) prior to closure. The legislation also provides that if the task force votes for closure, DHS will prepare a plan for the closure and transition of individuals receiving care in the state facility to a home or community-based support system. Effective immediately.

**Bill History:** 10-22-19 H First consideration  
10-22-19 H Laid on the table  
10-28-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar  
10-24-19 H Discussed during Medical Assistance Advisory Committee Meeting  
11-18-19 H Set on the Tabled Calendar

**HB 1983 Causer, Martin(R)** (PN 2788) Amends Title 3 (Agriculture), in race horse industry reform, repealing the sunset date for the four-year provision regarding funding for the testing of racehorses for medication. Effective immediately.

**Bill History:** 10-23-19 H Filed  
10-25-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Agriculture and Rural Affairs

**HB 1984 Benninghoff, Kerry(R)** (PN 2789) Amends Title 23 (Domestic Relations), in proceedings prior to petition to adopt, establishing special provisions regarding terminating parental rights when a child was conceived as a result of rape or incest. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 10-24-19 H Filed  
10-25-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Judiciary

**HB 1994 Pashinski, Eddie Day(D)** (PN 2797) Amends Title 18 (Crimes & Offenses) establishing a summary offense for selling, furnishing, purchasing, manufacturing, or displaying flavored vapor products along with penalties for the offense; Title 5 (Health & Safety), providing for the labeling of vapor products; and Title 53 (Municipalities Generally), preempting local authority regarding vapor products. The legislation prohibits flavored vapor products, along with provisions regarding enforcement of the act and authority of the Department of Health. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 10-25-19 H Filed  
10-25-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Judiciary



HB 2005 Ortitya, Jason(R) (PN 2810) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses), in other offenses, establishing that funding for the Substance Abuse Education and Demand Reduction Fund and grant programs shall be appropriated annually by the General Assembly. The legislation repeals the allocation schedule. Effective July 1, 2020, or immediately, whichever is later.

**Bill History:** 10-28-19 H Filed  
10-29-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Judiciary

HB 2008 Burns, Frank(D) (PN 2824) Amends the Human Services Code, in public assistance, repealing provisions related to nonemergency medical transportation services. Effective immediately.

**Bill History:** 10-29-19 H Filed  
10-30-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Health

HB 2026 Isaacson, Mary (F)(D) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety), providing for public health and imposing duties on the Department of Environmental Protection.

**Bill History:** 10-31-19 H Filed

HB 2027 Isaacson, Mary (F)(D) Amends Title 35 (Health & Safety), providing for opioid stewardship; est. the Opioid Reparation & Accountability Fund & the Opiate Epidemic Response Advisory Council; and imposing duties on the DOH, DHS and DDAP.

**Bill History:** 10-31-19 H Filed

HB 2029 Isaacson, Mary (F)(D) Amends Titles 18 (Crimes & Offenses) & 42 (Judiciary), in sexual offenses; providing for the offense of fertility fraud; in particular rights & immunities, for damages in actions for fertility fraud; in registration of sex offenders.

**Bill History:** 10-31-19 H Filed

HR 565 Briggs, Tim(D) (PN 2667) Resolution recognizing October 20, 2019, as "Mast Cell Diseases Awareness Day" in Pennsylvania.

**Bill History:** 10-22-19 H Meeting set for 9:30 a.m., Room G-50, Irvis Office Building, House Health -- House Health  
10-22-19 H Voted favorably from committee on House Health  
10-22-19 H Reported as committed from House Health  
10-30-19 H Set on the House Calendar  
10-30-19 H Adopted (Vote: Y:196/N: 0)

HR 566 Matzie, Robert(D) (PN 2715) Resolution designating the month of November 2019 as "Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

**Bill History:** 10-21-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Health  
10-29-19 H Meeting set for Off the floor, Room G-50, Irvis Office Build, House Health -- House Health  
10-29-19 H Voted favorably from committee on House Health  
10-29-19 H Reported as committed from House Health  
11-18-19 H Set on the House Calendar



- HR 570     Bizzarro, Ryan(D)     (PN 2718) Resolution recognizing the month of November 2019 as "National Epilepsy Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.
- Bill History:** 10-21-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Health  
10-29-19 H Meeting set for Off the floor, Room G-50, Irvis Office Build, House Health -- House Health  
10-29-19 H Voted favorably from committee on House Health  
10-29-19 H Reported as committed from House Health  
11-18-19 H Set on the House Calendar
- HR 573     Everett, Garth(R)     (PN 2719) Resolution designating the month of November 2019 as "Infant Safe Sleep Month" in Pennsylvania.
- Bill History:** 10-21-19 H Introduced and referred to committee on House Children and Youth  
10-30-19 H Meeting set for 10:00 a.m., Room 60, East Wing, House Children and Youth -- House Children and Youth  
10-30-19 H Voted favorably from committee on House Children and Youth  
10-30-19 H Reported as committed from House Children and Youth  
11-18-19 H Set on the House Calendar
- SB 67     Ward, Judy (F)(R)     (PN 60) The Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact Act authorizes the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to join the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact; provides for the form of the compact; and imposes additional powers and duties on the governor, the Secretary of the Commonwealth and the compact. Effective in 60 days.
- Bill History:** 09-23-19 Second consideration 4:19pm  
09-23-19 S Rereferred to Senate Appropriations  
10-28-19 S Meeting set for Off the Floor, Rules Committee Conference Ro, Senate Appropriations -- Senate Appropriations  
10-28-19 S Reported as committed from Senate Appropriations  
11-18-19 S Set on the Senate Calendar



- SB 74      Martin, Scott(R)      (PN 339) Amends the Tax Reform Code adding a new article establishing a tax credit to be granted to a business firm that meets the requirements of the legislation for the purpose of funding pediatric cancer research in Pennsylvania. Requires contributions received by a pediatric cancer research center from a business firm to be used exclusively for pediatric cancer research. Provides for availability of tax credits and for the duties of the Department of Revenue. Further provides the total aggregate amount of all tax credits approved shall not exceed \$10 million in a fiscal year. Also provides a tax credit may not be approved in excess of \$2.5 million in a fiscal year for contributions to any one pediatric cancer research center. This new article shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2019. Effective in 60 days.
- Bill History:** 10-29-19 S Set on the Senate Calendar  
10-29-19 Laid out for discussion 4:56pm  
10-29-19 S 1 Floor amendment(s) adopted  
10-29-19 Second consideration 4:57pm  
10-29-19 S Rereferred to Senate Appropriations
- SB 350      Leach, Daylin(D)      Amends Titles 3, 18, & 42, providing for adult-use cannabis and establishing the Adult-Use Cannabis Grant Program and Adult-Use Cannabis Fund; in criminal history records and expungement, in sentencing, and dismissal of offenses.
- Bill History:** 10-31-19 S Filed  
10-31-19 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs
- SB 351      Ward, Judy (F)(R)      (PN 341) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses), in assault, further providing for the offense of aggravated assault by adding all health care practitioners as a protected class. Effective in 60 days.
- Bill History:** 10-28-19 S Set on the Senate Calendar  
10-28-19 Laid out for discussion 4:19pm  
10-28-19 Third consideration 4:25pm  
10-28-19 S Final Passage (Vote: Y: 49/N: 0)  
10-30-19 H Received in the House and referred to House Judiciary
- SB 640      Boscola, Lisa(D)      (PN 771) The Physical Therapy Licensure Compact Act authorizes the commonwealth of Pennsylvania to join the Physical Therapy Licensure Compact; and provides for the form of the compact. Effective immediately.
- Bill History:** 10-30-19 S Meeting set for 9:30 a.m., Room 461, Main Capitol, Senate Consumer Protection & Prof. Licensure -- Senate Consumer Protection & Prof. Licensure  
10-30-19 S Voted favorably from committee as amended Senate Consumer Protection & Prof. Licensure  
10-30-19 S Reported as amended Senate Consumer Protection & Prof. Licensure  
10-30-19 S First consideration  
11-18-19 S Set on the Senate Calendar



SB 819 Mensch, Bob(R)

(PN 1126) Amends the Older Adults Protective Services Act, extensively revising provisions on older adults protective services relating to preliminary provisions, administration, criminal history for employees, reporting suspected abuse by employees and miscellaneous provisions; and imposing penalties. The legislation repeals Chapters 1, 3, 5, 6 and 51 of the act, and replaces the statute with language which addresses the constitutionality concern of regarding offenses listed in the act which result in a lifetime employment ban without further evaluation. The legislation streamlines communication between organizations and agencies, addresses financial exploitation by permitting financial institutions to intervene in suspected financial abuse, establishes mandatory reporters for reporting elder abuse, and provides for employment practices that are safe for elder care organizations. The legislation establishes civil and criminal penalties and liabilities, Section 202-A of the act shall take effect in one year; the remainder of this act shall take effect immediately.

**Bill History:** 10-29-19 S Set on the Senate Calendar  
10-29-19 Laid out for discussion 4:51pm  
10-29-19 Third consideration 4:51pm  
10-29-19 S Final Passage (Vote: Y: 49/N: 0)  
10-30-19 H Received in the House and referred to House Aging and Older Adult Services

SB 836 Regan, Mike(R)

(PN 1145) Amends the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Prevention Act to include electrocardiogram testing and require information be provided to student athletes regarding electrocardiogram testing. The legislation also provides that the athletes be notified of the option to request the administration of an electrocardiogram in addition to the standard physical examination. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 10-30-19 S Set on the Senate Calendar  
10-30-19 Laid out for discussion 12:03pm  
10-30-19 Third consideration 12:04pm  
10-30-19 S Final Passage (Vote: Y: 48/N: 0)  
10-31-19 H Received in the House and referred to House Education





**SB 841**     **Martin, Scott(R)**     (PN 1151) Amends Title 35 (Health and Safety) reauthorizing the Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council (PHC4). The Health Care Cost Containment Act reestablishes the PHC4 as an independent council consisting of public officials and representatives from business communities, organized labor, consumers, hospitals, physicians, nurses and the insurance industry to collect and disseminate health care cost data. The legislation codifies PHC4 under Title 35 and does not include a sunset date. Effective immediately.

