



*Center for Beef Excellence
Beef Bytes
March 12, 2010*

Welcome Spring!

Well almost. With just one week left until spring and the warm weather and sunshine of this week, I am sure you will join us in saying a heartfelt goodbye to this past winter. Even the sapling bender and onion snows will pass quickly now.

We have several opportunities for you to consider.

1. Nominate your favorite Farm Mom for Monsanto's Farm Mom of the Year Award. Cash prizes will be given to regional winners.

<http://monsanto.mediaroom.com/index.php?s=43&item=813>

2. Have your favorite agriculturally-oriented college student apply for the Agriculture Future of America. Deadline arrives shortly so do not hesitate.

<http://www.agfuture.org/students/scholar/index.html>

3. Celebrate National Ag Day in DC by attending one of several events. Some are free!

<http://www.agday.org/>

4. Looking for agricultural employment? See the attached opportunities available at CropLife America and the National FFA.

See the clips below for a budget update as well the news of the week.

Thank you for supporting our industry and let us know how we can best assist you.

MeeCee

Articles of Interest

[If it smells like manure ... It must be manure](#)

03-12-2010

As Washington threatens to cut off police funding to force compliance with onerous federal regulations, Pennsylvania farmers are its pawns. Three years ago, a federal Motor Safety Carrier Administration audit found supposed deficiencies in Pennsylvania regulations. Now, Pennsylvania State... - [TRIB](#)

[Rapid Rise in Seed Prices Draws U.S. Scrutiny](#)

03-12-2010

During the depths of the economic crisis last year, the prices for many goods held steady or even dropped. But on American farms, the picture was far different, as farmers watched the price they paid for seeds skyrocket. Corn seed prices rose 32 percent; soybean seeds were up 24 percent.... - [NY TIMES](#)

[Rein in use of antibiotics](#)

03-12-2010

Health care reform has stalled partially on the issue of controlling costs. At the same time, a sound bill on an important aspect of health policy is stalled, even though it would promote better health and help to control costs. Overuse of antibiotics, particularly in the livestock and poultry... - [POTTS. REP.](#)

[PA Farm Bureau: Farmers Discuss Critical Issues Confronting Ag w/ DC Delegation](#)

03-11-2010

(Press Release)

[Central Pennsylvania emergency responders learn how to save farm animals](#)

03-11-2010

Firefighters, EMTs and other first responders are used to saving lives from burning buildings, overturned vehicles and other emergency situations. But many face unfamiliar territory when the lives in danger are the animal kind and the variety is large livestock. It's a fairly common situation in... - [PATRIOT](#)

[The Senate should act on a sensible food-protection bill](#)

03-11-2010

THANKS TO federal regulations that took effect in September, a new salmonella contamination attributed to a flavor enhancer was caught and a recall begun. But inspection documents released by the Food and Drug Administration on Tuesday showed that a Las Vegas company continued to... - [WASH POST](#)

[Total milk production down](#)

03-11-2010

Pennsylvania milk production in January totaled 882 million pounds, down 1.7 percent from last January's production of 897 million pounds, according to the Pennsylvania Field Office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. The number of milk cows in the state during the month averaged 541,000... - [SOMERSET DAILY](#)

[House adopts Houghton measure to honor agriculture in Pennsylvania](#)

03-10-2010

(Press Release)

[Merck, Sanofi combining animal medicine businesses](#)

03-10-2010

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) - Two of the world's biggest pharmaceutical companies said Tuesday they are uniting their animal health businesses in a deal to become the top dog in the veterinary industry... - [AP](#)

[Manure spill ends Fulton County farmers' careers](#)

03-10-2010

McCONNELLSBURG -- Three operators of a Fulton County dairy farm responsible for a November fish kill in Big Cove Creek, Fulton County, have paid \$12,920 and will stop

farming. J. Lamar Hege and Glen Hege will vacate a leased farm near McConnellsburg by May 1, according to the Department of Environmental Protection and... - [CHAMBERS. P.O.](#)

03-09-2010 [Citizens Rally for Changes to ACRE Law](#)
(Press Conference)

03-08-2010 [Barry Township farmer talks biosolids](#)
WEISHAMPLE - A Barry Township farmer under scrutiny for applying Class A biosolids on his farm defended the practice Tuesday. Robert "Bob" Scheib, contacted The Citizen-Standard Tuesday morning to respond to claims from Citizens Against Biosolids. Kevin Scheib, a member of Citizens Against Biosolids and a neighbor to the... - [POTTS. REP.](#)

03-08-2010 [Law would allow farms to cultivate more business](#)
State Sen. Chuck McIlhinney said farmers need to be free from zoning that blocks their ability to make money from their land. Farming can be a difficult business during the best of times. In today's economy, it can be even more challenging. Farmers across Bucks and Montgomery counties have long enhanced their... - [THE INTELLIGENCER](#)

03-08-2010 [Editorial: Reconsider intrusive vehicle rules for farmers](#)
It's strange, really, the things bureaucrats will do to keep that federal funding flowing into the commonwealth's coffers. The state's farmers are mobilizing against a recent ruling by the state Independent Regulatory Review Commission that imposes many of the same... - [CHAMBERS. P.O.](#)

03-07-2010 [Salmonella prompts processed-food recall](#)
Thousands of types of processed foods -- including many varieties of soups, chips, frozen dinners, hot dogs and salad dressings -- may pose a health threat because they contain a flavor enhancer that could be contaminated with salmonella, the Food and Drug Administration said Thursday.... - [WASH. POST](#)

Legislative Interests

[HB 2279](#) [Evans, D](#) Act to provide from the General Fund for the expenses of the Executive, Legislative & Judicial Departments of the Commonwealth, for public debt & the public schools for the fiscal year July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011.

