



Public Policy Summary March 2, 2017

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Below is a summary of key public policy issues impacting the Pittsburgh region's nonprofit sector. Key stories include:

[Upcoming GPNP Events](#)

- Tuesday March 28: GPNP is hosting "Rising Above the Line Items: GPNP's 4th Annual Budget Session." It is our 4th year offering thought provoking insight from leading experts on the Pennsylvania state budget. Panelists will include PA Budget Secretary Randy Albright, PA House Majority Leader Dave Reed, and The Pew Charitable Trusts Greg Mennis. This discussion will challenge the nonprofit sector to rise above the line items and examine the ongoing state budgetary challenges that continue to place publicly-funded, community programming at risk due to rising costs at the state and organizational levels. During this discussion we will identify on what topic(s) should the sector take a stand. Click [here](#) to learn more and register.
- Tuesday March 21: GPNP and Schneider Downs are hosting an educational session on Cash Management. Michael Von Lehman and John Bellardini of Schneider Downs Meridian will present various tools and analysis use by financial statement advisors and users to track, manage and evaluate cash flow considerations utilizing basic financial statements of an organization. Additionally, an expert panel will speak to their experience on cash flow issues and turnarounds in the not-for-profit industry and the lessons learned from those experiences. Click [here](#) to learn more and register.

[The Forbes Funds and GPNP News and Announcements](#)

- Many of your organizations are mobilizing around key issues, and we want to make sure that you can share your activities with GPNP members. If you are hosting an event or meeting, seeking coalition partners, or organizing and advocacy campaign and need to get the word out, share your information with streeeter@forbesfunds.org. Please share your activities with us so we can help you amplify your work!
- The Forbes Funds is proud to launch the Wishart Nonprofit Executive Fellowship 2017. Click [here](#) for more information.
- March 28: Nonprofit Talent, The Forbes Funds, and Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania present, "Lessons in Social Impact Investing With Tony Wells, President And Co-Founder Of The Wells Foundation."
- GPNP is pleased to offer you a growing array of exclusive member services and discounts from our corporate sponsors! Click [here](#) to view the list of services.
- PublicSource is offering a special GPNP member discount code for its upcoming event with *Hillbilly Elegy* author J.D. Vance.

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- Sisters Place is our March Member Spotlight!

[Pennsylvania Budget](#)

- Pennsylvania was short in its revenue collections for February, bringing the total shortfall for this fiscal year to \$450 million. The Governor's office projects that Pennsylvania will end the year with an estimated \$600 million shortfall, while the Independent Fiscal Office estimates a \$700 million shortfall.
- Certain Republicans raised questions about whether Governor Tom Wolf's proposed early retirement program for state workers will add to Pennsylvania's pension liability.
- During their Senate budget hearing, state-related universities warned that students may face a tuition increase without additional state funding.
- The AP reported that Pennsylvania's state system of higher education may lay off staff and close and consolidate facilities in order to adapt to the state's current financial situation.
- A report issues from gambling industry organizations states that Pennsylvania could raise an additional \$400 million over six years through legalized online gambling.
- The Pennsylvania State Police Commissioner testified during his department's budget hearing that it costs \$234 per person to police the 1,300 municipalities in which it currently provides law enforcement services.
- WITF reported on the emerging conflict over Governor Wolf's proposed user fee to fund the state police.

[Additional State Government News](#)

- Pennsylvania's federal and state legislators are considering withholding federal housing subsidies from landlords who are delinquent in their local property taxes.
- *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* reported on Senate Bill 128, which would prohibit municipalities from implementing their own sick leave policies for employers. SB 128 cleared the Local Government committee in January and is currently on first consideration in the Senate.
- The Department of Labor and Industry's House budget hearing focused heavily on the issues within the state unemployment compensation system.

[Legislation](#)

The following bills were introduced since our last update:

- HB 634- Pre-School Education Grant Program
- HB 640- Merging the PHMC with DCNR
- HB 644- Community-Based Health Care Act
- HB 645- Neighborhood Assistance Tax Credit
- HB 648- Basic Education Continuation Funding
- HB 666- Lead Package
- HB 668- Lead Package
- HB 669- Lead Package
- HB 672- Taxpayer's Savings Account
- HB 676- Response to Opioid Overdose Deaths
- HB 677- Response to Opioid Overdose Deaths
- SB 22- Independent Citizens Commission for Redistricting
- SB 391- Casey's Law -- Involuntary Commitment for Substance Abuse Disorder
- SB 439- Carbon Monoxide Detectors
- SB 440- Early Voting
- SB 455- Protecting Adults in Care Facilities

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- SB 456- PA Low-Income Water and Wastewater Assistance Act
- SB 464- Redistricting Reform
- SB 467- Homeless Veterans Initiative
- SB 469- Animal Shelter Tax Credit
- SB 479- Pennsylvania Family and Medical Leave Act

Federal Policy

- Preliminary information regarding President Donald Trump's budget proposal has begun to emerge. Overall, his plan calls for an increase in defense spending while other government departments receive cuts. However, *The New York Times* and *Politico* note that the ideas coming from the White House may not be reflected in the final budget passed by Congress. Office of Management and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney said a formal budget proposal will be released from the Administration by March 16.
- *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* reported that President Trump's budget could cut legal assistance funding for the poor.
- *Time* reported that the President's budget could cut funding to the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, which provides funding for projects in underserved areas.
- *Politico* and *The New York Times* reported on the emerging tax reform debate in Washington.
- The Senate confirmed Ben Carson to lead the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Health Care

- In his speech Tuesday night, President Trump outlined five principles for his health care reform plan.
- *Politico* obtained a draft version of the House Republican plan to replace the Affordable Care Act. According to *Politico*, "The legislation would take down the foundation of Obamacare, including the unpopular individual mandate, subsidies based on people's income, and all of the law's taxes. It would significantly roll back Medicaid spending and give states money to create high risk pools for some people with pre-existing conditions."
- Department of Human Services Secretary Ted Dallas said that it would be "extraordinarily difficult" for Pennsylvania to replace federal funds for Medicaid if the draft Republican plan is implemented.
- PublicSource reported that community health centers are preparing for the Affordable Care Act's repeal.
- AARP cautioned that the draft Republican plan could cause insurance premium increases for adults between 50 and 64.
- PublicSource reported on the Affordable Care Act's impact on refugee populations.
- The Kaiser Family Foundation released an analysis of the tax credit feature contained the draft Republican plan.

Immigration

- *The Patriot-News* reported on the rights that undocumented immigrants have if they are approached by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents.
- *The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review* reported that victims' advocates are concerned about President Trump's focus on crimes committed by undocumented immigrants.
- *The Wall Street Journal* published a story about the economic impact of refugees in certain cities, including Erie, PA.

Nonprofit Sector

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- The Department of Revenue issued a warning for nonprofits regarding a new email phishing scam.

[Pittsburgh Region News](#)

- The Brookings Institution released a report on Pittsburgh's economic growth which acknowledges that the growth has not been equitable for all populations.
- Next Pittsburgh reported on the new "Neighborhood Attraction Factors Impacting the Young Professional African American Population in the City of Pittsburgh" report released last week.
- *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* published a feature on the city's African-American community.

[Health and Human Services](#)

- Auditor General Eugene DePasquale is looking into complaints regarding the distribution of the state's Medicaid contracts.
- The Department of Aging announced that it is increasing its fines for regulatory violations.
- A new study from the University of Pittsburgh found a link between child abuse and behavioral problems later in life among abuse victims.
- *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* profiled the work of disability advocates to dispel stigma.
- *The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review* reported on an effective opioid treatment currently being administered in Armstrong County.
- *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* reported on black lung clinics treating coal miners in the Pittsburgh region.