**Bill History:** 10-30-19 S Set on the Senate Calendar  
10-30-19 Laid out for discussion 12:13pm  
10-30-19 Third consideration 12:13pm  
10-30-19 S Final Passage (Vote: Y: 48/N: 0)  
10-31-19 H Received in the House and referred to House Health

**SB 842**     **Phillips-Hill, Kristin (F)**     (PN 1152) Amends the Health Care Facilities Act, in licensing of health care facilities, further providing for photo identification tag regulations by adding that the tag shall include the employee's first name. A notation, marker or indicator included on an identification badge that differentiates employees with the same first name is considered acceptable in lieu of displaying an employee's last name. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 10-22-19 S Reported as committed from Senate Health and Human Services  
10-22-19 S First consideration  
10-28-19 S Set on the Senate Calendar  
10-28-19 Second consideration 4:29pm  
10-28-19 S Rereferred to Senate Appropriations

**SB 857**     **Vogel, Jr., Elder(R)**     (PN 1170) The Telemedicine Act authorizes the practice of telemedicine by health care providers. Requires each licensure board to promulgate regulations within 24 months of the effective date and provides for the publishing of temporary regulations within 60 days. Further provides for evaluation and treatment, insurance coverage, and Medicaid program reimbursement. The provisions regarding insurance coverage and Medicaid program reimbursement shall take effect in 90 days and the remainder shall take effect immediately.

**Bill History:** 10-30-19 S Over in Senate  
10-30-19 Laid out for discussion 12:41pm  
10-30-19 Third consideration 12:44pm  
10-30-19 S Final Passage (Vote: Y: 47/N: 1)  
10-31-19 H Received in the House and referred to House Insurance



- SB 905      Browne, Patrick(R)      (PN 1256) The Capital Budget Project Itemization Act of 2019-20 provides for the capital budget for fiscal year 2019-20, itemizes various public improvement projects, authorizes the incurring of debt without the approval of electors for financing projects, authorizes the use of current revenue for the purpose of financing projects and provides appropriations. Effective immediately.
- Bill History:** 10-30-19 S Set on the Senate Calendar  
10-30-19 Laid out for discussion 12:16pm  
10-30-19 Third consideration 12:16pm  
10-30-19 S Final Passage (Vote: Y: 48/N: 0)  
10-31-19 H Received in the House and referred to House Appropriations
- SB 906      Yudichak, John(D)      (PN 1259) Amends the Mental Health and Intellectual Disability Act, in preliminary provisions, providing a technical change; and in responsibilities of the state, providing for a moratorium on the closure of state facilities. This legislation provides for no closure of a state facility until all Medicaid-waiver eligible persons have been granted waivers. Once waivers have been granted, the bill provides for the establishment of a task force to conduct an evaluation and provide recommendations to the Department of Human Services (DHS) prior to closure. The legislation also provides that if the task force votes for closure, DHS will prepare a plan for the closure and transition of individuals receiving care in the state facility to a home or community-based support system. Effective immediately.
- Bill History:** 10-28-19 Second consideration 4:32pm  
10-28-19 S Rereferred to Senate Appropriations  
10-29-19 S Meeting set for Off the Floor, Room 256, Main Capitol, Senate Appropriations -- Senate Appropriations  
10-29-19 S Reported as committed from Senate Appropriations  
11-18-19 S Set on the Senate Calendar
- SB 912      Mastriano, Doug(R)      (PN 1316) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses), in abortion, establishing that a physician shall determine if there is a fetal heartbeat before performing an abortion, and prohibiting an abortion of an unborn child if a fetal heartbeat is detected. This legislation also provides for an exception permitting an abortion of an unborn child if the child does not have a fetal heartbeat and requires reporting of a physician performing an abortion after a fetal heartbeat is detected. Effective in 60 days.
- Bill History:** 10-25-19 S Filed  
10-25-19 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Health and Human Services



**SB 922**     **Bartolotta, Camera(R)** (PN 1309) Amends the Workers' Compensation Act, in liability and compensation, removing the word installments from the statute. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 10-29-19 S Passed over in committee Senate Labor and Industry  
10-30-19 S Meeting set for Off the Floor, Rules Committee Conference Ro, Senate Labor and Industry -- Senate Labor and Industry  
10-30-19 S Reported as committed from Senate Labor and Industry  
10-30-19 S First consideration  
11-18-19 S Set on the Senate Calendar

**SB 924**     **Farnese, Lawrence(D)** (PN 1310) Amends Title 20 (Decedents, Estates and Fiduciaries, in incapacitated persons, establishing subchapter G for Guardianship for Medically Disabled Adult Children. If a court, no less than 20 days after receipt of the petition, affidavit of medical disability, affidavit of accountability by the proposed guardian and notice to the individual alleged to be a medically disabled adult child and other party, finds by a clear and convincing standard an individual to be a medically disabled adult child, the court may appoint a guardian or guardians of the medically disabled adult's person or estate. The petitioner may be any individual the court has determined is providing at least 50 percent financial responsibility or 50 percent physical custody for the medically disabled adult child. The legislation indicates petition contents and establishes notification guidelines. The petitioner shall provide the court evidence of medical disability. If there has been no change in the capacity of the medically disabled adult child, the court may require an updated affidavit of medical disability in lieu of a hearing if no change to the guardianship is sought. The court shall annually file with the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts a statistical and descriptive report to assist in evaluating the operation and costs of the guardianship system. The legislation establishes the duty of the guardian of the medically disabled adult child to assert the rights and best interests of the medically disabled adult child. Effective in 60 days.

**Bill History:** 10-24-19 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Judiciary  
10-29-19 S Meeting set for Off the floor, Rules Committee Conference Ro, Senate Judiciary -- Senate Judiciary  
10-29-19 S Reported as amended Senate Judiciary  
10-29-19 S First consideration  
11-18-19 S Set on the Senate Calendar



- SB 938**     **Schwank, Judy(D)**     (PN 1359) Amends the Public School Code, in terms and courses of study, further providing for dating violence education by providing grants for implementation, public posting of policy, copies of the policy distributed to students, training for teachers and coaches, and establishing communication protocols between school entities when an incident occurs; and, in sexual violence education at institutions of higher education, further providing for definitions and for education program. Effective in 60 days.
- Bill History:** 10-31-19 S Filed  
10-31-19 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Education
- SR 261**     **Leach, Daylin(D)**     (PN 1360) Resolution condemning the use of performance-enhancing drugs by athletes, rebuking any organization that knowingly allows or encourages athletes to use drugs and urging education of all coaches and athletic directors.
- Bill History:** 10-31-19 S Filed  
10-31-19 S Introduced and referred to committee on Senate Education
- SR 266**     **Blake, John(D)**     Resolution designating the month of November 2019 as "Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.
- Bill History:** 10-29-19 S Filed  
10-29-19 S Introduced and adopted
- SR 270**     **Bartolotta, Camera(R)**     (PN 1352) Resolution designating the week of November 10 through 16, 2019 as "Nurse Practitioner Week" in Pennsylvania.
- Bill History:** 10-30-19 S Filed  
10-30-19 S Introduced and adopted

## Upcoming Events

### **Patient Safety Authority**

*November 4, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., The Conference Center at Central Penn College, 600 Valley Road, Summerdale*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 346-0469

### **Department of Human Services**

*November 5, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., PCCD Offices, Commission Meeting Room, Ground Floor, 3101 N. Front Street, Harrisburg*

Children's Advocacy Center Advisory Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 265-8497

### **Department of Human Services**

*November 6, 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

### **State Board of Optometry**

*November 7, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7155

### **Department of Health**

*November 7, 2019 - 9:30 a.m., Gift of Life Donor Program Office, 800 North 3rd Street, Suite 504, Harrisburg*  
Organ Donation Advisory Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 787-5876



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

*November 7, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Council Conference Room, 225 Market Street, Suite 400, Harrisburg*  
Council Meeting. For additional information: (717) 232-6787

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

*November 8, 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 Health**

*November 13, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Keystone Building, Forest Room, 400 North Street, Harrisburg*  
Medical Marijuana Advisory Board. For additional information: (717) 547-3047

**Department of Human Services**

*November 13, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Commonwealth Tower, 12th Floor, Clothes Tree Room, 303 Walnut Street, Harrisburg*  
Bureau of Fee-for-Service Programs Meeting. For additional information: (717) 772-6780

**State Board of Physical Therapy**

*November 14, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7134

**State Board of Dentistry**

*November 14, 2019 - 4:00 p.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Scope of Practice Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7162

**State Board of Veterinary Medicine**

*November 15, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7134

**State Board of Dentistry**

*November 15, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Regulations Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7162

*November 15, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*

Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7162

**House Human Services**

*November 19, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., Room 60, East Wing*  
Public hearing on: [SB 675](#) Brooks, Michele Act re licensing prescribers of suboxone

**State Bd of Social Wkrs, Marriage & Fam. Therapists & Prof. Coun.**

*November 19, 2019 - 9:30 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Harrisburg*  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-1389

