

HARRISBURG OVERVIEW

On Tuesday, March 7th, Governor Josh Shapiro gave his first budget address for the 2023-24 budget. It is a \$44.4 billion proposal, which is an 8% increase over last year's budget.

Below are a couple of highlights from the proposal:

- Requests \$1 million to create an Organic Center of Excellence & \$500,000 for a Center of Plant Excellence.
- Requests \$2 million to improve access to fresh produce.
- Requests nearly \$39 million to provide universal free breakfast for every student across the state and free lunch for students who are currently eligible for reduced-price lunches.
- Proposes to eliminate the state's 11% tax on cell phone bills.
- Proposes to raise the minimum wage to \$15/hour on January 1st, 2024.

The House and Senate Appropriations Committees are now completing their budget hearings with the state agencies, where they discuss expenditures, projects, and goals of the agencies. The legislature has until June 30th to pass a balanced budget.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

After the February 7th special elections, Democrats secured a majority of seats (102) in the state House. Republicans stepped back into the minority with 101 seats.

The House Democratic leadership team is comprised of the following members:

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

The House Republican leadership team is comprised of the following members:

- Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster)- *Minority Leader*
- Seth Grove (R-York)- *Appropriations Chair*
- Tim O'Neal (R-Washington)- *Whip*
- George Dunbar (R-Westmoreland)- *Caucus Chair*
- Martina White (R-Philadelphia)- *Caucus Secretary*
- Josh Kail (R-Beaver)- *Policy Chair*
- Sheryl Delozier (R-Cumberland)- *Caucus Administrator*

House committee rosters were finally announced on March 7th. Below are committee chairs of interest to PSACF:

- Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee:

- Majority Chair Eddie Day Pashinski (D-Luzerne)
- Minority Chair Dan Moul (R-York)
- Tourism & Recreational Development Committee:
 - Majority Chair Mary Jo Daley (D-Montgomery)
 - Minority Chair Donna Oberlander (R-Clarion).

Because of the tight margins, all bills will need strong bipartisan support to survive and successfully make it to the Governor's desk.

SENATE

Republicans continue to hold the majority in the Senate (28-22). They recently announced their 2023-24 leadership team:

- Kim Ward (Westmoreland)- *President Pro Tempore*
- Joe Pittman (Indiana)- *Majority Leader*
- Ryan Aument (Lancaster)- *Whip*
- Scott Martin (Lancaster)- *Appropriations Chair*
- Kristin Phillips-Hill (York)- *Caucus Chair*
- Camera Bartolotta (Washington)- *Caucus Secretary*

On the Democratic side, the leadership team is comprised of the following members:

- Jay Costa (Allegheny)- *Minority Leader*
- Tina Tartaglione (Philadelphia)- *Whip*
- Vincent Hughes (Philadelphia)- *Appropriations Chair*
- Wayne D. Fontana (Allegheny)- *Caucus Chair*
- Maria Collett (Montgomery)-*Caucus Secretary*

Below are committee chairs of interest to PCOA:

- Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee:
 - Majority Chair Elder Vogel (R-Beaver)
 - Minority Chair Judy Scwhank (D-Berks)
- Community, Economic and Recreational Development Committee:
 - Majority Chair Chris Gebhard (R-Lebanon)
 - Minority Chair Anthony Williams (D-Philadelphia)

Shapiro Administration

Although there is a new administration, Governor Shapiro has opted to retain several of the Wolf administration's cabinet members. Russell Redding was nominated to continue to serve as the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture. As you know, Redding served as Secretary under both Governor Tom Wolf and Governor Ed Rendell and previously served as Agriculture Policy Advisor to U.S. Senator Harris Wofford.

Rick Siger was appointed to become the next Secretary of Community and Economic Development (DCED). Siger is currently Chief of Staff to the President of Carnegie Mellon

University and previously served as Chief of Staff at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy under the Obama Administration.

All cabinet appointees must be confirmed by the Senate with a two-thirds majority. In the meantime, they will serve as “acting secretaries.” **PSACF circulated a letter of support for the confirmation of Russell Redding to Senate leadership.**

BUDGET LINE ITEM

Good news! Governor Shapiro’s 2023-24 budget proposal level funds the county fairs line item at \$4,000,000.

To maintain this line item in the final budget package, we will have to continue to advocate for it with House and Senate leadership and various fair champions, including Representative Robert Leadbeter (R-Columbia) and Representative Mike Schlossberg (D-Lehigh).

We will send our request to the House and Senate Appropriations Chairs and request that several rank-and-file members send follow-up letters to the Chairs as well.

LEGISLATION

SB 160 (Brooks, R-Mercer): Amends Title 3 (Agriculture) by exempting nonprofits from retail food facility licensing if they operate on no more than 12 days per year.

If this legislation passed, fairs that operate concessions for more than 12 days would still need to have a license, but those that operate for less than 12 days wouldn’t need a license.

The bill was introduced and referred to the Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee on January 19th, 2023. Keep in mind, similar language has been introduced several times and never received consideration in committee, so all previous introductions have died.

HB 794 (Ecker, R-Adams): Amends the Solicitation of Funds for Charitable Purposes Act (Act 202 of 1990) by exempting volunteer fire companies from the Department of State’s audit/registration requirements, *regardless of whether they utilize a 3rd party fundraiser.*

Current law only permits registration exemptions for organizations that handle *all* fundraising activities and don’t utilize a 3rd party professional fundraiser.

We’ve incorporated language to amend the definitions of “professional solicitors” and “solicitation,” with the goal of ensuring that showmen are not to be considered “professional solicitors” and would not have to register with the Department.

The bill was introduced and referred to the House State Government Committee on April 3rd, 2023. PSSA is supportive of this bill and will be actively advocating for its support.

OTHER

Cornucopia

On March 7th, several members of the PSACF board attended the Cornucopia event in the state Capitol. They were able to interact directly with dozens of legislators and staff and discuss PSACF legislative priorities, including the annual budget line-item request.

Legislative Reception

Milliron Goodman is planning to host a legislative reception at our office on June 5th. This will give the PSACF board members another opportunity to connect with members and staff of the House and Senate Tourism and Agriculture Committees and continue to represent the entire fair industry.

As always, please feel free to contact our office with any questions or concerns. We look forward to continuing to represent you in the 2023-24 legislative session.