[Education](#)

- A new report from PennEnvironment Research and Policy Center gave Pennsylvania an F grade for preventing lead contamination in school water systems.
- According to the AP, "A law firm hired by the Butler Area School District to review water problems that forced one of its elementary schools to close has found evidence that some employees may have deleted relevant emails and lied during its investigation."
- Butler Area School District Assistant Superintendent Mary Wolf announced her resignation over the water issues.

[Housing and Community Development](#)

- *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* reported on blight remediation efforts in Allegheny and Westmoreland Counties.
- *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* reported on rising housing costs in Pittsburgh.
- Greensburg is hoping its special health care zoning district will spur economic and neighborhood growth within the city.

[Water, Energy, and Environment](#)

- The Department of Environmental Protection announced a new plan to address lead contamination in water. However, the plan could take two years to implement.
- A coalition of health care professionals is urging the gas industry to adopt methane controls.
- Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto announced his intention to seek public and private partners to revamp the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority.

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- Pittsburgh City Council Member Deb Gross is proposing a lead filter program for households with children.

[Arts and Culture](#)

- *The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review* profiled Seton Hill University's art therapy program.
- KDKA reported on Pennsylvania's film tax credit program.

These stories, and many others, follow below.

Sections

[GNPN and The Forbes Funds Events](#)

* [March 21: GNPN and Schneider Downs Session on Cash Management](#)

* [March 28: Rising Above the Line Items: GNPN's 4th Annual PA Budget Session](#)

* [March 28: Good Ideas Forum: Lessons in Social Impact Investing With Tony Wells, President And Co-Founder Of The Wells Foundation](#)

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March 21: GNPN and Schneider Downs Session on Cash Management

Join Schneider Downs and GNPN for a special education event on

Cash Management

Michael Von Lehman and John Bellardini of Schneider Downs Meridian will present various tools and analysis use by financial statement advisors and users to track, manage and evaluate cash flow considerations utilizing basic financial statements of an organization. Additionally, an expert panel will speak to their experience on cash flow issues and turnarounds in the not-for-profit industry and the lessons learned from those experiences.

Speakers Include:

- * **John Bellardini, CTP**- Schneider Downs Meridian
- * **Jack Owen, Esq.**- Owens & Conley
- * **Karen Rath**- Huntington Bank
- * **Robert Stape**- Goodwill of Southwestern Pennsylvania
- * **Michael Von Lehman, CTP**- Schneider Downs Meridian

Who Should Attend:

Nonprofit Executives and Staff * Board Members

Tuesday, March 21, 2017

9:00 AM to 11:00 AM

The Forbes Funds and GNPN Office
5 PPG Place, Second Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

[register](#)



GNPN
Greater Pittsburgh
Nonprofit Partnership



Big Thinking. Personal Focus.

March 28: Rising Above the Line Items: GNPN's 4th Annual PA Budget Session

**** Special GNPN Education Event ****

Rising Above the Line Items

**Please join us for
GPNP's 4th annual Pennsylvania budget session.**

It is our 4th year offering thought provoking insight from leading experts on the Pennsylvania state budget. This discussion will challenge the nonprofit sector to *rise above the line items* and examine the ongoing state budgetary challenges that continue to place publicly-funded, community programming at risk due to rising costs at the state and organizational levels. During this discussion we will identify on what topic(s) should the sector take a stand.

Panel Participants:



PA Budget Secretary Randy Albright



PA House Majority Leader Dave Reed



The Pew Charitable Trusts' Greg Mennis

The goals of this session are:

1. GPNP members will understand the Governor Wolf's 2017-2018 budget proposal.
2. GPNP members will learn about potential cost-saving measures and the practical implications of government reform, such as the departmental consolidation plan proposed by the Wolf Administration.

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3. GPNP members will learn about Pennsylvania's public retirement system and its impact on the long-term sustainability of community-focused programs.

4. GPNP members will understand existing state revenue options.

Who Should Attend:

Nonprofit Executives and staff * Elected Officials and Staff

General Public * Philanthropy

Tuesday, March 28, 2017

10:30 AM to 12:30 PM

Rodef Shalom,
4905 5th Avenue,
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

[register](#)



March 28: Good Ideas Forum: Lessons in Social Impact Investing With Tony Wells, President And Co-Founder Of The Wells Foundation

NONPROFIT TALENT
PRESENTS



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LESSONS IN SOCIAL IMPACT INVESTING WITH TONY WELLS, PRESIDENT AND CO-FOUNDER OF THE WELLS FOUNDATION

Presented by Nonprofit Talent, Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania, and The Forbes Funds

Date: Tuesday, March 28th, 2017

Time: 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Location: Point Park University Ballroom downtown Pittsburgh

Cost: \$20 per person/delicious breakfast and beverages provided

This engaging session is designed for funders, investors, and nonprofits seeking to learn more about capital, financing strategies, and approaches to achieve greater social impact.

The Wells Foundation is a Columbus-based private family foundation created by Dana and Tony Wells. Pursuant to its mission, the foundation has a history of investing into social enterprises, developing new social innovation models, and advising local nonprofit organizations that are considering social enterprise since 2001. Tony is one of the most creative, and sought-after national speakers on the topic of Social Impact Investing, sharing his own stories, successes and lessons learned after taking the risk to make nearly ALL of his foundation's endowment available for impact in the nonprofit sector.

register



2017 Public Policy Committee Meeting Dates

GPNP's Public Policy Committee will convene on:

- [Tuesday, April 11, 2017](#)
- [Tuesday, May 30, 2017](#)
- [Tuesday, August 8, 2017](#)
- [Tuesday, November 14, 2017](#)

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The meetings will be held from 8:30 AM to 10:30 AM at The Forbes Funds/GPNP offices located at 5 PPG Place, 2nd Floor, Pittsburgh, PA, 15222. Conference lines will be available for those who cannot attend in person. You can register for the meetings by clicking the meeting dates above.

The Forbes Funds and GPNP News

[The Forbes Funds Launches the Wishart Nonprofit Executive Fellowship 2017](#)

Here at the Forbes Funds, we're always building, testing, tweaking. Our newest creation is the Wishart Nonprofit Executive Fellowship, which will send three outstanding nonprofit leaders to a unique learning opportunity outside the traditional nonprofit educational circuit. Funded by the Alfred W. Wishart, Jr. Fund for Excellence in Nonprofit Management, Fellows will attend the prestigious Carnegie Bosch Institute (CBI) at Carnegie Mellon University's Tepper Business School. Valued at \$4,100, this program is offered at no cost to participating Fellows. Application deadline: Tuesday, March 7, 2017. Click [here](#) to learn more about this exciting opportunity.

[Exclusive Services for GPNP Members](#)

GPNP is pleased to offer you a growing array of exclusive member services and discounts from our corporate sponsors! Services and discounts are currently available from:

- * **Association of Fundraising Professionals Western Pennsylvania Chapter**
- * **Bookminders**
- * **Enscoe Long Insurance Group and Travelers**
- * **Multiscope**
- * **The Wilson Group**
- * **Your CFO**

Click [here](#) to view our current offering of services for GPNP Members!

[Sisters Place Member Spotlight!](#)

Since 1993, Sisters Place, a housing program founded by the Catholic sisters of the Tri-Diocesan Sisters Leadership, has provided a caring, healthy community for homeless single parents and their children. Click [here](#) to read about their important work!

