

Legislative Locator

The Legislative Locator is a Bimonthly Publication of The Pennsylvania Municipal League



**Legislative
Locator**

January 2025

The League's 2025 Advocacy Agenda

As the new legislative session is underway and bills are introduced, The League has updated its Legislative Priorities and Policy Statement for 2025.

The League's 2025 Legislative Priorities, broken down into three categories – Public Safety, Municipal Finance, and Community Development and Infrastructure – will serve as the top issues for our advocacy efforts in the next year.

In addition to our priorities, we incorporated the adopted resolutions from our annual Municipal Leadership Summit into The League's 2025 Policy Statement. The Policy Statement serves as a guide when representing our members before the legislative and executive branches in Harrisburg. It is a living, comprehensive statement of goals and policies developed by consensus of The League's members.

Lastly, we encourage all local officials within our membership, elected or appointed, to review our Advocacy Toolkit and use it to prepare for your own local advocacy efforts in the year ahead. Please find hyperlinks to each resource below.

2025 Legislative Priorities
Celebrating Strengthening Communities

Municipal Finance
The Commonwealth's 1983 local tax structure no longer meets today's expenses. To prevent local citizens, the General Assembly must expand proven taxing options to all municipalities.

- authorize an increase in the Local Services Tax to \$50 a year;
- eliminate the rate cap on the Earned Income Tax;
- authorize the Payroll Tax.

Modern Methods for Public Notice Advertising
The current methods to advertise public notices in print media no longer promotes transparency and good government. The high cost of placing ads, the reduction in daily print newspapers and the shrinking of newspapers has resulted in less transparency, increased clutter and wasted taxpayer dollars. A menu of advertising options is a more efficient way to serve the public in today's online news environment.

Public Safety
Modern Speed Timing Technology
The current technology that municipal police officers are authorized to use to control vehicle speed on local roads is obsolete and widely ineffective. Radar, LIDAR and automated cameras are new technologies that, authorized for all municipalities, can help speeding and save lives.

Sustainable Public Safety Services
Public safety is an essential service of local government. The ability to recruit and retain first responders is an ongoing crisis that jeopardizes the health, safety and welfare of all.

Community Development and Infrastructure
Affordable Housing
The League commends Governor Shapiro for elevating the housing crisis to a statewide priority. The urgent need for housing is a statewide issue with local solutions from both the public and private sector. Local government must be at the table as solutions are developed through the Housing Action Plan and through legislation.

Reliable Local Transportation Infrastructure Funding
The 2023 Transportation Revenue Options Commission identified a \$2 billion funding gap for local roads and bridges. As gas tax revenue and, in turn, municipal road funds declines, the Commonwealth must develop new funding sources to reliably and adequately support transportation infrastructure. The condition of our roads and bridges impacts not only public safety, but also the local and state economy. All new funding sources must maintain the historic local share of 50 percent.

For questions, please contact Amy Burgess, Deputy Executive Director for Advocacy at aburgess@leaguenet.org or call 717.633.1120.

2025 Policy Statement
Celebrating Strengthening Communities

Advocacy Toolkit
What you need to know to be an effective advocate for your municipality

2025 Capitol Conference Webinar Series

How to Support The League and PSATC's Advocacy Efforts and Why It's Important You Do!

Thursday, February 20th, 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

It's important for local elected and appointed officials to know what's happening in Harrisburg. The General Assembly is beginning a new two-year session and there will be plenty of local impacts.

Please join us as we kick off our 2025 Capitol Conference Webinar Series on February 20th with a presentation and discussion of our Legislative Priorities, including:

- Local use of radar;
- Public notice advertising fees;
- Modern municipal revenue sources;
- Delivery of public safety services;
- Affordable housing;
- Transportation infrastructure funding;
- Skill games;
- Local preemption; and
- More!

We will provide insights into the various topics, along with updates on introduced legislation, and how you can support our advocacy work. We will also highlight items of interest to local government from the Governor's 25-26 budget address.

Register for Webinar

2025 Bid Limits Announced

The Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry has announced changes to the base amounts triggering the requirement for public bids, telephonic bids, or separate bids, for certain contracts. There is a 2.4% change for this year, which falls under the 3 percent cap. Therefore, the base amount for public bids is \$23,800 and the base amount for written or telephonic bids is \$12,900, effective January 1, 2025. [Click here](#) for the complete list of base values.

Key Committee Leadership Positions for Local Government

Senate Committee Leaders

Senate Appropriations Committee

Majority Chair: Senator Scott Martin

Minority Chair: Senator Vincent Hughes

Senate Local Government Committee

Majority Chair: Senator Dawn Keefer

Minority Chair: Senator Patty Kim

Senate Urban Affairs & Housing Committee

Majority Chair: Senator Joe Picozzi

Minority Chair: Senator Nikil Saval

Senate Community, Economic &

Recreational Development Committee

Majority Chair: Senator Rosemary Brown

Minority Chair: Senator Anthony Williams

Senate Transportation Committee

Majority Chair: Senator Judy Ward

Minority Chair: Senator Marty Flynn

Senate Veterans Affairs & Emergency

Preparedness Committee

Majority Chair: Senator Doug Mastriano

Minority Chair: Senator Katie Muth

House Committee Leaders

House Appropriations Committee

Majority Chair: Rep. Jordan Harris

Minority Chair: Rep. Jim Struzzi

House Local Government Committee

Majority Chair: Rep. Bob Freeman

Minority Chair: Rep. Brett Miller

House Housing and Community

Development Committee

Majority Chair: Rep. Brandon Markosek

Minority Chair: Rep. Rich Irvin

House Tourism, Recreation and Economic Development Committee

House Transportation Committee

Majority Chair: Rep. Ed Neilson

Minority Chair: Rep. Kerry Benninghoff

Majority Chair: Rep. Mary Jo Daley

Minority Chair: Rep. R. Lee James

*House Veterans Affairs and Emergency
Preparedness Committee*

Majority Chair: Rep. Jared Solomon

Minority Chair: Rep. Mark Gillen

Please find a complete list of all committee leadership positions [here](#).

