

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
**Legislative Journal**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 10, 2024

SESSION OF 2024 208TH OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

No. 33

**SENATE**

WEDNESDAY, July 10, 2024

The Senate met at 11 a.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore (Senator Kim L. Ward) in the Chair.

**PRAYER**

The following prayer was offered by Senator JUDY WARD:

Please bow your heads.

Father, we are so grateful to be living in a democracy where many play a part in making sure the needs and desires of our State and nation's citizens are heard and met. As our State leaders work together to find solutions to difficult problems, we ask that You guide them to speak respectfully and with humility to one another. Fill them with wisdom and discernment. Help them to show Godlike love to those they interact with and be an advocate for their constituents and others. In this we ask, Lord, in Your Name. Amen.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair thanks Senator Judy Ward.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

(The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those assembled.)

**LEGISLATIVE LEAVES**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Madam President, I request legislative leaves for Senator Yaw and Senator Regan.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Costa.

Senator COSTA. Madam President, I request a temporary Capitol leave for Senator Muth, and legislative leaves for Senator Cappelletti, Senator Comitta, and Senator Anthony Williams.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senator Pittman requests legislative leaves for Senator Yaw and Senator Regan.

Senator Costa requests a temporary Capitol leave for Senator Muth, and legislative leaves for Senator Cappelletti, Senator Comitta, and Senator Anthony Williams.

Without objection, the leaves will be granted.

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Senator PITTMAN asked and obtained a leave of absence for Senator PENNYCUICK, for today's Session, for personal reasons.

**JOURNAL APPROVED**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Journal of the Session of May 7, 2024, is now in print.

The Clerk proceeded to read the Journal of the Session of May 7, 2024.

Senator PITTMAN. Madam President, I move that further reading of the Journal be dispensed with and that the Journal be approved.

On the question,  
Will the Senate agree to the motion?

The yeas and nays were required by Senator PITTMAN and were as follows, viz:

YEA-49

Argall	Culver	Kearney	Santarsiero
Aument	Dillon	Langerholc	Saval
Baker	DiSanto	Laughlin	Schwank
Bartolotta	Dush	Martin	Stefano
Boscola	Farry	Mastriano	Street
Brewster	Flynn	Miller	Tartaglione
Brooks	Fontana	Muth	Vogel
Brown	Gebhard	Phillips-Hill	Ward, Judy
Cappelletti	Haywood	Pittman	Ward, Kim
Coleman	Hughes	Regan	Williams, Anthony H.
Collett	Hutchinson	Robinson	Williams, Lindsey
Comitta	Kane	Rothman	Yaw
Costa			

NAY-0

A majority of the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Journal is approved.

**RECESS**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Madam President, I request a recess of the Senate for purposes of a meeting of the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations, to be followed by a meeting of the Committee on Appropriations, to be followed by a meeting of the

Committee on Community, Economic and Recreational Development, all of which will be held immediately in the Rules room. Following those committee meetings, the Senate Republicans will caucus in the Majority Caucus Room.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Costa.

Senator COSTA. Madam President, at the conclusion of the three meetings that were referenced by the Majority Leader, Senate Democrats will meet in the rear of the Chamber for a caucus as well.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. For purposes of a series of committee meetings to be held off the floor in the Rules room immediately, beginning with the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations, followed by the Committee on Appropriations, followed by the Committee on Community, Economic and Recreational Development, followed by Republican and Democratic caucuses to be held in their respective caucus rooms, without objection, the Senate stands in recess.

**AFTER RECESS**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The time of recess having expired, the Senate will come to order.

**CALENDAR**

**THIRD CONSIDERATION CALENDAR**

**BILLS OVER IN ORDER**

**SB 25, HB 327, SB 365, SB 366, HB 663, SB 766, SB 795 and SB 812** -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

**BILL REREFERRED**

**HB 897 (Pr. No. 3424)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in transfers of credits between institutions of higher education, further providing for definitions and for duties of public institutions of higher education, providing for guaranteed admission and for reports to General Assembly and further providing for duties of department and for applicability.

Upon motion of Senator PITTMAN, and agreed to by voice vote, the bill was rereferred to the Committee on Appropriations.

**BILLS OVER IN ORDER**

**SB 976, SB 1058 and SB 1087** -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

**BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION AND FINAL PASSAGE**

**SB 1160 (Pr. No. 1524)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 38 (Holidays and Observances) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in veteran recognition, providing for Vietnam War Veterans Day.

Considered the third time and agreed to,

On the question,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Franklin, Senator Mastriano.