[Special GPNP Discount for Event with Hillbilly Elegy Author J.D. Vance](#)

PublicSource is bringing the author of the #1 New York Times bestselling book Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis to Pittsburgh for an evening lecture on Thursday, March 30, 2017. The event will begin at 7 p.m. at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Lecture Hall. Purchase [your tickets](#) now using the code GPNP for a 25% discount!

Announcements

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["Report - Citizen-Centric Advocacy: The Untapped Power of Constituent Engagement."](#) [Congressional Management Foundation. February 13, 2017.](#)

"Citizen-Centric Advocacy: The Untapped Power of Constituent Engagement," reveals the degree of influence that citizens have on congressional decision-making. The report is the most comprehensive research ever published on citizen engagement with Congress. The research answers critical questions for citizen-advocates and lobbyists, including the following: How influential are constituent meetings compared to lobbyist meetings? What is the most effective way to communicate with a lawmaker (letter, email, phone call)? Which methods/strategies are most successful for building long-term relationships with Congress? The findings are based on nine surveys of congressional staff, comprising nearly 1,200 responses provided to CMF from 2004-2015. The research also includes a new case study with food bank representatives (part of the Feeding America network) and how they utilized advanced citizen-advocacy techniques to build relationships with their legislators."

[Grants to Reduce Underage and Dangerous Drinking Application Period Open Until March 31](#)

From Senator Wayne Fontana: "The Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board (LCB) is accepting applications from schools, community organizations, municipalities, law enforcement organizations, non-profits, institutions of higher education, and for-profit institutions, for two-year grants aimed at reducing underage and dangerous drinking. Grants are intended to fund programs that focus on proven strategies to discourage and reduce both underage and dangerous drinking. The grant cycle is for up to two years, from July 2017 through June 2019, with a maximum award of \$20,000 per year and \$40,000 over two years. Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis and are subject to the availability of funds, and grant amounts will be determined by the Bureau of Alcohol Education. The deadline to apply is 4 p.m. on March 31 and applications must be submitted through PLCB+, an online system developed to streamline licensing and alcohol education functions. More information on this system and on the grant is available by clicking on the "Alcohol Education Grants" tab at www.lcb.pa.gov or by clicking here. The LCB sets aside roughly \$2 million per grant cycle, and initiatives funded in previous years include increased police patrols, social norms campaigns, Parents Who Host Lose the Most campaigns, college alcohol assessment surveys, online alcohol education programs, peer training, and more. There is no limit to the number of organizations from a single county or municipality that may apply for grants, but each must be a separate entity and only one grant will be awarded per organization."

[Conservation Partnerships Grant Application Period Open Until April 12](#)

From Senator Elder Vogel: "The state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) is now accepting applications for grants under the 2017 Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2). The C2P2 program has funded thousands of projects that have helped plan, acquire, and develop parks, recreation facilities, and trails as well as conserve watersheds throughout the Commonwealth. Most grants require at least a 50% match. For more information, please contact your regional advisor. The application period for C2P2 grants is open until April 12. Click here for more information and to apply."

Health Care Advocacy

Many GNPN members are concerned about the anticipated changes to the Affordable Care Act, Medicare, Medicaid, and CHIP. If your organization is conducting activities, please share them with

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streeeter@forbesfunds.org so they can be included in this section. Below are announcements from GNPN members:

From Allies for Children:

Proposals to block grant Medicaid could undermine the key components of the program including: the guarantee of coverage for eligible children, the ability for children to have all the care they need covered, and the ability for families to get care for children at an affordable cost. We are looking to have a better understanding of how organizations benefit from Medicaid as well as the economic impacts of the Medicaid program. If you are able or willing to share stories related to clients who benefit from Medicaid or CHIP, please contact Heather Hopson, communications director, at heather.hopson@alliesforchildren.org.

From the Consumer Health Coalition:

The Consumer Health Coalition (CHC) is looking for volunteers to share their personal health insurance stories. Click [here](#) to download information. Additionally, the Consumer Health Coalition has published "Cover Me" resources for organizations and individuals mobilizing around health care. Click [here](#) and [here](#) to download them.

From the PA Health Access Network and Insure PA:

Join a statewide movement to protect all Pennsylvanians' access to affordable, high-quality healthcare coverage, preserve life-saving consumer protections, and ensure Medicare, CHIP, and Medicaid remain available for those who need them. Click [here](#) to learn more.

Resources from the ACLU

The American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania has joined GNPN and is available to assist nonprofits on civil liberties issues. In particular, the ACLU offers a number of "Know Your Rights" guides available [here](#) along with its Speakers' Bureau.

The ACLU often provides speakers for educational events, panels, conferences, and school programs. It has an active speakers' bureau consisting of attorneys, community leaders, ACLU-PA staff, and board members who are well versed in a variety of civil liberties topics, including (but not limited to):

- Free speech
- Immigrants' rights
- LGBT rights
- Police practices
- Religious liberty
- Reproductive freedom
- Security & civil liberties
- Student & youth rights
- Voting rights

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Click [here](#) for more information.

Pennsylvania Budget

["Pennsylvania's another month older and deeper in debt." Jan Murphy. *The Patriot-News*. March 1, 2017.](#)

"According to the Department of Revenue, the state collected \$1.9 billion in February, which was \$32.9 million less than anticipated. That brings the fiscal year-to-date collections to \$18 billion, which is \$450 million below estimate. Barring any unforeseen changes in the four remaining months of the fiscal year, Pennsylvania appears to be on track to end with a \$600 million budget deficit, as is projected by Gov. Tom Wolf's administration, or \$700 million if you go by the state's Independent Fiscal Office."

["Would Wolf's retirement incentive add to the pension liability?" Katie Meyer. WITF. February 24, 2017.](#)

"Part of Governor Tom Wolf's plan to deal with a multi-billion-dollar structural deficit is to shrink the state's employee complement by urging workers to retire early. But lawmakers--particularly Republicans--have repeatedly brought up concerns that this would just add unnecessary millions to the state's more than \$60 billion in unfunded pension debts."

["State-related universities make case for funding increases." Bill Shackner. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. March 2, 2017.](#)

"Tens of thousands of students attending Pennsylvania's four state-related universities are likely to face higher tuition this fall if the schools' commonwealth appropriations remain frozen at current-year levels, campus leaders testified Wednesday. Chief executives of the University of Pittsburgh, Penn State, Temple and Lincoln universities spoke at a hearing before the Senate Appropriations Committee."

["Some PA state colleges in danger of closing." AP. February 28, 2017.](#)

"In the coming months, some of the schools in Pennsylvania's 14-university system of higher education may get pink slips. Dropping post-recession enrollments, financial struggles at some system schools and unwillingness by the state to come to the rescue is driving an exploration that could result in recommendations that some of the schools shut their doors."

["Report: Online gambling can bring Pa. more than \\$400 million in next six years." *The Morning Call*. February 27, 2017.](#)

"A report released Monday states Pennsylvania can rake in more than \$400 million by 2022 if lawmakers legalize online gambling. The 14-page white paper comes as state legislators prepare to open hearings about how to use expanded gambling statewide to help fill a multibillion-dollar hole in the state budget for 2017-18. Lawmakers will view the report with a skeptical eye because it was produced by Play Pennsylvania and onlinepokerreport.com - two online gambling industry organizations that stand to gain by the legalization of internet gambling in Pennsylvania. Play Pennsylvania is a website focused almost exclusively on getting internet gambling legalized in Pennsylvania, and Online Poker Report is an web publication that follows online gambling across the globe."