**Department of Health**

*November 19, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Giant Food Store, Upper level, 3301 Trindle Road, Camp Hill*  
Newborn Screening and Follow-Up Technical Advisory Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-8143

**Press Conference**

*November 19, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Main Capitol Rotunda, Harrisburg*  
Be the Match (unconfirmed)



### **Department of Human Services**

November 20, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., Health & Welfare Building, 625 Forster Street, Harrisburg  
LIHEAP Advisory Committee Meeting. For additional information: (717) 257-7792

### **State Board of Chiropractic**

November 21, 2019 - 9:00 a.m., 2601 North Third Street, Board Room B, Harrisburg  
Board Meeting. For additional information: (717) 783-7155

### **Independent Regulatory Review Commission**

November 21, 2019 - 10:00 a.m., 14th Fl. Conf. Room, 333 Market St., Harrisburg  
To consider the following regulation: Reg. No. 3221 State Board of Veterinary Medicine #16A-5727: Certified Veterinary Technicians and Veterinary Assistants

## **In the News**

- 10-31-2019 **[Senate passes legislation aimed at educating parents of student athletes about screening for heart disease](#)**  
The mother of a Trinity High School alumnae who died of Sudden Cardiac Arrest six years ago this Saturday celebrated a milestone in her quest to educate others about this affliction that is the nation's No. 1 killer of student athletes. On Wednesday, Julie Walker was on hand to witness the state Senate pass... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)
- 10-31-2019 **[Quakertown school district to sue vaping manufacturers](#)**  
The Quakertown school board has authorized litigation against e-cigarette manufacturers, joining school districts around the country taking legal action in response to the rapid rise of vaping among students. Lawyers for the Bucks County school district plan to file a lawsuit next... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-31-2019 **[Harrisburg-area veterans will no longer have to travel to Lebanon County to see heart and lung specialists](#)**  
Veterans in the Harrisburg area will no longer have go to the Lebanon VA Medical center for cardiology and pulmonary services. The Cumberland County VA Clinic at 5070 Ritter Road in Upper Allen Township now offers those service on-site. The Cumberland County VA Clinic added staff to support the specialties... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)
- 10-31-2019 **[Pa. lawmaker addresses furor over fetal remains bill, says it would allow, not force, funerals](#)**  
The Pennsylvania lawmaker who is sponsoring a fetal remains bill on Wednesday night addressed confusion surrounding his proposal. State Rep. Francis Ryan, R-Lebanon County, stressed that his bill would give families the option to bury or cremate fetal remains after a... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)
- 10-31-2019 **[Fetal remains bill draws criticism from Pa. lawmakers and advocates on funeral services for miscarriages and abortions](#)**  
Editor's note: Following publication of this story, state Rep. Francis Ryan, the bill's sponsor, told PennLive the fetal remains bill would give parents the option of a cremation or funeral but wouldn't require it. This story has been updated to reflect Ryan's remarks.... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)



- 10-31-2019 **Pa. Attorney General lashes out at Republican leaders and Catholic officials over lack of child sex abuse reforms**  
Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro had harsh words for Pennsylvania Republican lawmakers and Catholic church leaders for what he views as their role in delaying reforms intended to prevent child sex abuse and help victims. The reforms resulted from the Shapiro-led grand jury investigation which... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)
- 10-31-2019 **Medical marijuana: PA Supreme Court halts Lebanon court's ban for people on probation**  
The Pennsylvania Supreme Court has prohibited Lebanon County courts from enforcing a ban on the use of medical marijuana by people under court supervision pending further action in a lawsuit challenging the policy. The order issued Wednesday comes roughly three weeks after the American... - [Lebanon Daily News](#)
- 10-31-2019 **Sen. Yaw applauds PA Senate passage of 'Peyton's Law'**  
HARRISBURG — The Pennsylvania Senate approved legislation to help student athletes and their parents take steps to prevent Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) on Wednesday, according to Sen. Gene Yaw (R-23). - [Sayre Morning](#)
- 10-31-2019 **Casey warns of 'misleading' health care plans**  
Sen. Bob Casey is warning Pennsylvanians searching online for health care plans to avoid "misleading" junk options that may not provide the coverage they need. "We have a lot of scam artists trying to rip people off that we have to warn people about," Casey said in a conference call Tuesday with media to... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)
- 10-31-2019 **Former St. Francis Hospital renovation delayed**  
Construction on the former St. Francis Hospital is on hold, but is still projected to be partially operational by next summer. "We're working to try to put together all of the final design plans," said Charles Everhardt, president of Lockwood Development Partners who purchased... - [New Castle News](#)
- 10-31-2019 **'Congenial' candidates talk wages, Polk**  
Congenial and relaxed, the four candidates vying for a trio of Venango County commissioner jobs took their cases for election to the Scrubgrass Grange in a pre-election forum Wednesday night. It was a back-to-back performance for Democrats Bonnie Summers and Albert... - [Oil City Derrick](#)
- 10-31-2019 **State Shuts Down Local Pharmacy for the Day**  
The sign on the door of Hiland Pharmacy in West Kittanning said the business was temporarily closed yesterday. Outside the front door, two police detectives in full uniform stood guard and no one was permitted to enter the building. Inside, agents from the State Attorney General's office were... - [Kittanning Paper](#)
- 10-31-2019 **Tioga County 9-1-1 ECC celebrates 40 years of answering calls**  
WELLSBORO — The Tioga County 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Center celebrated 40 years of answering emergency calls and 30 years answering calls to the number 911 during an open house Thursday, Oct. 24. The David R. Cohick 911 Emergency Communications Center located at 99... - [Wellsboro Tioga Publishing](#)





- 10-31-2019 **Commissioners proclaim October as Nat'l Disability Employment Awareness month**  
COUDERSPORT — County commissioners passed a proclamation to recognize October as National Disability Employment Awareness month. Marsha Dippold, employment support services program director at Dickinsons Center, spoke on the importance of employing those who have disabilities.... - [Wellsboro Tioga Publishing](#)
- 10-31-2019 **Juul put 1 million tainted pods into the market, former executive alleges in lawsuit**  
A former executive contends in a new lawsuit that Juul released 1 million tainted vaping pods into the market, then failed to warn retailers and consumers. Siddharth Breja, who had been the vice president of global finance, claims in a lawsuit filed Tuesday that he was .inappropriately terminated. in... - [Washington Post](#)
- 10-31-2019 **Analysis | The Health 202: Drug companies could be on the hook for billions more to mitigate the opioid crisis**  
Four major drug companies averted an opioid epidemic trial this month with an 11th-hour settlement. But the massive litigation is far from over. There are still about 2,400 states, cities, counties and Native American tribes suing a couple dozen major opioid makers and distributors. These... - [Washington Post](#)
- 10-31-2019 **5 nursing homes in Lancaster County ranked among best by Newsweek, U.S. News**  
Five nursing homes in Lancaster County have been singled out this month as exceptional performers by two news magazines: Newsweek magazine determined that three of the top 10 nursing homes in Pennsylvania are in Lancaster County. The Glen at Willow Valley, with 203 nursing beds, ranked first in the... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 10-31-2019 **Rural and Safety Net Hospitals Prepare for Cut in Federal Support**  
Absent action by Congress in the next three weeks, Dr. Michael Waldrum, CEO of Vidant Health, is going to have to figure out what medical services to deny hard-pressed communities in rural eastern North Carolina. "It runs the gamut," Waldrum said in an interview last week.... - [Stateline.org](#)
- 10-31-2019 **1.2 million Ohio Medicaid recipients may be in dark over losing coverage for Walgreens**  
Walgreens, Ohio's second-largest pharmacy retailer, and CareSource, the state's largest Medicaid managed-care plan have cut ties, according to Walgreens executives. Yet, with open enrollment starting on Friday, neither CareSource nor Ohio Medicaid have acknowledged the split, much less... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 10-31-2019 **Ohio still can't get lethal drugs, so DeWine delays executions for two killers**  
State's difficulty getting execution drugs now responsible for six delays. As expected, Gov. Mike DeWine has postponed two more executions amid difficulty finding drugs to carry out the process. DeWine on Wednesday issued reprieves for Kareem Jackson, 45, of Columbus... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 10-31-2019 **Medicare for All could bring higher wages, but not for everyone | Opinion**  
Two models for redesigning our health insurance system both involve replacing private insurance and out-of-pocket payments with public insurance subsidized by tax collections. Whether the solution is Medicare for All (with no explicit premium or out-of-pocket payments) or a more... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