Senator MASTRIANO. Madam President, I rise today in support of Senate Bill No. 1160. On this day in 1966, Captain Sherrill V. Brown of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, gave his all in South Vietnam. He was a U.S. Army soldier serving with the MACV, Military Assistance Command Vietnam. His awards included the Purple Heart, National Defense [Service] Medal, among others. And with that commemoration that we had posted today, we say, we will never forget you, brother. In recent years, Pennsylvania has designated March 6 as Persian Gulf Veterans Day, October 7 as the Global War on Terror Day--both wars that I was involved with--and sadly, we do not recognize, at the State level, a Vietnam Day. Once again, it seems like our heroes from the Vietnam War have been forgotten. As you may know, the Vietnam conflict encompasses from 1959 to 1975 and involved us fighting in North Vietnam the Viet Cong, with the United States and allies fighting to defend South Vietnam. The war sadly spilled over to Laos and Cambodia. More than 58,000 members of our U.S. Armed Forces lost their lives in this war, and more than 300,000 were wounded combating the spread of Communism overseas. In 2012, President Obama signed a proclamation designating March 29 as the annual observance of the Vietnam War Veterans Day. In 2017, President Trump signed into law the Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act, designating March 29 as National Vietnam War Veterans Day, and amended the Flag Code to include the National Vietnam War Veterans Day on which the flag should be flown. As we continue to mark the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War, I am pleased, with the passing of this legislation, that Pennsylvania can also join the ranks of other States to recognize March 29 formally into law. And in this small way, we can say thank you to our heroes of the Vietnam War and welcome home.

Thank you, Madam President.

And the question recurring,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

**YEA-49**

Argall	Culver	Kearney	Santarsiero
Aument	Dillon	Langerholc	Saval
Baker	DiSanto	Laughlin	Schwank
Bartolotta	Dush	Martin	Stefano
Boscola	Farry	Mastriano	Street
Brewster	Flynn	Miller	Tartaglione
Brooks	Fontana	Muth	Vogel
Brown	Gebhard	Phillips-Hill	Ward, Judy
Cappelletti	Haywood	Pittman	Ward, Kim
Coleman	Hughes	Regan	Williams, Anthony H.
Collett	Hutchinson	Robinson	Williams, Lindsey

Comitta Kane Rothman Yaw  
Costa

NAY-0

A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate present said bill to the House of Representatives for concurrence.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Madam President, I request a temporary Capitol leave for Senator Martin.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senator Pittman requests a temporary Capitol leave for Senator Martin. Without objection, the leave will be granted.

CONSIDERATION OF CALENDAR RESUMED

THIRD CONSIDERATION CALENDAR RESUMED

BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION AND FINAL PASSAGE

SB 1232 (Pr. No. 1812) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of June 2, 1915 (P.L.736, No.338), known as the Workers' Compensation Act, in liability and compensation, further providing for payment of compensation.

Considered the third time and agreed to,  
And the amendments made thereto having been printed as required by the Constitution,

On the question,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Chester, Senator Kane.

Senator KANE. Madam President, today I rise to speak on behalf of our Commonwealth workforce in support of Senate Bill No. 1232. This bill, allowing direct deposit for workers' compensation payments, is a major step forward in modernizing our system and ensuring hardworking Pennsylvanians receive their compensation quickly and efficiently. While I served as business manager of the plumbers' union, I saw the stress and uncertainty our workers faced while dealing with the workers' comp system. Folks who are already dealing with injuries and the recovery are facing payment delays and hold-ups. When we move to direct deposit, we eliminate many of these issues, ensuring that workers have timely access to their much-needed funds. I urge my colleagues to support Senate Bill No. 1232 and help us improve the workers' compensation system for everyone involved.

Thank you, Madam President.

And the question recurring,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

YEA-49

Argall	Culver	Kearney	Santarsiero
Aument	Dillon	Langerholc	Saval
Baker	DiSanto	Laughlin	Schwank
Bartolotta	Dush	Martin	Stefano
Boscola	Farry	Mastriano	Street
Brewster	Flynn	Miller	Tartaglione
Brooks	Fontana	Muth	Vogel
Brown	Gebhard	Phillips-Hill	Ward, Judy
Cappelletti	Haywood	Pittman	Ward, Kim
Coleman	Hughes	Regan	Williams, Anthony H.
Collett	Hutchinson	Robinson	Williams, Lindsey
Comitta	Kane	Rothman	Yaw
Costa			

NAY-0

A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate present said bill to the House of Representatives for concurrence.

BILL OVER IN ORDER

SB 1269 -- Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION AND FINAL PASSAGE

SB 1274 (Pr. No. 1773) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of July 2, 2004 (P.L.492, No.57), known as the Sign Language Interpreter and Transliterators State Registration Act, further providing for title of act, for definitions, for office responsibilities, for State registration required, for State registration and for provisional registration.

Considered the third time and agreed to,

On the question,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Robinson.

Senator ROBINSON. Madam President, today I rise and ask support for Senate Bill No. 1274, bipartisan legislation I introduced with my friend and fellow Committee on Labor and Industry chair, Senator John Kane, to expand the pathways individuals can take to become registered sign language interpreters in Pennsylvania. The number of registered interpreters has not kept up with the needs of the deaf, deafblind, and hard-of-hearing communities. This bill will expand the number of recognized certifications that interpreters can hold. It also recognizes alternative pathways outside of traditional bachelor's degrees or individuals who wish to become qualified registered interpreters. Numerous deaf individuals, interpreters, and advocacy organizations,

including many from my district, have expressed support for this bill, and I ask my colleagues for an affirmative vote.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Chester, Senator Kane.