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["State police spend \\$234 per person for full-time coverage." Robert Swift. *The Times Tribune*. February 24, 2017.](#)

"It costs \$600 million for state troopers to provide full-time police services in nearly 1,300 municipalities across Pennsylvania, the state police commissioner said Thursday at a Senate budget hearing. Commissioner Col. Tyree Blocker broke down the per capita, or per person, cost at \$234 annually for full-time services to each of the 2.5 million Pennsylvania residents living in those municipalities. This is the first time a per capita figure has been disclosed and the first update of a total cost for full-time municipal services in several years."

["Lawmakers balk at municipal police fees, voice conflicting complaints." Katie Meyer. WITF. February 24, 2017.](#)

"Governor Tom Wolf has proposed a \$25 per-person fee for municipalities that rely on state police coverage, which he's estimated would pump an estimated \$63 million into the agency.

But lots of lawmakers are making their gripes about the measure apparent. State Police Commissioner Tyree Blocker and other ranking troopers took a barrage of questions from lawmakers during a more than two-hour Senate hearing on their budget for the next fiscal year. Blocker made his position clear--the agency needs money and he doesn't care where it comes from."

["Lawmakers discuss property tax plan at C-M town hall." Gideon Bradshaw. *Observer-Reporter*. February 27, 2017. \(Subscription Required\)](#)

["Local workers, employers weigh benefits of hike." Renee Gendreau. *New Castle News*. February 28, 2017.](#)

"... if wages go too high, Lawrence County Regional Chamber of Commerce executive vice president Bob McCracken believes there won't be enough jobs to go around."

["Because of high OT bills, Pa. prisons could instead hire more guards, still save money: report." Charles Thompson. *The Patriot-News*. February 28, 2017.](#)

"The Legislative Budget and Finance Committee found that the Department of Corrections could have saved up to \$22 million in the last full budget year had its corrections officer positions been fully staffed. The savings would have come from the difference in paying those hypothetical new guards at regular time, and the \$105 million in overtime racked up by actual officers who did the time."

["State uses little-publicized change to fiscal code to add \\$2.1 billion to roads, bridges." Ed Blazina. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. March 1, 2017.](#)

"Pennsylvania will use a little-publicized change in the state fiscal code as part of the 2016-17 budget to fund \$2.1 billion in additional road and bridge repairs over a 10-year period beginning in 2018-19. Gov. Tom Wolf announced the new program, known as Road Maintenance and Preservation (Road MaP), on Tuesday and said it will provide money earmarked for capital projects on interstates and less traveled highways, plus more money for maintenance work in Pennsylvania Department of Transportation districts across the state. Funds for interstates and maintenance have not had substantial increases since the 2005-06 fiscal year. The money for the additional work will come from a not-well-known change the Legislature made in how the Motor Vehicle Fund is distributed. The fund generates about \$2.8 billion a year through the state gasoline tax as well as fees paid for driver licenses and vehicle registrations. In the past, a portion of that fund, which

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generates about \$208 billion a year, has been used to pay for state troopers to patrol state roads. That escalating cost reached \$801 million this year."

[Commentary: "Pa. budget process isn't sustainable." House Speaker Mike Turzai \(R-Allegheny\). Philadelphia Inquirer. February 28, 2017.](#)

[Commentary: "Marcellus money and the Pa. legislature." Representative Greg Vitali \(D-Delaware\). Philadelphia Inquirer. March 1, 2017.](#)

[Commentary: "Budgets affect county, state partnerships." Douglas Hill. York Dispatch. March 1, 2017.](#)

[Commentary: "Reinventing state government." Nathan Benefield. Pittsburgh Tribune-Review. February 27, 2017.](#)

Additional State Government News

["To avoid tax hikes, Pa. officials push to withhold Section 8 money from delinquent landlords." Laura Benshoff. Newsworks. March 2, 2017.](#)

"State and federal lawmakers in Pennsylvania want to crack down on landlords who receive federal subsidies but short school districts on their taxes. They argue delinquency unfairly burdens law-abiding taxpayers, who are tapped to recover the losses."

["State bill would erase local sick leave laws." Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. February 27, 2017.](#)

"A bill advancing in the Pennsylvania Senate would ensure that Pittsburgh's currently suspended 2015 ordinance mandating paid sick leave will never take effect. Senate Bill 128 would prohibit Pennsylvania municipalities from requiring employers to provide any form of paid or unpaid employee leave that is not required by federal or state law. It would also strike down existing local ordinances that impose it."

["Fixing Pa.'s broken unemployment compensation system focus of House hearing." Jan Murphy. The Patriot-News. March 1, 2017.](#)

"Legislators from both sides of the aisle and Labor & Industry Secretary Kathy Manderino spent two and a half hours on Wednesday discussing what got the system of delivering jobless benefits to unemployed workers into its current state of disrepair and what can be done to make it operate better. It will likely take several more weeks, if not months, before the problems plaguing the system go away. That means displaced workers will have to put up with the long waits on hold or busy signals when trying to reach an unemployment compensation call center for a while longer."

["Pittsburgh South Hills constituents voice opposition to state Sen. Guy Reschenthaler's legislation." Ryan Deto. Pittsburgh City Paper. March 1, 2017.](#)

" On Feb. 27, a group of more than 50 constituents held a protest outside his Bethel Park office, and then went in to attend Reschenthaler's open house to voice their opposition to the senator's stances."

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Pennsylvania Legislation

Below are key bills introduced or voted on since our last update. If there is a bill relevant to you mission that you do not see listed, please email streater@forbesfunds.org so we can add it to our tracking list.

New Legislation

[HB 634- Pre-School Education Grant Program](#)

Prime Sponsor: Representative Thomas Quigley (R-Montgomery)

Current Committee: Education

"... a State-funded program that allows eligible families to apply for and receive grants that would be used to meet the costs of their children's attendance at safe, caring and effective public or nonpublic pre-kindergarten programs will go a long way toward leveling the academic playing field and giving a well-deserved boost to responsible and loving parents who want to give their children a better chance for success in school and in life." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[HB 640- Merging the PHMC with DCNR](#)

Prime Sponsor: Representative Stephen Barrar (R-Chester, Delaware)

Current Committee: State Government

"...legislation that will combine the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[HB 644- Community-Based Health Care Act](#)

Prime Sponsor: Representative Matthew Baker (R-Bradford, Potter, Tioga)

Current Committee: Health

"... legislation that would remove the artificial 25% limitation on funds for FQHCs distributed in accordance with the Community-Based Health Care Act. Many times the only applicants for these dollars are FQHCs as they are the only health centers capable of providing the services." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[HB 645- Neighborhood Assistance Tax Credit](#)

Prime Sponsor: Representative Bernie O'Neill (R-Bucks)

Current Committee: Finance

"This legislation would increase NAP funding to \$36 million." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[HB 648- Basic Education Continuation Funding](#)

Prime Sponsor: Representative David Hickernell (R-Dauphin, Lancaster)

Current Committee: Education

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"legislation ... future that will provide for the payment of the basic education subsidy to school districts in cases when a General Appropriation Act providing for a basic education subsidy appropriation is not enacted by August 15 of any fiscal year." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[HB 666- Lead Package](#)

Prime Sponsor: Representative Angel Cruz (D-Philadelphia)

Current Committee: Health

"Providing for lead screening and related services, for health insurance coverage for lead screening and related diagnostic services and supplies and for duties of the Department of Health."