- 10-31-2019 **[Philadelphia police are searching more cars for marijuana — but finding less of it, critics say](#)**  
Though Philadelphia has effectively decriminalized possession of small amounts of marijuana — and close to 200,000 Pennsylvania residents now have medical marijuana cards — the odor of marijuana has recently become one of the most common reasons police give for searching vehicles.... - *Philadelphia Inquirer*
- 10-31-2019 **[Pitt engineer's device will warn of pending falls among the elderly](#)**  
The statistics are sobering: every 19 minutes, an older person dies from a fall, which is the leading cause of fatal injuries among the elderly. The usefulness of “I’ve fallen and can’t get up” devices aside, what if caregivers could know about an impending fall 30 to 60... - *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*
- 10-31-2019 **[Marriage with Upjohn is a payday bonanza for Mylan's top executives](#)**  
Four Mylan executives are due golden parachutes of \$71.1 million next year when the generic drug giant is expected to combine with Upjohn, according to a new filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Outgoing CEO Heather Bresch is poised to receive the highest payout at an... - *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*
- 10-31-2019 **[Law enforcement and educators work together to help traumatized students](#)**  
When police officers go into a home to arrest a suspect or investigate a crime, it can create a scary situation for children in the house. At school the next day, those traumatized kids may act out, or be overly tired. Their teachers may not know why. That could change soon under a new partnership between Lehigh County law... - *Allentown Morning Call*
- 10-31-2019 **[Medicare for All could bring higher wages, but not for everyone | Opinion](#)**  
Two models for redesigning our health insurance system both involve replacing private insurance and out-of-pocket payments with public insurance subsidized by tax collections. Whether the solution is Medicare for All (with no explicit premium or out-of-pocket payments) or a more... - *Philadelphia Inquirer*
- 10-31-2019 **[Pennsylvania's heartbeat bill makes me worry for my patients. abortion access | Opinion](#)**  
I am a family doctor who provides abortion care in the Philadelphia suburbs. While that may sound like a bit of an oxymoron, the reality is that abortion is just like any other health care decision. Prenatal care and abortion care comprise the full spectrum of reproductive health care.... - *Philadelphia Inquirer*
- 10-31-2019 **[Philly schools using email, calls, and even home visits to help kids get required vaccines](#)**  
Over the summer, parents of Philadelphia students got phone calls, text messages, and letters reminding them to have their children vaccinated. By Monday's deadline.s for immunizations, the district may start planning home visits to families that have not provided medical records or sought... - *Philadelphia Inquirer*
- 10-31-2019 **[Students blast Pa.'s largest community college for cutting campus mental health services while spending big on renovations](#)**  
On days that 19-year-old Sabrina Herb feels overwhelmingly anxious or depressed, her first stop is the counseling office at HACC, Central Pennsylvania.s Community College. It.s one of the only places she can turn to for help. She has no car, and on class days, she takes two buses and walks a mile to get to the... - *Philadelphia Inquirer*



- 10-31-2019 **Stable costs but more uninsured as 'Obamacare' sign-ups open**  
More Americans are going without health insurance, and stable premiums plus greater choice next year under the Obama health law aren't likely to reverse that... - [AP](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Committee advances bill requiring burial or cremation of fetal remains**  
A House committee voted Tuesday to approve a bill mandating the burial or cremation of fetal remains, coming just months after the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a similar law in Indiana. Supporters of the measure, authored by Rep. Frank Ryan (R-Lebanon), believe... - [Pennsylvania Legislative Services](#)
- 10-30-2019 **California lab develops test for 'tick-borne relapsing fever'**  
The series of events that happen inside the human body when someone is bitten by a disease-carrying tick is immensely complex. Spiral-shaped bacteria from the Borrelia family can lead to a variety of medical conditions including the notoriously difficult-to-diagnose Lyme... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Growing demand for nurses gives colleges an opportunity to fill classroom seats**  
The idea is to boost the training and the flow of nurses into the workplace. Just don't call it a tuition discount. Even if price reductions are now common among private colleges and even some public schools, Penn State University prefers the term "tuition adjustment."... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Philly's needle exchange prevented 10,000 HIV diagnoses, but fentanyl means new cases are up**  
Philadelphia's syringe exchange — the only one in the city, and one of just a handful operating around the state — prevented an estimated 10,592 HIV diagnoses in its first 10 years of operation, researchers at George Washington University have found. The study, published Tuesday in the Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Feds announce new hemp regulations to the relief of local hemp farmers, attorneys**  
The new program, announced in a conference call with news reporters, creates "a consistent regulatory framework around hemp production throughout the United States," according to a statement released by Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue. The announcement was greeted with relief by Philadelphia-area attorneys who... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Joyce appointed to cybersecurity committee, talks health care with President Trump**  
U.S. Rep. John Joyce was appointed to the House Committee on Homeland Security Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Innovation late last week. He also serves on the House Small Business Committee and is the top Republican on its Subcommittee on Rural Development, Agriculture, Trade,... - [Somerset Daily](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Some Medicare plans now cover non-medical things like meals and household help**  
Things that can help older Americans stay out of hospitals and nursing homes makes sense. They make sense in terms of helping seniors have good quality of life. And they make financial sense, given the high cost of hospital and nursing home care. That's why the federal government is increasingly allowing Medicare to... - [Penn Live, Patriot-News](#)



- 10-30-2019 **California man convicted in Coraopolis 'pill mill' scheme gets 11 years in prison, owes \$1.6M**  
A judge sentenced a California doctor to more than 11 years behind bars for running a "pill mill" in Western Pennsylvania through which he illegally prescribed fentanyl and opioid painkillers for cash, federal prosecutors said Tuesday. Dr. Paul Michael Hoover, 59, formerly of Novato, Calif., also must pay the... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Game Commission revisits CWD plan**  
HOLLIDAYSBURG — By this time next year, the Pennsylvania Game Commission's plan to limit the spread of chronic wasting disease will have been launched. That plan calls for increased tag allocations, season extensions and removing point restrictions. And if those measures fail, the Game... - [Altoona Mirror](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Youth vaping rates rise amid health fears; data confirms continued trend among teens, even as related illnesses multiply**  
The rate of teens using electronic cigarettes has doubled in two years, the largest and quickest increase in the popularity of any substance since tracking began 45 years ago. That data was published recently in the New England Journal of Medicine — months ahead of schedule — just as... - [Beaver County Times](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Drug Coalition says it 'made progress' but work is not complete**  
Since its formation in September 2016, the members and sectors of the Cambria County Drug Coalition "have stayed the course" in a three-pronged approach to bring leaders in law enforcement, treatment and prevention together to reverse the county's drug problem.... - [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Luzerne County Council objects to White Haven Center closure**  
Luzerne County Council declared its opposition to the White Haven State Center shutdown Tuesday, passing a resolution supporting proposed state legislation that would place a moratorium on the closure. The legislation, HB1918 and SB906, would halt state closure of the White Haven and Polk State centers until Pennsylvania is... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 10-30-2019 **W-B hospital reaches \$16M settlement with Nanticoke man's estate**  
Wilkes-Barre General Hospital has reached a \$16 million settlement with the estate of a man who died after having his neck broken during an emergency intubation, according to documents filed in court Tuesday. Luzerne County Judge Lesa S. Gelb signed an order approving the settlement... - [Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice](#)
- 10-30-2019 **CHRIS KELLY: Dunmore voters can start divorce proceedings**  
To explain "codependency," mental health and addiction treatment professionals often cite the classic example of the alcoholic and his enabling wife. His drinking poisons the marriage, but she accepts serial apologies and excuses his malignant narcissism. He buys time with small gestures and... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Pickett's resolution designates October as 'Life Insurance Awareness Month'**  
HARRISBURG — A resolution designating October as Life Insurance Awareness Month in Pennsylvania, sponsored by Rep. Tina Pickett (R-Bradford /Sullivan/Susquehanna), was unanimously adopted by the House of Representatives on Tuesday. HBX - [Sayre Morning](#)



- 10-30-2019 **Bill Tracker update: Underage tobacco use, volunteer firefighter and electric car proposals make progress**  
Each legislative session thousands of bills and amendments are introduced in the Pennsylvania Legislature. Only a fraction become law, and an even smaller portion receive wide media coverage. These bills impact the lives of people living in Pennsylvania every day... - [Carlisle Sentinel](#)
- 10-30-2019 **D.A.: Boothwyn woman sold drugs in fatal overdose**  
MEDIA COURTHOUSE — An Upper Chichester woman has been arrested for allegedly dealing the drugs that led to a fatal overdose that claimed the life of another woman, officials said. Ashley Lynn May, 33, is charged with dealing the fentanyl-laced heroin that resulted in the fatal overdose of a 35-year-old Boothwyn woman on November... - [Primos Delaware County Daily and Sunday Times](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Chesco earmarks \$5 million toward Embreeville State Hospital purchase**  
WEST CHESTER — Chester County commissioners will boost the effort by West Bradford officials to acquire the former Embreeville State Hospital site from its developer owner with a \$5 million contribution from the county's Open Space Municipal Grant Program, it was announced Tuesday.... - [Pottstown Mercury](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Excelsa Health Westmoreland Hospital honored as among region's best**  
Excelsa Health has once again received national recognition for clinical expertise and high quality patient care, ranking among the top performing hospitals by U.S. News & World Report for 2019-20. Excelsa Health Westmoreland Hospital in Greensburg was deemed one of the... - [Latrobe Bulletin](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Alabama Abortion Ban Is Temporarily Blocked by a Federal Judge**  
A federal judge on Tuesday blocked a near-total ban on abortions from taking effect next month in Alabama, ensuring the procedure remains legal and available in the state while the case winds its way through the courts. In ruling against the Alabama law . the most far-reaching anti-abortion... - [New York Times](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Analysis | The Health 202: Kids are losing health coverage despite the strong economy**  
A strong economy usually means more children have health insurance. Instead, precisely the opposite is happening right now in the U.S.: Kids are losing coverage. A small but significant decline in the number of insured children has started attracting the notice of lawmakers and policymakers, who are partly... - [Washington Post](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Causer bill to help rural EMS passes House**  
HARRISBURG — A plan to improve the affordability and accessibility of training for emergency services agencies in rural areas was approved unanimously in the state House Monday, said Rep. Martin Causer, R-Turtlepoint, prime sponsor of the measure. “With the number of volunteer first responders declining in rural... - [Bradford Era](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Madden, Brown sound off on Pa.'s heartbeat bills**  
Local politicians are weighing in on prospective “heartbeat bills” currently circulating through state legislature that Governor Tom Wolf has vowed to veto. In October, HB1977 and SB912 were introduced with similar language that would restrict abortions for women in Pennsylvania... - [Pocono Record](#)