Senator KANE. Madam President, today we can make our Commonwealth more inclusive by ensuring quality services to a community who has reached out for help. Senate Bill No. 1274 will be crucial for Pennsylvanians who rely on sign language and transliterating services in their daily lives. I am proud to co-prime sponsor this bill with my friend and colleague Senator Robinson. Madam President, I urge a "yes" vote on Senate Bill No. 1274, and I would like to submit the rest of my remarks for the record.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, the remarks will be spread upon the record.

*(The following prepared remarks were made part of the record at the request of the gentleman from Chester, Senator KANE:)*

Madam President, Senate Bill No. 1274 updates Act 57 of 2004. These updates add new definitions and certification paths to better serve our deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind communities. For the first time, we are including the term "deafblind" to make sure we address the unique needs of this group. The bill also modernizes the registration process, especially for those offering video remote interpreting. This ensures our interpreters are qualified and available when urgently needed. It also provides practical exceptions for emergencies and internships. This bill is the result of months of hard work and collaboration with various stakeholders who strongly support this bill. Organizations from the Pennsylvania State Association of the Deaf to the Administrative Office of the Pennsylvania Courts Interpreter Program back this bill. By removing outdated barriers, we help new interpreters serve effectively while ensuring our deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind residents get the services they deserve. This bill is a big step towards a more inclusive and fairer Pennsylvania. Thank you.

And the question recurring,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

YEA-49

Argall	Culver	Kearney	Santarsiero
Aument	Dillon	Langerholc	Saval
Baker	DiSanto	Laughlin	Schwank
Bartolotta	Dush	Martin	Stefano
Boscola	Farry	Mastriano	Street
Brewster	Flynn	Miller	Tartaglione
Brooks	Fontana	Muth	Vogel
Brown	Gebhard	Phillips-Hill	Ward, Judy
Cappelletti	Haywood	Pittman	Ward, Kim
Coleman	Hughes	Regan	Williams, Anthony H.
Collett	Hutchinson	Robinson	Williams, Lindsey
Comitta	Kane	Rothman	Yaw
Costa			

NAY-0

A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate present said bill to the House of Representatives for concurrence.

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

**HB 1446, HB 1540 and HB 1619** -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

BILL AMENDED AND REREFERRED

**HB 1633 (Pr. No. 3486)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act prohibiting the enforcement of certain noncompete covenants entered into by health care practitioners and employers and providing for a study by the Health Care Cost Containment Council.

On the question,  
Will the Senate agree to the bill on third consideration?

BROOKS AMENDMENT A5519 AGREED TO

Senator BROOKS offered the following amendment No. A5519:

Amend Bill, page 3, line 7, by striking out ", OR THE MEDICAL PRACTICE ACT OF 1985"

Amend Bill, page 3, line 14, by inserting after "ACT":  
or section 2 of the Medical Practice Act of 1985

Amend Bill, page 6, line 15, by inserting after "UNENFORCEABLE":

under this act

Amend Bill, page 7, line 14, by inserting after "patient":  
of two or more years

On the question,  
Will the Senate agree to the amendment?

It was agreed to.

Upon motion of Senator PITTMAN, and agreed to by voice vote, the bill, as amended, was rereferred to the Committee on Appropriations.

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

**HB 1700, HB 1820, HB 1853, HB 1889 and HB 2161** -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION AND FINAL PASSAGE

**HB 2216 (Pr. No. 3498)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act authorizing the Department of General Services, on behalf of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and with the approval of the Governor, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, to quitclaim and release to the United States of America any right, title or interest it may have with respect to a certain use restriction and a related reversionary interest related to certain portions of Valley Forge National Historical Park situate in Upper Merion Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania; authorizing the release of Project 70 restrictions on certain land owned by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission in Overfield Township, Wyoming County; authorizing the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, with the approval