([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[HB 668- Lead Package](#)

Prime Sponsor: Representative Michael Schlossberg (D-Lehigh)

Current Committee: Urban Affairs

"This legislation amends the Landlord and Tenant Act of 1951 by creating a new section for lead inspection requirements and disclosure." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[HB 669- Lead Package](#)

Prime Sponsor: Representative Angel Cruz (D-Philadelphia)

Current Committee: Health

"This legislation requiring day cares licensed by the Department of Human Services to be tested for lead as part of their licensure procedures." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[HB 672- Taxpayer's Savings Account](#)

Prime Sponsor: Representative Rick Saccone (R-Allegheny, Washington)

Current Committee: Not Yet Assigned

"... this legislation would amend the Administrative Code and outline how cost-savings are handled within the state's budget procedures." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[HB 676- Response to Opioid Overdose Deaths](#)

Prime Sponsor: Representative Bryan Barbin (D-Cambria, Somerset)

Current Committee: Not Yet Assigned

"Establishing Eight Regional Detox Centers across the Commonwealth paid for with tobacco settlement funds." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[HB 677- Response to Opioid Overdose Deaths](#)

Prime Sponsor: Representative Bryan Barbin (D-Cambria, Somerset)

Current Committee: Not Yet Assigned

"Providing for "Summer's Protection" Involuntary Commitment for Emergency Opioid Overdoses." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[SB 22- Independent Citizens Commission for Redistricting](#)

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Prime Sponsor: Senator Lisa Boscola (D-Lehigh, Northampton)

Current Committee: State Government

"This joint resolution provides for a Redistricting Commission that is solely comprised of independent citizens. Individuals that apply to serve would go through a process for appointment that includes a series of random selections by lot." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[SB 391- Casey's Law -- Involuntary Commitment for Substance Abuse Disorder](#)

Prime Sponsor: Senator Jay Costa (D-Allegheny)

Current Committee: Judiciary

"... legislation that amends the Mental Health Procedures Act to allow families the opportunity to seek involuntary commitment of loved ones for treatment for alcohol and drug abuse." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[SB 439- Carbon Monoxide Detectors](#)

Prime Sponsor: Senator Wayne Fontana (D-Allegheny)

Current Committee: Health and Human Services

"... a package of bills that would require carbon monoxide detectors in college and university dorms, hotels and other lodging establishments, k-12 schools and child care facilities if the facility uses a fossil fuel-burning heater or appliance or has an attached garage." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[SB 440- Early Voting](#)

Prime Sponsor: Senator Wayne Fontana (D-Allegheny)

Current Committee: State Government

"My bill would allow for early voting to take place for a specific number of days over a course of several weeks before Election Day, including a set number of hours on Saturday during the early voting period. I believe my legislation will give Pennsylvania an advantage to be a key player when it comes to deciding potential Presidential candidates. In addition, early voting would give individuals who work several jobs or who travel often the ability to cast their vote during a time that better meets their needs without having to offer a reason why." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[SB 455- Protecting Adults in Care Facilities](#)

Prime Sponsor: Senator Jim Brewster (D-Allegheny, Westmoreland)

Current Committee: Aging and Youth

"Facilities who house older adults shall perform a simple search an applicant's name on the Pennsylvania State Police registry of offenders and sexually violent predators, prior to admission into their facility. If the applicant resides or has resided outside of Pennsylvania, the facility will search the Dru Sjodin National Sex Offender Public website. In no case may a facility admit an applicant if their name appears on either the PSP or Dru Sjodin list of offenders. Also, within 30 days of the effective date of this legislation, facilities shall search current residents' names." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[SB 456- PA Low-Income Water and Wastewater Assistance Act](#)

Prime Sponsor: Senator Jim Brewster (D-Allegheny, Westmoreland)

Current Committee: Health and Human Services

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"This Act will provide assistance to low-income households that are at risk of having their water supply discontinued due to unpaid water or wastewater bills." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[SB 464- Redistricting Reform](#)

Prime Sponsor: Senator John Blake (D-Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe)

Current Committee: State Government

"...amend the Pennsylvania Constitution to reform the manner in which our State Senate, State House, and Congressional Districts are redrawn." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[SB 467- Homeless Veterans Initiative](#)

Prime Sponsor: Senator John Blake (D-Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe)

Current Committee: Housing and Urban Affairs

"...to establish the Veterans' Housing Assistance Program to provide housing assistance grants to homeless or imminently homeless veterans. This program can supplement and be used in conjunction with the federal housing program known as the Housing and Urban Development-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program, which awards grants to local housing authorities to house homeless veterans." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[SB 469- Animal Shelter Tax Credit](#)

Prime Sponsor: Senator John Blake (D-Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe)

Current Committee: Finance

"This legislation would provide for a \$2 million annual tax credit program to incentivize businesses to contribute to non-profit animal shelters." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

[SB 479- Pennsylvania Family and Medical Leave Act](#)

Prime Sponsor: Senator Andrew Dinniman (D-Chester)

Current Committee: Labor and Industry

"My bill would provide up to six weeks of protected, unpaid leave to an employee to care for a sibling, grandparent or grandchild with a serious health condition if such sibling, grandparent or grandchild has no living spouse, child over 17 years of age or parent under 65 years of age. The six weeks of unpaid leave is in contrast to the 12 weeks provided under the federal law, and my bill ensures that no one double-dips and takes leave time from the federal and state extension program." ([Cosponsor Memo](#))

Federal Policy

["Trump proposes defense spending boost, \\$54 billion in cuts to 'most federal agencies.'" CNN. February 27, 2017.](#)

"President Donald Trump's first budget proposal will look to increase defense and security spending by \$54 billion and cut roughly the same amount from non-defense programs, the White House said Monday. The budget blueprint, which was sent to government agencies Monday, would increase defense spending to \$603 billion and decrease non-defense discretionary spending to \$462 billion, Office of Management and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney said. ... Monday's announcement is only

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a budget blueprint and federal agencies will begin working with the White House to determine how to comply with their new budget. The proposals from the White House will also go to the agencies with suggestions on what to cut. Mulvaney said Monday that the White House intends to have a budget to Congress by March 16 and have a final budget finished by 'the first part of May.'

["Trump budget faces GOP resistance." *Politico*. February 27, 2017.](#)

"The president's plan to boost defense spending at the expense of other programs provoked deep skepticism."

["Trump's Budget Is Aspirational. Reality in Congress Will Change It." Carol Hulse. *The New York Times*. February 28, 2017.](#)

"Here is a look at some of the main issues hanging over the coming budget and spending fight."

["Here is a look at some of the main issues hanging over the coming budget and spending fight." Devin Henry. *The Hill*. March 1, 2017.](#)

"Trump is tearing into the EPA's budget by a reported 24 percent, which if approved by Congress would slash the agency's \$8.1 billion budget to George H.W. Bush-era levels and reduce the EPA's workforce by one-fifth. Trump and his newly installed EPA administrator, Scott Pruitt, are also beginning an aggressive regulatory rollback at the agency, taking aim at climate change programs instituted or expanded under President Obama."

["Federal cuts would target civil legal aid for poor." Kate Giammarise. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. February 27, 2017.](#)

"According to several reports, President Donald Trump's budget proposal could eliminate the Legal Services Corporation, the largest funder of civil legal assistance for low-income Americans. Locally, legal services funds go to the Neighborhood Legal Services Association, Southwestern Pennsylvania Legal Services, Inc. and Laurel Legal Services, Inc."