- 10-30-2019 **Proposed SNAP cuts could jeopardize free schools meals for 120,000 WV households**  
West Virginia education officials are sounding alarm bells as 120,000 households could lose automatic eligibility for free school meals. The change could come as part of a Trump administration proposal to limit access to food stamps. In July, the United States Department of Agriculture announced it would... - [Charleston Gazette-Mail](#)
- 10-30-2019 **He's guilty of the Capital Gazette murders. Now lawyers must pick a jury to decide if he was legally sane.**  
Questions about mental health are expected to figure prominently when jury selection begins Wednesday as prosecutors and defense attorneys seek 12 jurors who will decide whether the Capital Gazette gunman was criminally responsible and will serve his time in a state prison or mental... - [Baltimore Sun](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Maryland state employee union raises concerns about under-staffing in prisons, hospitals**  
Members of the largest union of state government employees, who are locked in a contract dispute with the governor, took their complaints of under-staffing to Annapolis Tuesday. Dozens of members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Council 3 union wore green T-shirts and packed a hearing room... - [Baltimore Sun](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Plan for medical marijuana dispensary in Harrisburg draws community criticism, patients' praise**  
Developers looking to build a medical marijuana dispensary in Harrisburg's South Allison Hill neighborhood need to take time to meet with members of the community. That was the message members of Harrisburg City Council gave to Peter Bio, CEO of Local Dispensaries LLC, a company based in Center Valley, Lehigh... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Senate passes legislation aimed at educating parents of student athletes about screening for heart disease**  
The mother of a Trinity High School alumnae who died of Sudden Cardiac Arrest six years ago this Saturday celebrated a milestone in her quest to educate others about this affliction that is the nation's No. 1 killer of student athletes. On Wednesday, Julie Walker was on hand to witness the state Senate pass... - [Penn Live](#), [Patriot-News](#)
- 10-30-2019 **Purdue Pharma paid CEO \$9M in year before bankruptcy**  
OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma paid its CEO \$9 million and its board chairman nearly \$4 million in the 12 months before the company's bankruptcy filing last month, according to recently filed financial documents... - [AP](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Excelsior Westmoreland ranked among top regional facilities in U.S. News & World Report**  
Excelsior Health Westmoreland Hospital won honors as Best Regional Hospital-Pittsburgh, according to U.S. News & World Report. The Greensburg hospital was one of 569 hospitals of the nearly 4,500 reviewed to rank among the Best Regional Hospitals in a state or metro area... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)





- 10-29-2019 **Doctors want new rules on insurance companies' 'prior authorization' of patient treatment**  
A behind-the-scenes struggle over what Pennsylvania doctors can do to patients ? specifically, the giving of final approval for specific treatments ? entered a new phase Monday morning. Proposed legislation intended to standardize insurance companies use of "prior authorization" was introduced at a Capitol Rotunda press... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 10-29-2019 **'It's not safe for kids to be in this school': North Philadelphia parents demand answers about asbestos**  
Jesse Stanton kept his two children at home Monday. Until there are answers from the Philadelphia School District, he said, he doesn't want to risk his children being exposed to asbestos at Thomas M. Peirce Elementary. "My kids said, 'Why can't we go to school?' and I said,... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Greensburg doctor admits illegal distribution of opioid addiction drug**  
A Greensburg doctor pleaded guilty Monday in federal court to distributing buprenorphine, an opioid addiction treatment drug, outside the course of professional practice. Dr. Nabil Jabbour, 68, also pleaded to health care fraud and money laundering. He admitted that on three dates between July 2016 and December of that... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Former Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter promotes marijuana company**  
Former Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter is joining the ranks of politicians remaking themselves as marijuana pitchmen. Nutter told NJ.com late last week that he had signed on to handle community relations for Green Leaf Medical New Jersey. The multistate operator, which... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Quakertown School District to join in lawsuit against vaping product makers**  
Quakertown Community School District officials said vaping at the high school is a serious problem. The Quakertown Community school board has authorized attorneys to prepare litigation that would join the district with other plaintiffs in suing companies that manufacture and market electronic cigarettes and vaping... - [Levittown Bucks County Courier Times](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Pashinski bill could spell trouble for the vaping industry**  
WILKES-BARRE — If state Rep. Eddie Day Pashinski gets his way, the flavored vaping industry will go up in smoke. The Wilkes-Barre Democrat on Friday introduced a bill, the "Ban on Flavored Vapor Products Act," that would prohibit stores from selling flavored vaping products in Pennsylvania.... - [Wilkes-Barre Citizens' Voice](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Doctors want new rules on insurance companies' 'prior authorization' of patient treatment**  
A behind-the-scenes struggle over what Pennsylvania doctors can do to patients ? specifically, the giving of final approval for specific treatments ? entered a new phase Monday morning. Proposed legislation intended to standardize insurance companies use of "prior authorization" was introduced at a Capitol Rotunda press... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Geisinger still seeking source of outbreak blamed in 3 infant deaths**  
Geisinger and state Health Department investigators still are searching for answers to a Pseudomonas bacteria outbreak blamed in the death of three infants in Geisinger Medical Center's neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), Geisinger spokesman Joseph Stender said.... - [Sunbury Daily Item](#)





- 10-29-2019 **Ex-Hatfield doctor accused of unlawfully prescribing opioids enters plea**  
NORRISTOWN — A former Hatfield Township doctor put his fate in the hands of a judge after he entered a no contest plea to charges he unlawfully prescribed opioid drugs to patients. Lawrence Ian Miller, 49, whose practice was located in the 1000 of Walnut Street in Hatfield, pleaded no contest in Montgomery County Court to felony... - [Lansdale Reporter](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Shusterman drafts legislation to fight food insecurity**  
WEST CHESTER—State Rep. Melissa Shusterman, D-Chester/Montgomery, will introduce legislation that seeks to address food insecurity and excessive food waste throughout the commonwealth. HB1999 seeks to explicitly add legal immunity to the donations of past-date foods through the Donated Food Limited Liability Act.... - [Pottstown Mercury](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Opinion | The world is flunking in the fight against disease**  
THE THREAT of a disease disaster has arisen in the past two decades in an unfortunate cycle of panic followed by neglect. The panics have been real: the anthrax letters; severe acute respiratory syndrome and Middle East Respiratory syndrome, both coronaviruses; the swine flu pandemic; the Ebola... - [Washington Post](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Centre County kids are benefiting from increased pre-K funding, but statewide gaps still exist**  
With help from a boost in state funding, what used to be empty space at the Learning Station is now home to a classroom for 3- and 4-year-olds who receive what director Lynda Mussi calls an “authentic” and high-quality early educational experience. The increase in pre-K funding in the 2019-20 state budget — a total of... - [State College Centre Daily Times](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Joyce appointed to cybersecurity committee, talks health care with President Trump**  
U.S. Rep. John Joyce was appointed to the House Committee on Homeland Security Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Innovation late last week. He also serves on the House Small Business Committee and is the top Republican on its Subcommittee on Rural Development, Agriculture, Trade,... - [Somerset Daily](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Murphy says he’s optimistic about reducing health care costs for N.J. teachers**  
Gov. Phil Murphy said Monday night he and other New Jersey leaders are negotiating a way to help the state’s public school teachers take home more pay by revamping their health care benefits a decade after a controversial overhaul increased premiums. Murphy stopped short of specifically endorsing a new bill, one that has... - [Trenton Times](#)
- 10-29-2019 **'Perfume' business was front to help accused heroin dealers operate in central Ohio, officials say**  
For years, authorities allege, a group of Mexicans efficiently distributed heroin like a sandwich delivery service in Columbus and central Ohio. A coordinated investigative effort that took 4 years resulted in federal indictments of 18 people, 13 of whom lived in central Ohio.... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)



- 10-29-2019 **Harvard study suggests Great Lakes region should install more solar to improve health, environment**  
To make greater national gains in slashing carbon emissions, more solar power should be installed in the Great Lakes region. And more wind turbines should be installed in the Upper Midwest, according to Harvard study. Experts say health and climate benefits outweigh financial costs of... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Analysis | The Health 202: Democrats slam GOP for a change to Obamacare that's never been carried out**  
Cue the 2020 election ads: Senate Democrats want to force Republicans to take a stand on Trump administration rules that open the door to discrimination against patients with preexisting medical conditions. But here's the rub: Not one single state has actually expressed an interest... - [Washington Post](#)
- 10-29-2019 **While UPMC and Highmark squared off, national players moved into the Medicare Advantage market**  
In the fall of 2014, Allegheny County's Medicare Advantage health insurance market was a pie with two big slices — one for Highmark and the other for UPMC. With a combined membership of 115,278, those two dwarfed all other insurers, none of whom had even one-tenth that total.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Continuing services: Successful mental health programs need funding**  
Support for quality mental health and addiction services is crucial As gun violence and the opioid epidemic continue to plague communities in our region and beyond, funding for quality mental health and addiction services is particularly crucial. A federal demonstration program that... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Sen. Casey: 'Junk plans' misleading Obamacare consumers in online search results**  
WASHINGTON — Searching online for Obamacare health plans this summer, Pittsburghers likely encountered several listings like "\$19 Health Insurance" and "Best Health Plans 2019 - Compare Plans from \$45 a Month" from sites like healthcare.org, a self-proclaimed "official... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 10-29-2019 **After student is found unconscious in bathroom, Quakertown school district to sue makers of vaping products**  
The Quakertown Community school board has authorized attorneys to sue companies that manufacture and market electronic cigarettes and vaping products, joining the district with other plaintiffs. School district officials said the timeline for filing the lawsuit... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Latest case against Lancaster County doctor accused of sexual assault moves to county court**  
Criminal charges related to a seventh person's accusations of sexual offenses against a Lancaster County doctor will be heard in court. William Vollmar, 56, waived his preliminary hearing Monday, Oct. 28, on one county each of corruption of minors and indecent assault before Quarryville... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)