of the Governor, to grant and convey to the City of Philadelphia a right-of-way easement situate in the City of Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, in exchange for improvements to Benjamin Rush State Park and monetary consideration to the Commonwealth to be used toward the acquisition and conveyance of a tract of land to be added to French Creek State Park; authorizing the transfer of administrative jurisdiction of portions of State park lands in exchange for certain lands situate in New Vernon Township, Mercer County, from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to the Department of Transportation for anticipated highway improvement projects; authorizing the Department of General Services, with the approval of the Department of Agriculture and the Governor, to grant and convey to Joshua R. Snyder a certain tract of land located in Windsor Township, Berks County; authorizing the Department of General Services, with the approval of the Governor, to grant and convey certain lands and improvements situate in Haverford Township, Delaware County, to Carelink Community Support Services of PA, Inc.; authorizing the Department of General Services, with the approval of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Governor, to grant and convey to The Roland Curtin Foundation for the Preservation of Eagle Furnace, certain lands, buildings and improvements, situate in Boggs Township, Centre County, and further authorizing the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission to transfer to The Roland Curtin Foundation for the Preservation of Eagle Furnace its buildings located on adjacent property leased from the United States Department of the Army; authorizing the Department of General Services, with the approval of the Governor, to grant and convey to Franklin Township, Greene County, certain lands situate in Franklin Township, Greene County; authorizing the Department of General Services to convey to the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry and Tourism, a Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation, certain lands and improvements thereon, situate in Oil City, Venango County; authorizing the Department of General Services, with the approval of the Governor and the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, to convey to the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry and Tourism, a Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation, certain lands and improvements thereon, situate in Oil City, Venango County; authorizing the Department of General Services, with the approval of the Department of Transportation and the Governor, to grant and convey to the Bear Creek Township Volunteer Hose Company an access easement and two storm water easements from certain lands situate in Bear Creek Township, Luzerne County; authorizing the Department of General Services, with the approval of the Governor, to release a portion of a use restriction affecting certain real property situate in Susquehanna Township, Dauphin County, which the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania previously conveyed to the School District of the City of Harrisburg; authorizing the sale and transfer of title for a 0.232 acre of Project 70 lands owned by Springettsbury Township, York County, to the Department of Transportation for highway right-of-way; authorizing the Department of General Services, with the approval of the Department of Human Services and the Governor, to grant and convey to the University of Pittsburgh a certain permanent easement through and across lands of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in the City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, and to accept from the University of Pittsburgh a certain permanent easement through and across lands of the University of Pittsburgh in the City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County; authorizing the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, with the approval of the Governor, to grant and convey certain lands and improvements situate in the 47th Ward of the City of Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, to New Freedom Theater, Inc.; and authorizing the State Armory Board to enter into such agreements as may be necessary to exchange with a branch of the United States Armed Forces the right of occupancy in, use of and obligations belonging to certain properties owned, managed or occupied by either the State Armory Board or a branch of the United States Armed Forces.

Considered the third time and agreed to,  
 And the amendments made thereto having been printed as required by the Constitution,

On the question,  
 Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

YEA-47

Argall	Culver	Kearney	Saval
Aument	Dillon	Langerholz	Schwank
Baker	DiSanto	Laughlin	Stefano
Bartolotta	Dush	Martin	Street
Boscola	Farry	Miller	Tartaglione
Brewster	Flynn	Muth	Vogel
Brooks	Fontana	Phillips-Hill	Ward, Judy
Brown	Gebhard	Pittman	Ward, Kim
Cappelletti	Haywood	Regan	Williams, Anthony H.
Collett	Hughes	Robinson	Williams, Lindsey
Comitta	Hutchinson	Rothman	Yaw
Costa	Kane	Santarsiero	

NAY-2

Coleman	Mastriano
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A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate return said bill to the House of Representatives with information that the Senate has passed the same with amendments in which concurrence of the House is requested.

SECOND CONSIDERATION CALENDAR

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

**SB 117, SB 349 and SB 988** -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

BILL OVER IN ORDER AND LAID ON THE TABLE

**SB 1171 (Pr. No. 1545)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, providing for administration of emergency anti-seizure medication.

Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

Pursuant to Senate Rule 9, the bill was laid on the table.

BILL OVER IN ORDER

**SB 1208** -- Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

BILL OVER IN ORDER AND LAID ON THE TABLE

**SB 1251 (Pr. No. 1706)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of May 22, 1951 (P.L.317, No.69), known as The Professional Nursing Law, further providing for fees and qualifications for licensure, for education programs, approved lists, distribution

and student credits where school removed from list and for certified registered nurse practitioners and qualifications.

Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

Pursuant to Senate Rule 9, the bill was laid on the table.

#### BILLS OVER IN ORDER

**SB 1271** and **SB 1280** -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator PITTMAN.

#### SENATE RESOLUTION No. 77, TABLED

Senator PITTMAN, without objection, called up from page 8 of the Calendar, **Senate Resolution No. 77**, entitled:

A Concurrent Resolution petitioning the Congress of the United States to call a Convention for proposing amendments pursuant to Article V of the Constitution of the United States limited to proposing amendments that impose fiscal restraints on the Federal Government, limit the power and jurisdiction of the Federal Government and limit the terms of office for its officials and for members of Congress.

Upon motion of Senator PITTMAN, and agreed to by voice vote, the resolution was laid on the table.

#### SENATE RESOLUTION No. 77 TAKEN FROM THE TABLE

Senator PITTMAN. Madam President, I move that **Senate Resolution No. 77** be taken from the table and placed on the Calendar.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The resolution will be placed on the Calendar.

#### BILLS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEES

Senator MARTIN, from the Committee on Appropriations, reported the following bills:

#### **SB 1026 (Pr. No. 1592)** (Rereported)

An Act amending the act of December 19, 1975 (P.L.604, No.173), entitled "An act to facilitate the use of electronic funds transfer systems by providing that credits to accounts in financial institutions designated by recipients shall satisfy legal requirements for payments by cash or checks," further providing for electronic funds transfers, for consumer protections and for payroll card accounts.