["Donald Trump's Budget Plan Would Kill a \\$258 Million Banking Program for the Poor. Here's What it Does." Taylor Tepper. *Time*. February 28, 2017.](#)

"The Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund, an arm of the Treasury Department that aids economically distressed localities, will see its funding slashed practically to nothing, according to The New York Times, should Congress adopt Trump's budget for next year. ... The CDFI Fund runs a number of different programs that encourage investment in poor communities around the country."

["Divided Republicans look to Trump to lead on tax reform." *Politico*. February 27, 2017.](#)

"Lawmakers widely agree on the need for a major tax-code cleanup, but they are tied in knots over how. The main proposal, by House Speaker Paul Ryan, has taken a beating from many of the party's erstwhile allies in the business community, not to mention a growing number of Republicans. But it's unclear what the critics could support in its place, with lawmakers offering a host of competing proposals. That's creating a big void that Trump, now working on a new tax-reform plan of his own, can fill - by resuscitating Ryan's so-called border adjustment plan or perhaps with an entirely new vision for the tax code."

["Did Someone Say 'Tax Code Rewrite'? Lobbyists Scramble." Alan Rappeport. *The New York Times*. February 24, 2017.](#)

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"To those who are in the trenches, talk of enacting sweeping tax legislation in the span of a few months sounds like a mix of bravado, naïveté and delusion. By definition, tax overhaul creates winners and losers on tax day, and with billions of dollars at stake, the prospect of revamping the system has already created fierce infighting among Republicans and a massing of lobbyist forces underwritten by a divided but well-heeled business community."

["Ben Carson, outsider with no government experience, confirmed to lead HUD." *The Washington Post*. March 2, 2017.](#)

"Retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson was confirmed Thursday as secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, bringing into President Trump's Cabinet a Washington outsider with no prior government experience and a staunchly conservative view of public assistance. Support for Carson's confirmation came down largely along party lines - 58-41 - highlighting the intense partisan and ideological conflicts in Washington and around Trump's agenda."

[Commentary: "Who Benefits from President Trump's Child Care Proposals?." Tax Policy Center. February 28, 2017.](#)

Health Care

["Trump and health care: President gives Congress five principles for Obamacare replacement." Dan Mangan. CNBC. February 28, 2017.](#)

"Trump's outline for replacing Obamacare included:

- Ensuring people with pre-existing health conditions are guaranteed 'access' to health insurance, 'and that we have a stable transition for Americans currently enrolled in the health-care exchanges.'
- Giving people who buy their own health coverage tax credits and expanded health savings accounts to help pay for their coverage, as well as flexibility about the design of their plans.
- Give states 'the resources and flexibility' in their Medicaid programs 'to make sure no one is left out.' Medicaid covers primarily poor people.
- Legal reforms to protect doctors and patients 'from unnecessary costs' that drive up insurance costs, and to bring down the price of high-cost drugs.
- Creating a national insurance marketplace that allows insurers to sell health plans across state lines."

["A divided White House still offers little guidance on replacing Obamacare." *The Washington Post*. February 26, 2017.](#)

"While leaving most of the detail work to lawmakers, top White House aides are divided on how dramatic an overhaul effort the party should pursue. And the biggest wild card remains the president himself, who has devoted only a modest amount of time to the grinding task of mastering health-care policy but has repeatedly suggested that his sweeping new plan is nearly complete."

["Exclusive: Leaked GOP Obamacare replacement shrinks subsidies, Medicaid expansion." Paul Demko. *Politico*. February 24, 2017.](#)

"A draft House Republican repeal bill would dismantle the Obamacare subsidies and scrap its Medicaid expansion, according to a copy of the proposal obtained by POLITICO. The legislation would take down the foundation of Obamacare, including the unpopular individual mandate, subsidies based on people's income, and all of the law's taxes. It would significantly roll back Medicaid spending and give states money to create high risk pools for some people with pre-

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existing conditions. Some elements would be effective right away; others not until 2020. The replacement would be paid for by limiting tax breaks on generous health plans people get at work - an idea that is similar to the Obamacare 'Cadillac tax' that Republicans have fought to repeal."

["Pennsylvania Dems denounce leaked Obamacare bill." Wes Ventreicher. *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*. February 27, 2017.](#)

"Pennsylvania Democratic officials Monday criticized a Republican plan to replace the Affordable Care Act, saying it would reduce federal money for the state by about \$2 billion per year by 2020 and eliminate health care plans for hundreds of thousands of residents. The House Republican plan, leaked Friday to POLITICO, calls for undoing the federal health law's Medicaid expansion, scaling back required benefits for individual health plans and restructuring the individual insurance marketplace. More than 700,000 Pennsylvanians have signed up for Medicaid under the expansion, which enabled individuals making up to about \$16,000 per year to enroll. The Republican proposal would reduce what the federal government pays the state to cover medical bills for the next three years and would make bigger changes in 2020, reducing what the state receives by about \$2 billion per year, said Department of Human Services Secretary Ted Dallas. Replacing the lost revenue at a time when Pennsylvania faces a growing budget deficit would be 'obviously extraordinarily difficult for us to do,' Dallas said."

["Medicaid cuts would be costly to Pennsylvania, officials say." Kris Mamula. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. February 28, 2017.](#)

"UPMC Health Plan has become the biggest provider of government health exchange insurance in the region at a time when Republican leaders in Washington prepare to make it more expensive. State officials are predicting that federal cuts to Pennsylvania's Medicaid plan, which was expanded under the Affordable Care Act, would cost the state at least \$2 billion by 2020. Medicaid covers many elderly Pennsylvanians, children, people with disabilities and those with low income; with the expansion, it now insures more than 2.8 million Pennsylvanians. Federal legislation that could be introduced as early as this week could end the government subsidies for Medicaid, leaving about 700,000 Pennsylvanians in danger of losing coverage. Precisely how UPMC Health Plan would be affected by legislation that will replace the Affordable Care Act isn't yet clear. But UPMC Insurance Services Division president Diane Holder was confident Monday that UPMC would continue to be able to provide coverage to people in need."

["Pittsburgh-area community health centers brace for potential Obamacare repeal." Kirsten Wong. *PublicSource*. February 28, 2017.](#)

"Directors of area community health centers are expecting their funding to be cut and that they'll have to turn patients away and cut health services."

["Older ACA enrollees could see jump in premiums." Steve Twedt. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. February 27, 2017.](#)

"For the past three years, the ACA has blocked insurers from charging older enrollees in the federal marketplace plans more than three times the amount charged young, healthy adults for the same plan. The difference can be hundreds of dollars a month. A plan proposed by U.S. House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., would change that ratio to 5-to-1, but that is drawing opposition from AARP - an organization with 1.8 million members in Pennsylvania and nearly 39 million nationwide - which says it would hit those in the 50-64 age group particularly hard."

["Obamacare didn't remove healthcare barriers for refugees, but it did alleviate problems." Andrea Frazier. *PublicSource*. February 28, 2017.](#)

"Under the ACA, those who come to the United States as refugees have the same rights to health care as any American citizen."