PDBA Opening Second Round for the Capital Projects Fund: Digital Connectivity Technology Program

In June 2024, the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority (PBDA) opened the Capital Projects Fund - Digital Connectivity Technology Program. This program utilized \$20 million of the \$279 million in the Capital Projects Fund that were allocated to Pennsylvania through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021.

In November 2024, the PBDA distributed over 9,000 laptops to 117 applicants across 42 counties. These entities included libraries, municipalities, workforce training organizations, not-for-profit organizations, and other community anchor institutions in areas where affordability is a barrier. For details on the first round of approved applicants, please visit the [Digital Connectivity Technology Program page](#).

The PBDA will open a second round of the Program beginning April 1, 2025 to distribute the remaining laptops. In preparation for this second round, there will be two webinars which will provide an overview of the program, review FAQs, and outline any updates to the guidelines. Additional information for these webinars can be found [here](#).

Should you have additional questions, please contact the PBDA at pbda_capitalprojectsfund@pa.gov.



Pennsylvania
**Office of the
State Fire Commissioner**

Webinar: Understanding The
OSFC's Annual FCEMS Grant

Tuesday, January 28
3:00 - 4:00 p.m.

The PA Office of the State Fire Commissioner will be conducting a webinar that will cover everything you ever wanted to know about its annual Fire Company and EMS Grant including how grant amounts are determined, exciting new improvements to the grant process, and an overview of the grant calendar to be sure you don't miss any important dates! Register at the link below. A recording will be made available to those who register but are unable to attend.

[Register Here](#)

Cosponsor Memos

Compensating Municipalities for Tax Exempt Properties

Representative Robert Freeman has announced his intention to reintroduce legislation establishing the Tax Exempt Property Municipal Assistance Fund designating a portion of the Liquor Tax for municipalities that have a high percentage of tax exempt properties within their jurisdiction.

County-Level Inventory of Properties

Representative Jared Solomon has announced his intention to introduce legislation allowing each counties' chief assessor to maintain a list of properties and owner contact information in their jurisdiction for code enforcement purposes.

Right to Know Vexatious Requestors

Senator Cris Dush has announced his intention to reintroduce legislation creating a process for municipalities to seek relief from a Right to Know requester that the municipality alleges is vexatious.

Preempting Local Governments through Energy Choice

Senator Gene Yaw has announced his intention to reintroduce legislation preempting municipalities regarding utilities and sources of energy.

Legislation Affecting Local Government

Municipal Emergency Services Fund

House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee, January 14, 2025

[House Bill 108](#) (PN 86), introduced by Representative Anita Kulik, would create the Real Property Emergency Services Act mandating all municipalities to establish a fund to supplement their emergency services allocation.

Within 15 days of the sale of a property, both the buyer and seller shall send \$25 each to the property's respective municipality, which would be placed into the fund. A \$250 penalty may be assessed for the failure of a buyer or seller to pay the fee. The fund's monies would be used for the purchase or maintenance of equipment and buildings for fire and EMS services, as well as covering the salaries of their personnel.

Municipalities would be required to conduct an audit every five years on their fund in addition to publishing a yearly report.

Third Class Cities Emergency Services Tax

House Local Government Committee, January 16, 2025

[House Bill 162](#) (PN 120), introduced by Representative Abby Major, would amend Title 11 (Cities) allowing third class cities to establish a one half mill tax to support the salaries, benefits, and other compensation of ambulance and other rescue personnel. If the city wishes to set the tax higher than one half mill, the question must go to the voters for approval through referendum.

Expanding Workers' Compensation for Permanent Disfigurement

House Labor and Industry Committee, January 16, 2025

[House Bill 183](#) (PN 130), introduced by Representative Jason Dawkins, would amend the Workers' Compensation Act expanding the range of injury and amount of compensation for permanent disfigurement.

Currently the Law limits benefits for an employee that suffers serious injury or permanent disfigurement to just the head, face and neck. This bill would expand benefits to cover disfigurement to anywhere on the body. Additionally, the bill would increase the total number of

compensable weeks for permanent disfigurement from 275 to 400 weeks. Lastly, an employee may collect both the permanent disfigurement benefit and total or partial disability benefits, allowing both classes of benefits to be collected simultaneously.

Second Class Township Ordinance Effective Date

House Local Government Committee, January 17, 2025

[House Bill 209](#) (PN 157), introduced by Representative Lisa Borowski, would amend the Second Class Township Code. Currently the code states ordinances become effective five days after adoption. This bill would remove that language and instead make ordinances effective immediately unless a later date is stated in the ordinance.

Park Protected Bike Lanes

House Transportation Committee, January 22, 2025

[House Bill 291](#) (PN 226), introduced by Representative Mary Jo Daley, would amend Title 75 (Transportation) allowing for the establishment of park protected pedestrian plazas and bike lanes by repealing current law that requires vehicles to park within 12 inches of a curb. This bill would not mandate that pedestrian plazas or bike lanes be established.

House and Senate Session Days 2025

House

February 3-5

March 17-19, 24-26

April 7-9, 22-24

Senate

February 3-5

March 24-26, 31

April 1-2

**reminder - session dates are subject to change*



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