#### **HB 1032 (Pr. No. 3495)** (Rereported)

An Act establishing the Solar for Schools Grant Program; and providing for powers and duties of the Department of Community and Economic Development.

#### **HB 1993 (Pr. No. 3499)** (Amended) (Rereported)

An Act amending the act of November 21, 2016 (P.L.1318, No.169), known as the Pharmacy Audit Integrity and Transparency Act, further providing for title of act; in preliminary provisions, further providing for short title, for scope of act and for definitions and providing for regulations; in pharmacy audits, further providing for limitations; in

registration, further providing for PBM and auditing entity registration; providing for pharmacy benefits manager contracts; in PBM cost transparency requirements, providing for PBM transparency report required, repealing provisions relating to regulations and providing for PSAO reporting requirements; in enforcements, further providing for scope of enforcement authority; providing for pharmacy services; and making repeals.

Senator PITTMAN, from the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations, reported the following bill:

#### **SB 447 (Pr. No. 1799)** (Rereported) (*Concurrence*)

An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Department of Military Affairs, establishing the PA VETConnect Program.

#### SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS SUPPLEMENTAL CALENDAR No. 1

#### SENATE CONCURS IN HOUSE AMENDMENTS

**SB 447 (Pr. No. 1799)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Department of Military Affairs, establishing the PA VETConnect Program.

On the question,

Will the Senate concur in the amendments made by the House to Senate Bill No. 447?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Madam President, I move that the Senate do concur in the amendments made by the House to Senate Bill No. 447.

On the question,

Will the Senate agree to the motion?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Franklin, Senator Mastriano.

Senator MASTRIANO. Madam President, I rise in support of Senate Bill No. 447, which codifies into law the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs' award-winning Pennsylvania VETConnect Program. As the name implies, PA VETConnect aims to connect Pennsylvania's over 700,000 veterans to the resources available to them in their communities and across the Commonwealth. Under VETConnect, the Department of Military Affairs reviews the veterans' needs, find the resources, and then connects them--the streamlined process that helps the veterans get what they need to get the job done. Since it launched in 2020, the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs has helped more than 20,000 connections here in Pennsylvania. It is a successful program, and I urge a positive vote. Thank you.

And the question recurring,

Will the Senate agree to the motion?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

YEA-49

Argall	Culver	Kearney	Santarsiero
Aument	Dillon	Langerholc	Saval
Baker	DiSanto	Laughlin	Schwank
Bartolotta	Dush	Martin	Stefano
Boscola	Farry	Mastriano	Street
Brewster	Flynn	Miller	Tartaglione
Brooks	Fontana	Muth	Vogel
Brown	Gebhard	Phillips-Hill	Ward, Judy
Cappelletti	Haywood	Pittman	Ward, Kim
Coleman	Hughes	Regan	Williams, Anthony H.
Collett	Hutchinson	Robinson	Williams, Lindsey
Comitta	Kane	Rothman	Yaw
Costa			

NAY-0

A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate inform the House of Representatives accordingly.

BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION AND FINAL PASSAGE

**HB 1032 (Pr. No. 3495)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act establishing the Solar for Schools Grant Program; and providing for powers and duties of the Department of Community and Economic Development.

Considered the third time and agreed to,  
And the amendments made thereto having been printed as required by the Constitution,

On the question,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

YEA-42

Argall	Culver	Laughlin	Saval
Aument	Dillon	Martin	Schwank
Baker	Farry	Miller	Stefano
Bartolotta	Flynn	Muth	Street
Boscola	Fontana	Phillips-Hill	Tartaglione
Brewster	Gebhard	Pittman	Vogel
Brown	Haywood	Regan	Ward, Kim
Cappelletti	Hughes	Robinson	Williams, Anthony H.
Collett	Kane	Rothman	Williams, Lindsey
Comitta	Kearney	Santarsiero	Yaw
Costa	Langerholc		

NAY-7

Brooks	DiSanto	Hutchinson	Ward, Judy
Coleman	Dush	Mastriano	

A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate return said bill to the House of Representatives with information that the Senate has passed the same with amendments in which concurrence of the House is requested.

SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS SUPPLEMENTAL CALENDAR No. 2

MOTION NOTWITHSTANDING SENATE RULE 12

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Madam President, as a special order of business, I call up Senate Supplemental Calendar No. 2 and move that the Senate proceed to consider House Bill No. 1993, notwithstanding the provisions of Senate Rule 12(m)(2).

On the question,  
Will the Senate agree to the motion?

A voice vote having been taken, the question was determined in the affirmative.

BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION AND FINAL PASSAGE

**HB 1993 (Pr. No. 3499)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of November 21, 2016 (P.L. 1318, No. 169), known as the Pharmacy Audit Integrity and Transparency Act, further providing for title of act; in preliminary provisions, further providing for short title, for scope of act and for definitions and providing for regulations; in pharmacy audits, further providing for limitations; in registration, further providing for PBM and auditing entity registration; providing for pharmacy benefits manager contracts; in PBM cost transparency requirements, providing for PBM transparency report required, repealing provisions relating to regulations and providing for PSAO reporting requirements; in enforcements, further providing for scope of enforcement authority; providing for pharmacy services; and making repeals.