[Report: "How Affordable Care Act Repeal and Replace Plans Might Shift Health Insurance Tax Credits." Kaiser Family Foundation. March 1, 2017.](#)

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["The Adults a Medicaid Work Requirement Would Leave Behind." Abby Goodenough. *The New York Times*. February 25, 2017 \(Subscription Required\)](#)

["Key Republican in Health Law's Fate Hails from a State that Embraced It." Robert Pear. *The New York Times*. February 25, 2017. \(Subscription Required\)](#)

[Commentary: "Relief from Obamacare: a better system ahead." Representative Keith Rothfus \(R-PA\), Representative Mike Kelly \(R-PA\), and Representative Bill Shuster \(R-PA\). *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. February 19, 2017.](#)

[Commentary: "The bad math behind 3 Pa. GOP congressmen's Obamacare claim." Amanda Orso. *The Incline*. February 24, 2017.](#)

[Commentary: "Put health-care coverage in Pa. on sound economic footing." Paul Mango. *Philadelphia Inquirer*. February 1, 2017.](#)

Immigration

["Fears of ICE raids mount, but undocumented immigrants actually have rights." Ivy DeJesus. *The Patriot-News*. March 2, 2017.](#)

"The situation has generated considerable confusion as to the rights of people who are stopped and questioned by agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The fact is that even undocumented immigrants have rights."

["Advocates for victims of crime wary of Trump's focus on undocumented immigrants." Tom Fontaine. *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*. March 1, 2017.](#)

"President Trump's immigration policy includes creating a government office to assist victims of crimes committed by undocumented immigrants and pulling the plug on outreach and advocacy services for people who are in the country illegally."

["The Town That Can't Do Without Refugees." Miram Jordan. *The Wall Street Journal*. February 28, 2017.](#)

"Donald Trump's decision to curb number of refugees admitted to U.S. could hurt cities like Erie, Pa., where employers worry economic progress will stall"

["Providing for the kids if the parents are deported." Peter Smith. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. February 26, 2017.](#)

"In many cases, 'we are talking about children who are American citizens,' said Cristian Minor, a bilingual attorney who was consulting with parents pro bono and drawing up documents for them at the clinic. 'We are forcing them to leave the country with their parents even though they are going to a country they have never been in.' The clinic was organized by Casa San Jose, a resource center for the Latino community, and hosted by St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church, where the agency's offices are located."

["Advocates warn 'dreamers' to lie low as Trump ramps up deportation plans." David Nakamura. *The Washington Post*. February 27, 2017.](#)

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"Immigration lawyers and advocacy groups are advising illegal immigrants not to enroll in a federal deferred-action program created by President Barack Obama over fears that the Trump administration will use their personal information to detain and deport them. The caution reflects deepening anxiety over sweeping new enforcement guidelines from Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly that aim to ramp up deportations of the nation's 11 million undocumented immigrants."

["Colleges rush to protect immigrant students." Megan Wilson. *The Hill*. March 1, 2017.](#)

"Colleges and universities are on the front lines of the immigration battle in Washington, pushing the administration and Congress to preserve a program for young people illegally brought to the United States as children. Known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), the program lifts the threat of deportation from undocumented immigrants under the age of 35 who came to the United States before age 16. Participants in the program, which provides only temporary relief, must meet a series of conditions."

Nonprofit Sector

["Department of Revenue warns Pennsylvania schools, nonprofits about email scam." J.D. Prose. *The Times*. March 1, 2017.](#)

"Public schools and nonprofits should be aware of an email phishing scam targeting their employees' W-2 form information, the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue warned Wednesday."

["Westmoreland Notables: Manager of resale store helps Westmoreland Community Action's anti-poverty work." Jamie Martines. *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*. February 26, 2017.](#)

"American Architectural Salvage, previously known as Shop Demo Depot, is best described as 'charity by doing business,' said Jack Brown, director of community services at Westmoreland Community Action. The nonprofit accepts donations of surplus building materials, furniture and home accessories and resells the items. Then, the profits are returned to Westmoreland Community Action and used to support the organization's several initiatives focused on eliminating poverty."

["IRS has revoked tax-exempt status for 2,212 local groups in Bucks, Burlington and Montgomery counties." *Courier Times*. February 26, 2017. \(Subscription Required\)](#)

Pittsburgh Region News

["Report: Pittsburgh's economy 'prosperous' but leaving some behind." Daniel Moore. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. March 2, 2017.](#)

"...while the value generated by Pittsburgh's economy has outpaced others, the growth has not necessarily translated into new jobs or rising incomes for the region's middle class, particularly for African-American residents."

["Why doesn't Pittsburgh appeal to young African-American professionals? A report dives in." Michael Machosky. *Next Pittsburgh*. February 27, 2017.](#)

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"Their report, entitled 'Neighborhood Attraction Factors Impacting the Young Professional African American Population in the City of Pittsburgh,' was compiled with help from the [University Center for Social and Urban Research](#) at Pitt, and support from The Heinz Endowments. By studying both the "push" and "pull" factors, the group feels like they have a baseline of knowledge to start addressing some of the long-standing issues keeping African-American millennials from arriving and staying."

["The Black Experience." Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. February 27, 2017.](#)

"Pittsburgh's African-Americans Often Leave Or Languish In Region"

["Pittsburgh poised to borrow \\$60M for capital improvements." Bob Bauder. Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. February 27, 2017.](#)

"Pittsburgh is preparing to borrow \$60 million for capital improvements in 2017 and 2018. Pittsburgh City Council was set to introduce legislation Tuesday to seek a 20-year bond issuance, but Finance Director Paul Leger said he asked for a delay because of a language change in the bill. The change permits retroactive payment for capital expenditures that have been made this year, he said. Leger said his office plans to resubmit the bill to council during its March 2 meeting."

["Transparency questions arise after Allegheny County Council holds another private meeting." Theresa Clift. Pittsburgh Tribune-Review. February 27, 2016.](#)

"The Allegheny County Council skirted the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act last week when it met behind closed doors without announcing it had done so or giving the reason, a media law expert said. The council met at 4 p.m. Tuesday, ahead of its regular meeting at 5 p.m., to discuss a personnel matter regarding county employees. The Sunshine Act does not require notices be posted for closed-session meetings, like it does for regular meetings. However, it does require the meeting and the reason for it to be announced."

["Leadership Westmoreland expands participants' knowledge of county." Kim Leonard. Pittsburgh Tribune-Review. February 26, 2017.](#)

"The 21 participants in the Westmoreland County Chamber of Commerce program set aside time to learn about the region, meet people and tour places they otherwise might never encounter and plan community service projects."

[Commentary: "Lifestyles Report ...Where are the Black middle class? Part 1." Debbie Norrell. New Pittsburgh Courier. March 1, 2017.](#)

Health and Human Services

["Protest builds over Pa. Medicaid contracts." Harold Brubaker. Philadelphia Inquirer. February 23, 2017.](#)

"Lawmakers, urged by constituents who participated in the bidding, have written to Gov. Wolf, Attorney General Josh Shapiro, and Auditor General Eugene DePasquale, urging them to examine a process that one lawmaker said appeared to be 'a badly managed mess from start to finish.' DePasquale said Wednesday that he had heard from Democrats and Republicans in the Senate and the House of Representatives and planned to meet with losing bidders Thursday."

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["State puts nursing homes on notice about increased fines." Gary Rotstein. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. February 27, 2017.](#)

"The department recently posted a website message advising the approximately 700 nursing homes of a change in enforcement policy likely to bring about increased fines. It emphasized that violators of regulations serious enough to merit a financial penalty in 2017 may have those 'calculated on a per violation per day basis.' Regulations already allowed the department to issue fines in that manner, but it has historically based penalties on a single instance rather than using a daily multiplier."

["Pitt Study: Abuse in childhood can lead to misbehavior later." David Templeton. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. March 1, 2017.](#)

"A study written by a newly appointed University of Pittsburgh assistant professor found that physical abuse during childhood can result in the child's inability to associate good behavior to positive outcomes in life."