- 10-29-2019 **Family health insurance costs Lancaster-area businesses & employees a combined \$19K**  
The massive problem of high health care costs isn't anywhere close to being solved, new local and national surveys show. Almost half the population gets health insurance through a job, and the premiums alone cost roughly as much as small car. And if they actually need medical care, many face significant deductibles... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Vaping is blamed for mounting deaths, lung injuries. Here's what it's doing to kids' brains.**  
With over 1,600 cases of vaping-related lung injuries and 34 deaths reported by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there is plenty that's worrisome about the health impacts of e-cigarettes. But the pulmonary harm — so concerning that the CDC website is updating... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-29-2019 **This 'breakthrough' benefit for trans workers at Mazzoni Center could be a model for other employers**  
Morgan Haven-Tietze first sought gender-transition-related care in 2011 at Philadelphia's Mazzoni Center, back when it was on Locust Street in the Gayborhood. Today, the city's decades-old center for LGBTQ health care has a sprawling space on Broad Street, and Haven-Tietze is more than just one of... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Violence against nurses is a very real hazard of their jobs | Opinion**  
There are some stories that haunt you for a long time. I'll never forget one from Laura, a registered nurse, who shared at an event at Lankenau Medical Center about a time one of her patients strangled her. Or, one from Elizabeth, a registered nurse from Fulton County Medical... - [Penn Live, Patriot-News](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Growing demand for nurses gives colleges an opportunity to fill classroom seats**  
The idea is to boost the training and the flow of nurses into the workplace. Just don't call it a tuition discount. Even if price reductions are now common among private colleges and even some public schools, Penn State University prefers the term .tuition adjustment..... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Survey: Number of kids watching online videos soars**  
The number of young Americans watching online videos every day has more than doubled, according to survey findings released Tuesday... - [AP](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Federal judge blocks Alabama's tough abortion law**  
A federal judge on Tuesday blocked Alabama's near-total abortion ban from taking effect next month, saying the law, part of wave of abortion restrictions by conservative states, is clearly unconstitutional... - [AP](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Committee advances bill requiring burial or cremation of fetal remains**  
A House committee voted Tuesday to approve a bill mandating the burial or cremation of fetal remains, coming just months after the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a similar law in Indiana. Supporters of the measure, authored by Rep. Frank Ryan (R-Lebanon), believe... - [Pennsylvania Legislative Services](#)



- 10-29-2019 **Philly's needle exchange prevented more than 10,000 HIV diagnoses in 10 years, study finds**  
Philadelphia's syringe exchange . the only one in the city, and one of just a handful operating around the state . prevented an estimated 10,592 HIV diagnoses in its first 10 years of operation, researchers at George Washington University have found. The study, published Tuesday in the Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Eagles rookies visit CHOP in Halloween costumes**  
As Eagles players filtered into the locker room Tuesday, costumes of all shapes and sizes awaited the team.s rookies, neatly packaged on their chairs. Literally, all shapes and sizes. Nate Herbig, at 6-foot-4 and 334 pounds, squeezed into a Mr. Incredible costume, while Miles Sanders, a 5-11, 211-pounder, asked for help to get a... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Philadelphia jury awards \$34 million to woman injured by defective medical device**  
A Philadelphia jury awarded nearly \$34 million to a Georgia woman who was seriously injured by a device that was supposed to save her life. Surgeons operated on Tracy Reed-Brown in 2010 to place a blood clot-catching .Option IVC. filter manufactured by Rex Medical LP into a... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-29-2019 **Until we know more about long-term effects, total ban on vaping products is needed | Opinion**  
Vaping is growing at an alarming rate among adolescents, putting their health at risk both now and in the future. Over 1,200 cases of severe acute lung injuries and at least 26 fatalities have brought the dangers of vaping to the forefront in recent months, but the risk of its potential long-term... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-28-2019 **Trump allies condemn probe**  
U.S. Rep. John Joyce, R-13th District, joined President Donald Trump in Pittsburgh last week, as Trump's congressional allies sought to fend off a mounting impeachment inquiry. Joyce — along with several central and western Pennsylvania GOP colleagues — rode along as Trump flew from Washington to Pittsburgh for... - [Altoona Mirror](#)
- 10-28-2019 **CWD informational programs set**  
Area residents will have a pair of opportunities during the next two weeks to learn about chronic wasting disease that is spreading in the deer population, especially in this area. The Pennsylvania Game Commission will offer an informational program at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the Hollidaysburg Area High School, 1510 Montgomery St.,... - [Altoona Mirror](#)
- 10-28-2019 **Veteran wants to take the 'D' out of PTSD**  
Retired Army Col. John C. Burns wants to take the “D” out of PTSD. It's enough to call it post traumatic stress without the word “disorder,” he said Thursday evening at Mental Health America (MHA) of Southwestern PA's 56th annual dinner meeting. “I hate the D-word,” he said. “It has a stigma attached. PTS is... - [Latrobe Bulletin](#)
- 10-28-2019 **Exiting Act 47 | Sewer project, poverty, blight biggest hurdles for city**  
The financial news organization 24/7 Wall St. recently ranked Johnstown as the seventh-poorest city in the United States. More than one-third of the citizens live in poverty. The median household income is \$23,636. Only about 12% of adult citizens hold at least a bachelor's degree. The current unemployment rate of... - [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#)



- 10-28-2019 **'It's about advocacy': Ms. Wheelchair Pa. crowned in Richland**  
For the first time in the organization's history, the Ms. Wheelchair Pennsylvania conference and competition was held in Johnstown. Barb Zablony, of Windber, Ms. Wheelchair Pennsylvania 2018 and now state coordinator of the organization, helped put together this year's... - [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#)
- 10-28-2019 **Longiotti, caregivers talk about programs for the vulnerable children**  
SHARON – The aftermath of Lorigan Shuttleworth's pregnancy at age 15 was difficult, almost as difficult as listening to her mother read the story as she wrote it. But when the story ended, the memory left behind a hint of a smile. Shuttleworth, now 16, asked her mom to read her story Friday at a gathering... - [Sharon Herald](#)
- 10-28-2019 **Pashinski introduces bill to ban flavored vaping products in Pa.**  
WILKES-BARRE — State Rep. Eddie Day Pashinski has introduced his "Ban on Flavored Vapor Products Act" — HB1994 — which would remove flavored vaping products from store shelves across Pennsylvania. "Vapor products have been repeatedly called 'safe' or 'less dangerous' than cigarettes," said Pashinski, D-Wilkes-Barre.... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 10-28-2019 **What's the Right Treatment for Lyme Disease? State Legislatures Wade Into the Debate**  
Ticks are sometimes hard to see with the naked eye. They're tiny creatures and can be as small as a pinhead. But while these bloodsuckers may be little, the impact they're having on humans is immense. Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses are on the rise in the U.S., with... - [Route Fifty](#)
- 10-28-2019 **Medical marijuana facility breaks ground in Penn Twp.**  
PA Options for Wellness, a Harrisburg-based medical marijuana company, broke ground Oct. 16 on its new production facility in Penn Twp. The ceremony included speeches by company executives, politicians and a Penn State Hershey Medical Center researcher. PA Options has an agreement with the hospital's pharmacology department... - [Penn Live, Patriot-News](#)
- 10-28-2019 **Your CBD Store takes out the guesswork**  
Self-admittedly unregulated, Your CBD Store which opened in May at 960 Plaza Drive, in Montoursville, attempts to remove the apprehension out of their products with rigorous testing and knowledgeable staff. "That's what our company is here for," said Anthony... - [Williamsport Sun-Gazette](#)
- 10-28-2019 **Local pharmacies struggling**  
Independent pharmacies across the country are struggling due to monopolies of corporate middlemen, called pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs). - [Huntingdon Daily News](#)
- 10-28-2019 **'It's been overwhelming': Prayers, support for school, family of North Schuylkill quarterback who suffered broken neck**  
One of the special things about high school sports in Schuylkill County is how entire communities come together and rally for each other in a time of need. Such was the case Saturday for North Schuylkill senior football player Jaden Leiby. The Spartans' starting quarterback was injured while making a tackle on... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)