Considered the third time and agreed to,  
And the amendments made thereto having been printed as required by the Constitution,

On the question,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Philadelphia, Senator Tartaglione.

Senator TARTAGLIONE. Madam President, I rise to support House Bill No. 1993, and like to thank Representative Benham and Representative Gaydos and also Senator Judy Ward for all our work we did together on moving this topic together forward as coauthors of the companion Senate Bill No. 1000. I would also like to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their support in this effort to rein in the negative practices of PBMs and save our community pharmacies. Last I checked, we had 38 co-sponsors on Senate Bill No. 1000 from all over the political spectrum and representing districts from all over the State: urban,

rural, and suburban. That is nearly unprecedented bipartisanship and should be applauded.

I will keep it brief and speak from the perspective of Philadelphia and its pharmacy landscape. My district is one of the most densely populated districts in this State. You would think there would be no issue for our people to find a pharmacy within walking distance or through a quick public transportation route that has their prescriptions for a fair price. When I was growing up you just strolled down the street to your mom-and-pop community pharmacy, they had what you needed when you needed it; you could rely on that pharmacy. I still use our corner pharmacy. Sadly, though, that type of pharmacy is struggling to remain open in my district and most of the big chains have already fled. This has resulted in a growing pharmacy desert where folks, many of whom are elderly, need to travel longer and spend more money for the same prescriptions they had for years. By addressing PBM practices such as patient steering, spread-pricing, transparency, and others, what we have before us is a sorely needed step towards relieving our community pharmacies and our constituents who rely on them. I urge my colleagues for an affirmative vote.

Thank you, Madam President.

#### LEGISLATIVE LEAVE CANCELLED

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senator Muth has returned, and her temporary Capitol leave is cancelled.

And the question recurring,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Montgomery, Senator Haywood.

Senator HAYWOOD. Madam President, I rise also to support House Bill No. 1993. Back in February of this year, I, along with Chairperson Muth of the Democratic Policy Committee, heard testimony from many pharmacists about the conditions in the Commonwealth. During that hearing, we heard from both those who were independent pharmacies and those who were not. All the groups cited significant challenges with PBMs, including increased cost, lower reimbursement rates for independent pharmacies, and patient steering, amongst other challenges. They clearly described the advantages of those pharmacies that were connected with the affiliated; those that were connected with the drug distributors, such as CVS; and to those who are unaffiliated and the disadvantages of all those who are unaffiliated. We also heard about numerous closures that had occurred in 2023, those occurring in 2024, and those that we could continue to expect to close given the pricing and other challenges. We heard about a term called "pharmacy deserts," and pharmacy deserts are increasing in communities without any nearby pharmacies.

Madam President, in my district, I have had a number of pharmacies close, and this has caused residents many challenges in terms of access to pharmacies and drugs and prescriptions. This is creating a challenge for lack of access to the core services that pharmacies provide. We had requested and sought some broader changes to the pharmacy benefit management system. However, this bill is a significant step forward to addressing some of the challenges that the pharmacists described to us during the hearing. This bill moves forward in leveling the playing field between

those who are affiliated and not affiliated in terms of reimbursement costs, also in terms of other provisions of the act. Those that are indirectly and directly controlled by these large companies will now face parity competition, which is so critical for survival. This bill requires a pass-through of health benefit plans. Those rebates--95 percent of rebates--that value has to go to the plans. There are a number of clawback provisions that are now eliminated, patient steering now prohibited. For all of these reasons, Madam President, even though we sought more in the legislation, this is a significant step forward in finally having the Insurance Department as one agency that can now have some level of oversight of what these PBMs are doing is significant. For all these reasons, Madam President, I encourage a "yes" vote on this legislation. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Delaware, Senator Kearney.

Senator KEARNEY. Madam President, I too rise today to express my support for House Bill No. 1993, and I want to commend the work of both the prime sponsors in the House, but also the work of the Senate prime [sponsors], Senator Judy Ward and Senator Tartaglione. I know many of us have heard from our local independent pharmacists in our districts about the need for this legislation and the need to reign in the power of pharmacy benefit managers and the roles that they play on prescription drug prices. In my district, I have heard from pharmacists like Mike from the Upper Darby Pharmacy, which is a mainstay in the neighborhood around my Upper Darby office, and my own personal pharmacist, Chichi, in Springfield Pharmacy; pharmacists whose express goal is simply to serve their communities while they have to deal with PBMs that fail to adequately reimburse them or fail to do so in a timely manner. In fact, staff members in my district offices have multiple times had to call PBMs directly to get timely payments for these pharmacists when our community pharmacists were dismissed by these companies.