["Living with a disability is living nonetheless, advocates say." Andrew Goldstein. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. March 2, 2017.](#)

"Dr. Bethany Ziss of the Children's Institute said that it's important to remind people, particularly parents of children with disabilities, that people with disabilities can lead happy lives with the right care and support."

["Opioid treatment success in Armstrong raises hope." Mary Ann Thomas. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. March 2, 2017.](#)

"...Armstrong County - with the second-highest overdose death rate per capita of any Pennsylvania county in 2015 - might have found an answer for its rural population, where treatment isn't as accessible as in urban areas. Vivitrol, a newer form of a known medication to treat drug and alcohol addiction, eliminates cravings for opioids."

["Amid health care uncertainty, black lung clinic provides support for miners." Daniel Moore. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. February 26, 2017.](#)

"Black lung - a debilitating and fatal respiratory disease caused by the inhalation of coal dust - is more prevalent and politically fraught today than most realize, said Lynda Glagola, program director for Lungs at Work. The federally funded nonprofit clinic in McMurray, Washington County, provides respiratory examinations and legal services to coal miners free of charge."

Education

["Pa. gets an 'F' for preventing lead in school drinking water." Jan Murphy. *The Patriot-News*. February 28, 2017.](#)

"Pennsylvania ended up with an 'F' grade on a PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center [report titled 'Get the Lead Out'](#) for failing to have proactive policies in place to protect children from lead poisoning."

["Report: Probe of Butler Area school water problems points to employee misconduct." AP. February 28, 2017.](#)

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"A law firm hired by the Butler Area School District to review water problems that forced one of its elementary schools to close has found evidence that some employees may have deleted relevant emails and lied during its investigation."

["Third Butler Area official resigns as questions mount about lead in water at school." Ben Schmitt. *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*. February 28, 2017.](#)

"A third Butler Area School District administrator has resigned in the midst of an investigation involving lead-tainted water that forced closure of an elementary school. Mary Wolf, assistant superintendent, resigned effective Monday night, the district's solicitor Tom King said."

Housing and Community Development

["Municipalities in Allegheny, Westmoreland counties find ways to fight blight." George Guido. *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*. February 25, 2017.](#)

"What West Deer has done with the area that once housed guided surface-to-air missiles is an example of how municipalities are taking unused land and converting it to other uses. A more perplexing problem is what to do with abandoned property once used for residences or businesses that is still privately owned. Many communities in Westmoreland County overall are handcuffed after removing blighted structures."

["Up-and-coming neighborhoods saw home prices explode in 2016." Tim Grant. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. February 28, 2017.](#)

"Figures provided by West Penn Multi-List show that between 2015 and the end of 2016, residential home prices in Brookline appreciated 8 percent. Greenfield also had an 8 percent price increase, followed by Highland Park with a 7 percent increase due to the burst of housing demand in nearby East Liberty."

["Greensburg's health care zoning district targets neighborhood rejuvenation." Jacob Tierney. *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*. February 25, 2017.](#)

"With the 2015 creation of a special health care zoning district, Greensburg leaders hoped to spur a transformation that would create a neighborhood of thriving shops, busy restaurants and friendly dwellings, with Excelsa Health Westmoreland Hospital as the centerpiece."

["McKees Rocks entrepreneur helps transform borough." Diane Daniels. *New Pittsburgh Courier*. February 24, 2017.](#)

"For more than two decades, Paul Brown, known as PK, has been striving to be a successful businessman. In 1996 he began operating Professional Limousine Service. In 2007 he moved the business from the Strip District to an acre of land in McKees Rocks. At one time, he operated 22 vehicles and had contracts with organizations and businesses inclusive of the Department of Energy, colleges and universities, churches and the National Urban League. Now contracted by boards of education, PLS focuses on transporting special needs students and his 32-year-old son Ebon operates the business."

Water, Energy, and Environment

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["DEP has a plan for keeping Pa.'s drinking water safe--but it may be two years away." Wallace McKelvey. *The Patriot-News*. February 27, 2017.](#)

"State regulators hope to address the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's warning of 'serious public health implications' due to inadequate drinking water oversight by raising \$7.5 million in new fees paid by public water systems. That proposal, however, could take two years or more to work through the regulatory process. The DEP needs to come up with a plan or risk an EPA takeover."

["Health industry makes plea to gas drilling lobby to embrace methane controls." Don Hopey. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. February 27, 2017.](#)

"Thousands of Pennsylvania doctors, nurses and other health care professionals have sent a letter to the Marcellus Shale Coalition, requesting that it stop legal challenges and lobbying against regulations aimed at controlling drilling air emissions and safeguarding public health. The one-page letter to the shale gas drilling industry's major Pennsylvania lobbying organization states that drilling operations can have deleterious impacts on public health, especially children, seniors and people with existing lung problems, and urges the industry to abide by emissions controls proposed for methane, volatile organic compounds and other pollutants."

["Pittsburgh's water system has so much debt, it's ripe for a takeover." Natasha Lindstrom. *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*. February 24, 2017.](#)

"In the coming months, Peduto intends to negotiate a new model for the debt- and controversy-riddled PWSA by finding one or more private or public entities willing to overhaul the city's water infrastructure without outright owning it. Partners also should have interest in finding ways to grow revenue by expanding PWSA's drinking water delivery to more customers outside city limits."

["Councilwoman: Pittsburgh households with young kids should receive lead filters." Adam Smeltz. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. February 28, 2017.](#)

"Estimating the endeavor might cost about \$500,000, Ms. Gross said she will encourage council, the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority and other agencies and leaders to help finance the effort. She wants to see a fundraising campaign take shape in the next month, with money in place by the summer, she said."

["Coal Industry Casts Itself as a Clean Energy Player." Clifford Krauss. *The New York Times*. February 26, 2017. \(Subscription Required\)](#)

Arts and Culture

["Creative expression at center of art therapy." Shirley McMarlin. *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*. February 25, 2017.](#)

"Dani Moss blends her interest in art with her desire to help others as a board certified art therapist and licensed professional counselor. She has a master's degree in art therapy with a specialization in counseling from Seton Hill University, where she now works as an art therapy instructor and internship program coordinator."

["Pa. Film Tax Credit To Thank For Pittsburgh Movie Boom." KDKA. February 26, 2017.](#)

"What brings Hollywood to Pennsylvania is the state's \$60 million a year film tax credit, but shortfalls in the state's budget could eliminate the credit all together."

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Transportation

["Meet Pittsburgh's first mobility and infrastructure director." The Incline. February 24, 2017.](#)

"Today is Karina Ricks' first day on a job that hasn't existed before in Pittsburgh. Ricks is the city's first director of the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure, which is tasked with providing a 'safe, sustainable and efficient system of transportation and accessibility.'"

Constituent and Town Hall Events

Below is a list of public and constituent events held by legislators.

If you know of an event not listed, please email streeter@forbesfunds.org

[Representative Hal English \(R-Allegheny\) "Speak with Hal" Events](#)

When: Friday March 3, 2017 from 4:30 to 6:30 PM

Where: Hampton Community Center, 3101 McCully Road, Allison Park, PA 15101

[Representative Aaron Bernstein \(R-Beaver, Butler, Lawrence\) Open House](#)

When: Monday, March 6, 2017 from 3:00 PM to 6: 30 PM

Where: 438 Line Avenue, Ellwood City, PA, 16117

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