Printer Number(s):[P3259](#) [P3277](#)

03-08-10 H Meeting set for Off the Floor, Room 140 Main Capitol ...House Appropriations

03-08-10 H Voted favorably from committee as amended House Appropriations

Bill History:03-08-10 H Reported as amended House Appropriations

03-08-10 H First consideration

03-08-10 H Laid on the table

03-08-10 H Removed from the table

03-08-10 H Rereferred to House Appropriations

[SR 215](#)

[Brubaker](#)

Resolution directing the Legislative Budget & Finance Cmte to study costs to achieve the Chesapeake Bay Program nutrient load reductions from PA's agricultural sources, for evaluations and protecting PA's agricultural sector.

Printer Number(s):[P1542](#) [P1725](#)

03-08-10 S Set on the Senate Calendar

03-08-10 S Laid out for discussion

03-08-10 S 1 Floor amendment(s) adopted

Bill History:

03-08-10 S Over in Senate

03-09-10 S Set on the Senate Calendar

03-09-10 S Adopted (Vote: Y: 49/N: 0)

Weekly Letter

President Barack Obama came to Glenside, Montgomery County this week, part of his nationwide Tour De Force on the topic of health care reform. Apparently, Obama wants some sort of health care bill passed, but we are fuzzy on the details, this being the first we've heard of it. All we have been able to glean from talk radio thus far is that the bill will guarantee health care for some folks who do not need it, will probably destroy Medicare and may plunge the country into the next Ice Age. We'll bring you more when those tight-lipped folks in Washington D.C. open up and start talking about the issue.

In stark contrast to last year's Budget That Never Ended, the House Appropriations Committee met this week a full 101 days before the end of the fiscal year, and voted out a \$29 billion spending plan. Before y'all pop the Cristal, the State Senate was less than impressed, calling the plan "dead on arrival," thereby getting zero points for original rhetoric.

Pennsylvania's tax amnesty program will launch on April 26, we learned this week from the Department of Please Give Us Your Revenue. The program will run for 54 days, and will give individual and business scofflaws alike a chance to square up with the state without fear of being fined into oblivion. Once again, if you owe the feds back taxes, they will not be quite as magnanimous. There is no such thing as tax amnesty with the United States Government. Just pain.

Pennsylvania mayors came to town this week with a wish list for state lawmakers. These mayors have trouble in their respective River Cities, and it all revolves around money, or the lack thereof. As state budgets shrink and cities are asked to do more with less, these particular mayors would like a chance to fix their own fiscal houses, but need state government to help. Among the items on the wish list: authority to levy local sales or poured drink taxes, and help figuring out how to get non-profits to pay their fair share. They should have probably asked for a pony, they would have a better chance for success.

A few weeks back, we discussed how potentially potent an alliance of sportsmen and environmentalists could be in the fight to stop the state from leasing more land to gas drillers. We posited that the Ecos and Anglers could even align to get one of the governor's long-sought policy goals, a natural gas extraction tax, passed into law. Well, the war began in earnest this week, as like-minded lawmakers rallied on the Capitol steps. In the parlance of the industry, let's see if this dog will hunt, or if this group is all hat and no cattle.

Centaur Gaming this week announced, apparently with a great deal of satisfaction, that it had filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection. Centaur, as some may recall, is still holding out hope of securing the financing to open the state's final Harness Racing track, along with a casino. The clock is ticking on Centaur and its Lawrence County-based project, as the Gaming Control Board is set to lose patience in 3...2...1...

In other gaming news, Hollywood casino in suburban Harrisburg announced this week that the addition of table games will allow it to create another 439 good-paying jobs. It is hard to see where they might get the bodies to fill those new positions, given that this red-hot economy just keeps humming along.

Nothing like putting a few sobering numbers into a policy debate to put things in proper perspective. We found out this week that the failure to approve tolling on Interstate 80 will cost the state \$472 million per year in transportation infrastructure funding. That, dear friends, is a mighty big pothole. Transportation funding advocates are now a nice shade of mauve after holding their collective breath for months, waiting for the feds to finally make a ruling. In the meantime, lawmakers told us all that, in the event tolls fail, there is no Plan B. Whew, that is comforting.

A joint confab of House and Senate lawmakers this week got together to explore the creation of a new, Independent Fiscal Office, which would essentially "de-politicize" budget projections and revenue numbers. It would also completely duplicate the efforts of dozens of people already employed by the governor and the General Assembly. We will be all ears to see how some folks will justify creating a brand-new multi-million bureaucracy while at the same time kicking people off of Medical Assistance. Those two positions sound like they would be tough to reconcile. For more on this topic, check out our analysis on the Triadvocate.