House Bill No. 1993 is a long-awaited comprehensive package to provide some relief to those hurting pharmacies by ensuring that our community pharmacists are reimbursed at the same rate as the PBM-affiliated retail pharmacies, not allowing PBMs to steer patients away from local pharmacies, and ensuring that local pharmacies are provided with a greater opportunity to participate in the PBM networks, all of this while providing greater transparency into PBMs and ensuring that the rebates they receive are passed along to customers. For these reasons, I am proud to stand in support of the legislation. I encourage my colleagues to do the same. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Street.

Senator STREET. Madam Chair, I also rise to support this legislation. I want to thank all those who worked on it. This is an issue that this Chamber and the General Assembly have been working on for some time. We have heard from independent pharmacies. We have heard from consumers who want to make sure that there is access in communities to pharmaceutical services at a reasonable price, who do not want to see just a few pharmacies have a monopoly. Curtailing and regulating appropriately the role of PBMs is an important step in that process, but ultimately ensuring that independent pharmacies and people have access to pharmaceutical care, both in the densest, most urban



districts like mine and to our most rural communities in the Commonwealth, is something that we can all agree on. I urge a "yes" vote on this bill and encourage Members to make folks aware that we are doing the work to protect independent pharmacies.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Jefferson, Senator Dush.

Senator DUSH. Madam President, and much like the speaker from Philadelphia who just commented, I agree, this is something that has been affecting all of us. It is a sign of a symptom that has run amok, and what has happened to our family pharmacies is unconscionable. It is a great bipartisan response to this; unfortunately, it has, I think, taken us a little bit too long--well, quite a bit too long. I have lost, in McKean County, three pharmacies that have had to sell out to a conglomerate, and they are shutting down one of them and cutting back on two more. I recently spoke with another one of my pharmacies down in Clinton County, where he just happened to be doing the books at the end of the month, and he showed me where he had sold \$2 million worth of product for this one prescription and lost \$5,300 in the process. Our people cannot stay in business with that kind of a model. I am glad that this has gotten such wide bipartisan support and just because it has affected us, our families individually, as well as all of our constituents. And I am very grateful for this legislation, and I want to congratulate the maker of the bill for the excellent work that has gone into this, as well as the entire team that has been working on this in a bipartisan way.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Blair, Senator Judy Ward.

Senator J. WARD. Madam President, our pharmacies are struggling. House Bill No. 1993, which is the House version of legislation that Senator Tartaglione and I sponsored, Senate Bill No. 1000, was worked on in close consultation with stakeholder groups including pharmacists, insurers, pharmacy benefit managers, and physicians, and this would bring critical relief to pharmacies across Pennsylvania. It brings much-needed reform to the way that pharmacy benefit managers, or PBMs, operate. In many areas of the State, especially rural areas like mine, pharmacies are a vital part of the healthcare network. These pharmacies are on the front lines of healthcare and are often the first stop for people looking for care. But these pharmacies are struggling as more and more continue to close because of the unfair business practices of PBMs, such as patient steering, spread pricing, and clawbacks. This legislation seeks to address some of these issues as well as provide for transparency and accountability measures to ensure that pharmacies and PBMs are on a fair, level playing field.

Oftentimes, local pharmacists have an intimate relationship with the community, providing trusted answers and guidance on important healthcare questions and decisions. Our community pharmacies provide critical access to care that countless Pennsylvanians rely on each and every day. Now they need our help. Our community pharmacies cannot wait any longer for us to take action, and we need to act now. I thank my colleagues for their support and appreciate their affirmative vote. And I would also like to thank Chris Donahue; Jordan Grant; and my staff, Nathan Akers, Greg Beckenbaugh, and Matt Deegan, for the hard work that they have put in on this bill and to help it get to the finish line.

Thank you, Madam President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Madam President, I rise and echo the support of all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for this piece of legislation. Madam President, this is why we are here, and this is why we have been elected to do the work of the good people of Pennsylvania, because there is nothing greater of a responsibility that we have than to ensure that our constituents have access to quality healthcare, and that includes pharmaceutical services. As the gentlelady from Blair County said, there are many who deserve recognition for their work in making this product possible: the gentlelady from Mercer County, the gentleman from Dauphin County, our friends across the other side of the aisle who have long been advocating for this piece of legislation, but also the stakeholders that were involved in this process. This was a difficult, complex, complicated process, and there were sacrifices made by the pharmacists, there were sacrifices made by the PBMs, there were sacrifices made by the insurers. But those sacrifices were made based on the mutual recognition that the status quo could not continue because the people of Pennsylvania needed better access to pharmaceutical services. And so, I echo the appreciation to all of those who have helped make this piece of legislation possible. It is a beautiful example of what divided government can do when we work together, and I ask my colleagues for an affirmative vote as well.

Thank you, Madam President.