- 10-28-2019 **[Geisinger, Delta Medix settle lawsuits over urology practices](#)**  
Five urologists who left the Delta Medix medical practice last year resumed practice in the Scranton area after reaching a settlement of several lawsuits relating to a dispute over a no-compete clause. Lisa Lori, attorney for Delta Medix, said the agreement resolves four... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 10-28-2019 **[Aiding with Aging helps adults caring for disabled adults](#)**  
HERMITAGE – There’s just no way around it, at times an adult caring for another adult with disabilities can be overwhelming. Help is out there, said Paulette Testani, who cares for a disabled relative. “But you have to have a vision,” she said to other caregivers... - [Sharon Herald](#)
- 10-28-2019 **[Front Lines | Hilltop EMT serving the community](#)**  
About every 40 seconds, someone in the United States suffers a heart attack, according to the American Heart Association. Many don’t survive. Many who do, form a special bond with the men and woman who saved their life. Success and failure is part of the job for first responders.... - [Johnstown Tribune-Democrat](#)
- 10-28-2019 **[Analysis | The Health 202: Officials confirm THC oil is linked to vaping deaths - but they can't regulate it for safety](#)**  
Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) is intensifying his calls to legalize marijuana products. That could help the federal government prevent more vaping-related deaths in the future. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirmed Friday what many had already suspected: That most people who died from a spate of... - [Washington Post](#)
- 10-28-2019 **[California finds widespread water contamination of 'forever chemicals'](#)**  
Nearly 300 drinking water wells and other water sources in California have traces of toxic chemicals linked to cancer, new state testing has found. Testing conducted this year of more than 600 wells across the state revealed pockets of contamination, where chemicals widely used for decades... - [Los Angeles Times](#)
- 10-28-2019 **[Wake-up call? Later school day urged in Ohio as 'public-health issue'](#)**  
In the wake of California’s new law prohibiting high schools from starting earlier than 8:30 a.m., an Ohio legislator from Cleveland has proposed a similar law. Some education officials warn that such a change could have costly effects on school districts and disrupt busing and... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 10-28-2019 **[Government 'strongly' advises against cannabis products while pregnant or nursing](#)**  
The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is “strongly” advising against use of cannabis-derived products by woman who are pregnant or breastfeeding their babies. The recent FDA advisory pertains to CBD and THC, two ingredients found in marijuana, as well as marijuana itself.... - [Penn Live, Patriot-News](#)
- 10-28-2019 **[Growing demand for nurses gives colleges an opportunity to fill classroom seats](#)**  
The idea is to boost the training and the flow of nurses into the workplace. Just don’t call it a tuition discount. Even if price reductions are now common among private colleges and even some public schools, Penn State University prefers the term “tuition adjustment.”... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)





- 10-28-2019 **[New calendar promotes Pittsburgh's inspirational 60-somethings](#)**  
Sam Gaetano hadn't really thought of himself as pinup material. But there he is, Mr. February, in a new "60 Strong" calendar released this week by Preferred Primary Care Physicians, the largest independent network of primary care doctors in Western Pennsylvania.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 10-28-2019 **[UPMC inks deal with Chinese developer for series of hospitals](#)**  
UPMC and Chinese conglomerate Wanda Group have broken ground on the first of what is expected to be a network of hospitals in cities across China. The hospital is being built in Chengdu, a city with a population of more than 18 million people, and it's expected to open in 2022. Wanda will... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 10-28-2019 **[I've studied bed bugs for 10 years. Mark Squilla just weakened Philly's plan to fight these pests. | Opinion](#)**  
Like nearly every major city in the United States, Philadelphia is suffering from a bedbug epidemic. Unlike other major cities, Philadelphia lacks effective and enforced bedbug policies, enabling infestations to continue to multiply. The most important thing I've learned from a decade studying bedbugs is... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-28-2019 **[Medical debt is driving how people make decisions about health care, insurance](#)**  
Sharon Kelly had always been healthy and never used her insurance plan much. That all changed in 2016, when a routine mammogram showed a lump in her left breast. Kelly, a self-employed psychologist in West Chester, was swept up in a whirlwind of medical appointments, tests, and surgeries that got rid of the... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-28-2019 **[I've studied bedbugs for 10 years. Mark Squilla just weakened Philly.s plan to fight these pests. | Opinion](#)**  
Like nearly every major city in the United States, Philadelphia is suffering from a bedbug epidemic. Unlike other major cities, Philadelphia lacks effective and enforced bedbug policies, enabling infestations to multiply. The most important thing I.ve learned from a decade studying bedbugs is... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-28-2019 **['It's not safe for kids to be in this school.' North Philadelphia parents demand answers about asbestos.](#)**  
Jesse Stanton kept his two children at home Monday. Until there are answers from the Philadelphia School District, he said, he doesn't want to risk his children being exposed to asbestos at T.M. Peirce Elementary. .My kids said, .Why can.t we go to school,. and I said, .I don.t want you... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-28-2019 **[Excelsior Westmoreland ranked among top regional facilities in U.S. News & World Report](#)**  
Excelsior Health Westmoreland Hospital won honors as Best Regional Hospital-Pittsburgh, according to U.S. News & World Report. The Greensburg hospital was one of 569 hospitals of the nearly 4,500 reviewed to rank among the Best Regional Hospitals in a state or metro area... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 10-28-2019 **[Doctors want new rules on insurance companies'prior authorization' of patient treatment](#)**  
A behind-the-scenes struggle over what Pennsylvania doctors can do to patients . specifically, the giving of final approval for specific treatments . entered a new phase Monday morning. Proposed legislation intended to standardize insurance companies use of "prior authorization. was introduced at a Capitol Rotunda press conference... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)





- 10-28-2019 **[Hey Lehigh Valley voters, there are new machines this year. Here's how to use them](#)**  
If you're heading to the polls across the Lehigh Valley this November, prepare for a different voting experience as Lehigh and Northampton counties roll out new voting systems. The machines, which voters are trying out for the first time locally, were mandated by the state after Russian hackers targeted 21 states including... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Philadelphia City Controller releases report on gun violence and property values](#)**  
Flanked by state legislators and spiritual leaders, City Controller Rebecca Rhynhart (D) announced Wednesday a novel investigation into the financial cost of gun violence in Philadelphia. Rhynhart's office spent over a year investigating the effects homicides... - [Pennsylvania Legislative Services](#)
- 10-27-2019 **['Everything got so far out of control,' says new mom helped with depression therapy](#)**  
Michelle Fogle was deep into depression after the birth of her first child, Claire, in January 2018. Although she had a history of anxiety and depression, she said, she had no prenatal screening for depression and wasn't getting the help she needed in those first weeks after delivery. She had talked to several professionals,... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Aging with dignity: Co-living helps seniors survive](#)**  
Some seniors of limited financial means have come together in a shared-living arrangement As baby boomers age into senior citizen status in greater proportion, ways to accommodate the needs of the elderly must be explored. Looking east to Pennsylvania's Amish country gives a glimpse at possibility.... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Medicine has changed. As an emergency doctor, I have too. | Perspective](#)**  
One year ago, doctors across the country pushed back against what could have been an easily overlooked tweet from the National Rifle Association. The organization told doctors to stay in your lane. on gun laws, after noting that articles in a medical journal advocated for safer gun policies.... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Ban on flavored e-cigarettes proposed for Pennsylvania](#)**  
The bill, introduced Oct. 25 by State Rep. Eddie Day Pashinski (D., Luzerne ), would prohibit stores from selling flavored vaping products, with penalties starting at \$500. It's time for Pennsylvania to combat this recent spike in teen tobacco product usage and the public health concerns that come with it,. Pashinski... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Don't call Pa.'s new female lawmakers 'girlie' or they'll hold another rally about tampons | Maria Panaritis](#)**  
Just past the clear bowl of tampons and pads she now makes available at the front desk of her Pennsylvania Senate office, from a seat at the shiny wood table where Maria Collett and I were talking the other day in the Capitol, I leaned toward the Montgomery County Democratic freshman to disclose why I... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)



- 10-27-2019 **[Allegheny Health Network releases wait-time tool for emergency rooms, urgent care centers](#)**  
It's now possible to know how long the wait will be at Allegheny Health Network emergency rooms and urgent care centers, the network announced Friday. Find Care Now. is available online at ahn.org and by desktop and mobile devices on MyChart. Patients can use MyChart to check in and enter basic demographic... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Expert: Large 'mosquitoes' are really disease-free crane flies](#)**  
Homeowners who are concerned their backyards are being invaded by super-sized mosquitoes are really witnessing the annual emergence of harmless adult crane flies, according to the Westmoreland Conservation District's Andrea Halfhill. She knows about mosquitoes, since she just finished monitoring the county.s... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Westmoreland County commissioner candidates push drug court to fight opioid epidemic](#)**  
The fourth installment features excerpts of the candidates' views on how they plan to combat the ongoing opioid epidemic, which has produced record numbers of fatal overdoses in the county. A video of their full responses can be seen at TribLIVE.com. Doug Chew (R), 49, of Hempfield... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Authorize full practice](#)**  
SB25, which gives nurse practitioners full practice authority by removing a mandate that requires a collaborative agreement with two physicians, passed the Senate June 12, 44-6, an even larger margin than last session. This legislation awaits consideration in the House.... - [Scranton Times](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Pashinski introduces bill to ban flavored vaping products in Pa.](#)**  
State Rep. Eddie Day Pashinski has introduced his Ban on Flavored Vapor Products Act. HB1994. which would remove flavored vaping products from store shelves across Pennsylvania. Vapor products have been repeatedly called safe. or less dangerous. than cigarettes,. said Pashinski, D-Wilkes-Barre. While it is true that vapor... - [Wilkes-Barre Times Leader](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Berks locations will accept unused drugs on Saturday's National Prescription Drug Take Back Day](#)**  
Saturday is National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. Gov. Tom Wolf is encouraging Pennsylvanians to gather unused or unwanted prescription drugs to be returned to one of 877 drug take-back box locations in the state's 67 counties. The service is free, anonymous, and in many places, convenient.... - [Reading Eagle](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Retired Reading Hospital doctor to receive Pennsylvania Medical Society's Distinguished Service Award](#)**  
Even though Dr. Raymond Truex knew he must be pretty smart to be a brain surgeon, he never imagined he'd share rarefied air with the likes of Drs. Jonas Salk and C. Everett Koop. But Saturday in Hershey, the retired Reading Hospital neurosurgeon will be presented the Pennsylvania Medical Society's Distinguished Service Award,... - [Reading Eagle](#)



