

Legislative Locator

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



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Locator**

May 2026

Support House Bill 2488 – Increasing the Local Services Tax

Representatives Ismail Smith-Wade-El and Jamie Flick introduced [House Bill 2488](#) proposing an increase to the Local Services Tax (LST). Currently, the tax is capped at \$52. The legislation would increase the cap to \$156, providing all municipalities with the option to decide if an increase would help their fiscal outlook. It also provides an exemption from the LST for individuals making less than \$15,600.

It is important that you reach out to your Representatives letting them know you support House Bill 2488 and ask them to do the same.

Take Action

Stormwater Fee UpdateSupreme Court Ruling on the Borough of West Chester v. PASSHE, et al.

On April 30, the PA Supreme Court issued its ruling on the Borough of West Chester v. PASSHE, et al. case, concluding the Borough's stormwater fee is a tax and therefore the Commonwealth is immune.

Please [click here](#) to read the Supreme Court's opinion.

Senate Housing Package

The Senate Urban Affairs and Housing Committee met on May 6th to consider their housing package. Please find a list of the bills passed by the Committee below.

- [Senate Bill 803](#) – would establish a first-time homebuyer savings account program in the Commonwealth.
- [Senate Bill 1277](#) – would amend the Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Act, extending the exemption schedule cap for residential development to 20 years.
- [Senate Bill 1278](#) – would establish the Residential Economic Development District Grant Program to provide state grants to local governments that are working with developers to build housing near job-creating projects.

- [Senate Bill 1279](#) – would create a Housing Regulatory Compliance Officer in the Office of Transformation and Opportunity who solely focuses on home ownership and housing development permits and applications.
- [Senate Bill 1281](#) – would amend the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code allowing municipalities to utilize a system of pre-vetted housing plans (e.g. duplexes, townhouses, accessory dwelling units).

Legislation Affecting Local Government

Water Consumption of Data Centers

Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, April 23, 2026

[House Bill 2150](#) (PN 3029), introduced by Representative Kyle Mullins, would require all data centers to submit an annual report of their energy and water use to the Department of Environmental Protection. The report must include the total energy and water use, maximum day demand, energy and water sources, and any measures taken to increase efficiency and protect the environment. A data center that fails to submit a timely report faces a \$10,000 fine per day until the report is submitted. Fines would be placed into the low-income electric customer assistance program of the electric distribution company for the service areas in which the data center in violation is located.

Data Center Model Ordinance

Passed the House, April 13, 2026

[House Bill 2151](#) (PN 3174), introduced by Representative Kyle Donahue, would direct the Local Government Commission to develop a model zoning ordinance for data centers to be updated on an annual basis.

Publication of Proposed Ordinances

Senate Local Government Committee, April 29, 2026

[House Bill 2177](#) (PN 2832) and [House Bill 2179](#) (PN 2833), introduced by Representative Bob Freeman and Christina Sappey respectively, would amend the Borough, Third Class City, County, and Second Class Township Codes setting out what must be included in the brief summary publication of a proposed ordinance.

The bills would continue to require either the full text of the proposed ordinance or a brief summary to be published. According to the bills, a brief summary shall include a description of each of the following as applicable.

- An adoption, amendment, or repeal of a tax, fee, charge or assessment.
- An adoption, amendment, or repeal of a regulation that provides for an offense or civil or criminal penalty.
- A provision that does one or more of the following:
 - Provides payment for goods, services, or contractual obligations.
 - Restrict funds for a specific purpose or obligation.
 - Pledges funds for a specific purpose or obligation.
- A reference to the municipal office where copies of the proposed ordinance may be examined.

- A reference to the publicly accessible website, if any, where the full text may be examined.

If a published brief summary is challenged, it shall be deemed legally sufficient if it contains the information required and was made publicly available at the municipal office and on the municipal website. This legislation would not supersede the requirements of a proposed ordinance published under the Municipalities Planning Code.

Accessory Dwelling Units

Second Consideration in the House, May 6, 2026

[House Bill 2186](#) (PN 3373), introduced by Representative John Inglis, amends Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) adding a new chapter mandating accessory dwelling units (ADUs) as a use by right in every municipality on parcels in which a residential building is permitted, except where superseded by a deed restriction. The legislation lists a number of prohibited municipal regulations of ADUs.

Lastly, added by an amendment on the House floor, a municipality may prohibit an ADU from being rented for fewer than 30 days at a time.

Preemption of Local Firearms Control

Passed the Senate, May 6, 2026

[Senate Bill 822](#) (PN 881), introduced by Senator Wayne Langerholc, would amend Titles 18 (Crimes and Offenses) and Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) preempting local regulation of firearms. A municipality would be prohibited from imposing firearm regulations in a more restrictive manner than state law. In addition to this preemptive language, a third party individual or member organization adversely affected by such an ordinance would be able to seek relief. If the court rules in favor of the third party individual or member organization, the municipality would be responsible for paying their reasonable expenses, including but not limited to attorney fees, expert witness fees, court costs and compensation for loss of income.

Study on the Municipalities Planning Code

Adopted by the Senate, April 21, 2026

[Senate Resolution 211](#) (PN 1507), introduced by Senator Judy Schwank, directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study and submit a report on the effectiveness and performance of the Municipalities Planning Code. The study will focus on housing affordability, local economic development, and zoning.

House and Senate Session Days 2026

House

June 1-3, 8-10, 15-17, 22-30

Summer Recess July-August

September 28-30

Senate

June 1-3, 8-10, 22-26, 29-30

Summer Recess July-August

September - TBD



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