And the question recurring,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

YEA-48

Argall	Costa	Kane	Santarsiero
Aument	Culver	Kearney	Saval
Baker	Dillon	Langerholc	Schwank
Bartolotta	DiSanto	Laughlin	Stefano
Boscola	Dush	Martin	Street
Brewster	Farry	Miller	Tartaglione
Brooks	Flynn	Muth	Vogel
Brown	Fontana	Phillips-Hill	Ward, Judy
Cappelletti	Gebhard	Pittman	Ward, Kim
Coleman	Haywood	Regan	Williams, Anthony H.
Collett	Hughes	Robinson	Williams, Lindsey
Comitta	Hutchinson	Rothman	Yaw

NAY-1

Mastriano

A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate return said bill to the House of Representatives with information that the Senate has passed the same with amendments in which concurrence of the House is requested.

SENATE AT EASE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Madam President, may we have a brief recess, and I would ask that the Members of the Republican Caucus please come to the rostrum. May we be at ease?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will be at ease. [The Senate was at ease.]

UNFINISHED BUSINESS BILL REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE

Senator GEBHARD, from the Committee on Community, Economic and Recreational Development, reported the following bill:

HB 2132 (Pr. No. 3436)

An Act amending Title 12 (Commerce and Trade) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, establishing the Pennsylvania-Ireland Trade Commission and the Pennsylvania-Ireland Trade Commission Fund; imposing duties on the Department of Community and Economic Development; and making an editorial change.

BILL ON FIRST CONSIDERATION

Senator BAKER. Madam President, I move that the Senate do now proceed to consideration of the bill reported from committee for the first time at today's Session.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote. The bill was as follows:

HB 2132.

And said bill having been considered for the first time, Ordered, To be printed on the Calendar for second consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY

The following announcements were read by the Secretary of the Senate:

SENATE OF PENNSYLVANIA COMMITTEE MEETINGS

THURSDAY, JULY 11, 2024

Off the Floor APPROPRIATIONS (to consider Senate Bill No. 1118; and House Bills No. 115, 897, 1633 and 2310) Rules Committee Conference Room

Off the Floor RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS (to consider Senate Bills No. 24, 654, 656, 700, 1001, 1009, 1150, 1154 and 1246) Rules Committee Conference Room

THURSDAY, JULY 25, 2024

10:30 A.M. EDUCATION (public hearing on combatting antisemitism on Pennsylvania college campuses) Hearing Room 1 North Office

PETITIONS AND REMONSTRANCES

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Philadelphia, Senator Tartaglione.

Senator TARTAGLIONE. Madam President, I rise because today marks 6,576 days since our Commonwealth's legislature last passed an increase in our minimum wage. My colleagues at this point know what I am going to say and what I am going to advocate for today. It is the same thing I advocate for every Session day. I come to this Chamber and give speeches about how it is a moral failure to allow Pennsylvanians to make these poverty-level wages, or we need to act now to put Pennsylvanians on a path to prosperity. But Madam President, I do not want to sit up here and lecture today. Today, I want to do a little demonstration. One, two, three, four, five: that is 1 cent. One, two, three, four, five: that is another cent. Madam President, every Session day I deliver remarks about how important it is to raise our minimum wage. But sometimes I think we lose track of what it really means to earn \$7.25 an hour. Earning the minimum wage means you make 1 cent every 5 seconds. Every minute, a minimum-wage earner earns 12 cents. If we are all earning the maximum minimum wage, since I began speaking, we have earned approximately 25 cents, 1 quarter, that is it. But we do not, Madam President. The Members of the Senate make at least \$51 per hour, more than 7 times what our minimum-wage earners make. If a minimum-wage earner makes 12 cents a minute, my colleagues in this Chamber make almost a dollar. Our minimum wage is immoral, Madam President. That is why I introduced Senate Bill No. 1186, because I will not sit here idly by as our minimum-wage earners are left behind. Our minimum-wage earners deserve better, Madam President. Our low-wage earners deserve better, Madam President. All Pennsylvanians deserve better. One, two, three, four, five.

Thank you, Madam President.

HOUSE MESSAGES

SENATE BILL RETURNED WITH AMENDMENTS

The Clerk of the House of Representatives returned to the Senate SB 656, with the information the House has passed the same with amendments in which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Pursuant to Senate Rule 13(c)(2)(i), the bill will be referred to the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations.

HOUSE CONCURS IN SENATE AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL

The Clerk of the House of Representatives informed the Senate that the House has concurred in amendments made by the Senate to HB 1466.

HOUSE CONCURS IN SENATE BILL

The Clerk of the House of Representatives returned to the Senate SB 219, with the information the House has passed the same without amendments.

**BILLS SIGNED**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore (Senator Kim L. Ward) in the presence of the Senate signed the following bills:

**SB 219, SB 447, HB 1086, HB 1466 and HB 2182.**

**SENATE AT EASE**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will be at ease.  
[The Senate was at ease.]

**The PRESIDING OFFICER (Senator Elder A. Vogel, Jr.)  
in the Chair.**

**RECESS**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Mr. President, I move that the Senate do now recess until Thursday, July 11, 2024, at 10 a.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time, unless sooner recalled by the President pro tempore.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

The Senate recessed at 4:06 p.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time.