- 10-27-2019 **[Insurers profit while patients suffer | Opinion](#)**  
Like most people, you (or your employer) faithfully pay your healthcare insurance premium every month. You remain fairly healthy throughout the year. Then, it happens. You trip, fall, and catch yourself as you hit the ground. Now your hand and wrist really hurt.... - [Penn Live, Patriot-News](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Pennsylvania's opioid settlement funds would go to communities but not individuals, AG Josh Shapiro says](#)**  
Pennsylvania's share of the proposed \$48 billion opioid settlement with pharmaceutical companies would be handed out to communities in need of addiction treatment resources, but would not be available to individuals and families harmed by drug addiction, Attorney General Josh Shapiro said... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Primary care doctors paid by patient monthly fees, not insurance, gaining traction](#)**  
The stuff that Dr. Kim Corba deals with every day . colds, infections, back pain, anxiety, hypertension, skin rashes . is part of the routine for a family doctor. But the way her patients pay her is not. Corba, whose office is in Upper Macungie Township, provides direct primary... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Paul Muschick: Why I support the area's first forced measles quarantine in 20 years](#)**  
It's a shame it had to happen, but Allentown health authorities did the right thing by forcing a woman to be quarantined after she was exposed to measles and there were concerns she could be contagious. We all have a responsibility to protect public health. Those exposed to a... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Important flu season tips \(letter\)](#)**  
Hey, seniors, you still have time to get the correct flu vaccines this year (for me, that means those selected by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, likely to be the most common strains of types A and B circulating in the U.S. this winter and next spring). For the 2019-20... - [Lancaster Intelligencer Journal](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Vaping devices now being accepted on Drug Take Back Day](#)**  
More than medication is being collected during Saturday's National Prescription Drug Take Back Day... - [AP](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Opioids saved my life. Quitting them was excruciating](#)**  
The sweet, clean high of Vicodin, I will never forget. That exalted sense of optimism and quiet elation, the release from the troubles of life. Peace. For years I needed it. I was born with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, a genetic disorder that causes nervous system dysfunction, extreme pain, debilitating... - [Los Angeles Times](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Families who lost children, savings feel left out in opioid lawsuits](#)**  
As drug companies and governments battle over multimillion-dollar settlements, families who lost homes, savings and loved ones to opioids want their voices heard. Many are angry about legal agreements allowing opioid manufacturers and distributors to pay up without acknowledging... - [Columbus Dispatch](#)
- 10-27-2019 **[Trump campaign urges White House to soften proposed flavored vape ban](#)**  
Parscale has commissioned internal campaign polling to argue that Trump supporters who use e-cigarettes could abandon the president if he follows through on a ban, according to a person familiar with the effort who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.... - [Washington Post](#)



- 10-25-2019 **Pa. to get \$53 million in opioid drug settlement**  
HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — Pennsylvania is in line to receive more than \$53 million as part of a nationwide settlement with a British company that once distributed a drug used to treat opioid addiction... - [AP](#)
- 10-25-2019 **Damaged asbestos was found in a North Philly school gym a month ago. It's still there.**  
Philadelphia School District officials waited more than a month to address warnings of possible asbestos contamination and exposure inside the gym at T.M. Peirce Elementary School in North Philadelphia. The lack of urgency is a stark contrast to how the district responded last... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-25-2019 **Punishing Addiction**  
Eric Daley raced in a sweat into the probation office in King of Prussia. It had been one of those mornings when things weren't going right, starting when he called the hotline — as he was required to do every morning — and learned that, yes, he did have to report for drug testing... - [Philadelphia Inquirer](#)
- 10-25-2019 **Pharmacies to police stations, drug take back collection sites open Saturday**  
Saturday's Drug Take Back Day will accept unwanted THC or other vape cartridges but not those with batteries, according to Drug Enforcement Agent Pat Trainor. The 18th National Prescription Drug Take Back Day will be held across the country. The service is free.... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 10-25-2019 **Our view: Highmark, UPMC ante up in Erie**  
Major investments have been accompanied by the expansion of and improvements to care. So much has happened since then that it's easy to forget how much angst was generated several years ago when Erie's two biggest hospitals affiliated with two Pennsylvania health care giants.... - [Erie Times-News](#)
- 10-25-2019 **Brownsville boy recognized for making lifesaving 911 call**  
A 6-year-old Brownsville boy knew something was wrong when his great-grandmother suddenly fell. He also knew to call 911 and was able to give dispatchers information with a calm surpassing many adult callers, 911 officials said. Two weeks later, Anthony Malone was recognized before his first-grade class... - [Uniontown Herald-Standard](#)
- 10-25-2019 **Sheriff promotes drug take back day**  
POTTSVILLE — For the eighth year, the Schuylkill County Sheriff's Office is teaming up with law enforcement agencies throughout the United States on Saturday for National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. Sheriff Joseph Groody said prescription drugs can be turned in at the... - [Pottsville Republican and Evening Herald](#)
- 10-25-2019 **Urgent care and other practices coming to new Keystone Health building**  
The 68,000-square-foot Keystone Professional Center, located on corner of Norland and Fifth avenues at 111 Chambers Hill Drive, will help Keystone to keep up with the growing demand for health services. The first floor of the building houses Keystone Urgent Care; Keystone... - [Chambersburg Public Opinion](#)



- 10-25-2019 **[OraSure simplifies medical testing worldwide. Why the CEO says they're still based in Bethlehem.](#)**  
Small enough to fit in a pocket, OraSure Technologies Inc.'s products sold by 23andMe bring DNA testing into the home for people to learn about their health and heredity. They make saliva tests for HIV cheap and fast enough for public health workers to take them door to door. That helps get people treatment and stem... - [Easton Express-Times](#)
- 10-25-2019 **[Local lawmakers discuss support for brain injury community](#)**  
HARRISBURG—Pennsylvanians living with traumatic and acquired brain injuries came to the state capitol this week to share their stories of survival, recovery, and hope. State Senator Andy Dinniman, who serves as co-chair of the Senate Brain Injury Caucus, helped organize and host the group during a day of... - [Pottstown Mercury](#)
- 10-25-2019 **[ImageFIRST donates a portion of proceeds to pediatric cancer research](#)**  
UPPER MERION — A King of Prussia company that has donated more than half a million dollars to local Ronald McDonald Houses has now formed an alliance with the National Pediatric Cancer Foundation (NPCF), further reflecting its mission "to make a positive difference in the lives of... - [Norristown Times Herald](#)
- 10-25-2019 **[Lt. Gov. Fetterman visits Venango County](#)**  
Lieutenant Governor John Fetterman found Venango County strongly in favor of the legalization of recreational marijuana on Sunday, at least based on the portion of the county that came to voice their opinions at his listening tour stop at Oil City High School.... - [Titusville Herald](#)
- 10-25-2019 **[California finds widespread water contamination of 'forever chemicals'](#)**  
Nearly 300 drinking water wells and other water sources in California have traces of toxic chemicals linked to cancer, new state testing has found. Testing conducted this year of more than 600 wells across the state revealed pockets of contamination, where chemicals widely used for decades... - [Los Angeles Times](#)
- 10-25-2019 **[Scientists Were Hunting for the Next Ebola. Now the U.S. Has Cut Off Their Funding.](#)**  
Predict, a government research program, sought to identify animal viruses that might infect humans and to head off new pandemics. - [New York Times](#)
- 10-25-2019 **[Should Family Members See Patients Die in the I.C.U.?](#)**  
On one recent intensive care unit shift, I admitted a man whose heart had stopped earlier that day. By the time I met him, it seemed clear that he wasn't going to live. So when he went into cardiac arrest for what I suspected would be the last time, I headed out of the unit to find his... - [New York Times](#)
- 10-25-2019 **['Who would listen to anything you have to say?': Allentown school director says a family medical leave date was botched](#)**  
In a meeting that was at times both contested and outlandish, Allentown School Director Robert E. Smith accused administrators of making a clerical mistake that would rob the district's business manager of two months of family medical leave. The district on Thursday night asked the school board to approve business... - [Allentown Morning Call](#)



- 10-25-2019 **[Westmoreland County commissioner candidates push drug court to fight opioid epidemic](#)**  
Editor's note: Candidates for Westmoreland County commissioner discussed their views on various subjects with the Tribune-Review, which will be published weekly leading up to the Nov. 5 election. The fourth installment features excerpts of the candidates' views on... - [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#)
- 10-25-2019 **[Former Philly mayor has budding career as face of South Jersey medical marijuana facility](#)**  
EDITOR'S NOTE: The billion-dollar medical marijuana, hemp and legal weed industries offer an economic opportunity unrivaled in modern N.J. history. NJ Cannabis Insider features exclusive, premium content for those interested in getting in on the ground floor or expanding their operation.... - [Trenton Times](#)
- 10-25-2019 **[Get the lead out: Allegheny County must show interest in lead abatement](#)**  
The failure to secure more federal money to combat lead poisoning signals at least two big problems Allegheny County's failure to secure more federal money to combat lead poisoning signals at least two big problems: The county isn't only losing out on a federal grant that was all but tied with a ribbon; it also... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)
- 10-25-2019 **[Paging Dr. Google: Curb the use of search engines for medical advice](#)**  
The internet is no replacement for a real doctor Ever had a stomach pain or a throbbing headache and turned to the internet for guidance? There is some good advice out there on the World Wide Web — drink some water, take a pain reliever, get some sleep. But one could... - [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#)



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, Cheryl, Aaron, Becky, Amyra, Nick, Nicole, Robert, Emily, Andrew, Shaun, Justin, Sheri, Harrison, Sarah, and John.

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Provided by Pennsylvania Legislative Services  
240 N. 3rd St. 8th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101  
Phone: 717.236.6984 Fax: 717.236.5097  
[www.mypls.com](http://www.mypls.com)