

THE POLICY RECAP

A summary of House Democratic Policy Committee Meetings..... November 2017

Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus Muncy | November 16

On behalf of the Pennsylvania Legislative Black Caucus, state Reps. Jordan Harris and Morgan Cephas hosted a joint Policy Committee hearing and tour at the State Correctional Institution Muncy. Rep. Harris is Chairman of the PLBC and Rep. Cephas serves as Chairwoman of the PLBC's Subcommittee on Women and Girls of Color.

The tour and meeting were the first held at a state prison facility for both the PLBC and the Policy Committee. Advocacy and community-based organizations and inmates joined state legislators to discuss policy initiatives aimed at reducing incarceration rates, ending the school-to-prison pipeline for young girls, and improving conditions for incarcerated women.



Visit www.pahouse.com/policycommittee for hearing testimony, video and photos.

Bipartisan Policy Committees Hearing on STEM

Harrisburg | November 20

Republican Policy Committee Chairman Kerry Benninghoff and Democratic Policy Committee Chairman Mike Sturla hosted a bipartisan hearing to discuss STEM-based programs and “learning ecosystems” that are gaining recognition and educating youth across Pennsylvania.



Hearing testifiers included: Julie Stolzer, Teaching Institute for Excellence in STEM (TIES); Matthew Stem, Pennsylvania Department of Education; Laura Saccente, Pennsylvania Statewide Afterschool/Youth Development Network (PSAYDN); Rachel Miller Strucko, Schools and Homes In Education (SHINE); Todd Pride, Mid-Atlantic Youth Anglers & Outdoors Program; Robert Krasne, Steinman Communications; LaTrenda Leonard Sherrill, Pittsburgh Regional STEM Ecosystem; and Jesse Maine, Southern Tioga School District.

Rep. Margo Davidson

Mental Health Treatment vs. Mass Incarceration

Yeadon | November 27

Rep. Margo Davidson hosted a public hearing at Yeadon Borough Hall to discuss the battle for mental health treatment versus mass incarceration. Rep. Davidson, who is finalizing a legislative package to address the issue, requested the hearing to discuss the public health crisis surrounding mental health treatment and the impact that a lack of treatment has had on the criminal justice system.



Hearing testifiers included:

- Marilyn Benoit, senior vice president, chief medical officer, and chief clinical officer, Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health
- Susan Rogers, director of special projects/advocacy, Mental Health Partnerships
- Andrew Wigglesworth, executive vice president of Wojdak and Associates, on behalf of Treatment Advocacy Center
- Lynn Patrone, mental health advocate, Pennsylvania Department of Corrections
- Scott Bohn, chief of West Chester Borough Police





Rep. Kevin Boyle

Rise of Anti-Semitic Acts

Philadelphia | November 28

Rep. Kevin Boyle hosted a hearing on the rise of anti-Semitic acts in Northeast Philadelphia at the Congregations of Shaare Shamayim. The committee discussed recent incidents, including rocks thrown through windows at Temple Menorah Keneseth Chai in Tacony, and the more than 270 tombstones overturned at Mount Carmel Cemetery in Wissinoming.

The committee heard testimony from Jeremy Bannett, associate regional director, Anti-Defamation League; Naomi Adler, president and CEO, Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia; Michele Foster, president-elect, Hadassah Greater Philadelphia Region; and Chuck Feldman, president, Holocaust Awareness Museum and Education Center.



Rep. Chris Rabb

Bold Budget Innovations Philadelphia | November 29

Rep. Chris Rabb hosted a public hearing on bold budget innovations for the betterment of all Pennsylvanians. Panelists discussed universal basic income, carbon fee and dividend policy, and criminal justice reform.



Testifiers included:

- Ioana Marinescu, Ph.D., assistant professor, University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy and Practice
- Darrick Hamilton, Ph.D., associate professor of economics and urban policy, The New School
- William Mettler, volunteer, Citizens' Climate Lobby
- Luke Taylor, Ph.D./MBA, associate professor of finance, The Wharton School
- James Dennis and Bobby Harris, recently released returning citizens
- Marie Gottschalk, Ph.D., professor of American politics, University of Pennsylvania

About the House Democratic Policy Committee

Rep. Mike Sturla is chair of the House Democratic Policy Committee. The Policy Committee holds public hearings and meetings across the state, and serves as the catalyst to enacting major policy initiatives put forth by members of the House Democratic Caucus.

You can find details about upcoming hearings, hearing testimony from previous hearings and Chairman Sturla's Policy Point of the Day by visiting www.pahouse.com/PolicyCommittee.

Rep. Perry Warren State Efforts to Battle Opioid Abuse Newtown | November 30

Rep. Perry Warren hosted a House Democratic Policy Committee hearing at the Chancellor Center on state efforts to battle opioid abuse.

Rep. Warren requested the hearing to receive updates from the state and his local community on the opioid crisis.



The hearing featured testimony from the state Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs acting Secretary Jennifer Smith; Jacqui Redner, president of Pennsbury School Board; local resident Pam Garozzo; Morrisville Borough Police Chief George McClay; and Diane Rosati, Executive Director, Bucks County Drug & Alcohol Commission.



If you or someone you know is suffering from a prescription drug or heroin problem, call Pennsylvania's hotline at 1-800-662-HELP. Help is completely confidential and the hotline is staffed by trained professionals 24 hours a day.