Opponents of a plan to lease the Pittsburgh Parking Authority have carped and complained from the start, mostly about how a private operator could "raise parking rates through the roof." And so this week, a few City Council folks came up with their own idea of how to save the city's empty pension fund without leasing the garages. It entails, for starters, raising parking rates by 34 PERCENT! Yeah, apparently the Irony Train hasn't reached the Pittsburgh station yet.

A dynamic duo of senior citizens from eastern Pennsylvania has discovered that the ticking public pension bomb is likely to smack them right in their property-tax-paying wallets. The two septuagenarians have decided to rally the troops in favor of a plan to freeze all senior citizen property taxes right now, in order to protect them from the fallout. Property taxpayers under the age of 65 reacted with absolute glee at the prospect of footing the entire bill for the fastest-growing portion of the PA population.

It was a wild week in election news, as the deadline to get on the Primary ballot fell on Tuesday. A few things we learned? Well first and foremost, the race for the GOP nomination for Lieutenant Governor just got exponentially more interesting, as wildly controversial and completely unapologetic state Rep. Daryl Metcalfe joined the fray. Mere words cannot describe how fun this will be.

Out in western Pennsylvania, we got a little taste of "Joe-mentum" as a man named Joe Vodvarka somehow got enough signatures to challenge U.S. Senator Arlen Specter and Congressman Joe Sestak. Vodvarka, a political neophyte, describes himself as pro-NRA, anti-tax and pro-smaller government, which totally describes why he is a registered Democrat. As the saying goes, western PA Democrats are far more conservative than eastern PA Republicans.

We also learned this week that a full 73 of the state's 253 elected lawmakers will be coming back in 2011, as they have no Primary or General Election opponent. This goes to prove once again that, despite the ranting and raving of some mad bloggers and angry editorial writers, Pennsylvania just isn't a "throw the bums out" type of joint. We love us some incumbency.

The state's largest teachers union, the PSEA, this week threw its considerable weight and gobs of campaign resources behind Dan Onorato in his quest to nab the Democratic Gubernatorial belt. Onorato is piling up the endorsements, while closest rival Auditor General Jack Wagner continues his grassroots drive through 67 counties. This one is shaping up to be a close one.

"What time is it? Union time!" Anyone who has ever attended a political rally in Pennsylvania has likely heard that full-throated opening salvo, delivered by the one and only Bill George, President of the Pennsylvania AFL-CIO. George announced this week that he and his golden pipes will be sashaying off to retirement next month, where he will like begin organizing the residents of his chosen retirement village. Godspeed, Billy, it will always be union time in some of our hearts!

Around the Capitol

ONE-THIRD OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY A LOCK FOR REELECTION- According to an article in the Patriot News, A third of the incumbent Pennsylvania legislators, 73, seeking for re-election this year to the state House or Senate have no primary or general challenger to worry about, according to a review of the unofficial candidate lists from the state Department of State. That number is 15 fewer than the 87 incumbents who coasted into a new term in the 2008 legislative elections. Meanwhile, 34 incumbents in the House and Senate, including several in the midstate, face a challenge in May 18 primary. Twenty legislative seats are being vacated at the end of this year. Three seats are vacant now and to be filled in an upcoming special election.

BALLOT SHOWS SPRING SKIRMISHES BEFORE MAJOR FALL FIGHTS - As the cast for the primary and much of the general election took shape Tuesday, Pennsylvania's 2010 elections appear to start slowly and pick up steam this fall. Only a few dozen spring primaries are even on the ballot. Despite contested primary elections approaching for both major party nominations for governor and U.S. Senate, many insiders say the biggest and closest election will come in November, not May. Tuesday marked the deadline for submitting petitions by registered voters to allow candidates onto the May 18 primary and special election ballots. Major-party candidates in the fall election also filed to get on the ballot for that election. The Department of State published its unofficial list, which will later be certified and sent to counties to be used when preparing their ballots.

SURPRISE METCALE CANDIDACY COULD THREATEN, ENERGIZE GOP ESTABLISHMENT -In a town where secrets are harder to keep than promises, Rep. Daryl Metcalfe, R-Butler, sprung a big one today. Metcalfe, an outspoken and combative conservative activist who is quick to point deviations from fiscal and social conservatism in his fellow Republicans, jumped into the race for lieutenant governor. As a hero to many in the web-based era of conservatives, and the only southwestern candidate in the GOP race for lieutenant governor, Metcalfe starts off with a genuine chance to win the election, writes Capitolwire Bureau Chief Peter L. DeCoursey in a new OFF The FLOOR column

LARGEST STATE TEACHER’S UNION ENDORSES ONORATO FOR GOVERNOR -The political action committee of the state’s largest teacher’s union is recommending that its members vote for Democrat Dan Onorato for governor in the May 18 primary election.

HAFER WITHDRAWS DUE TO CRITZ WINS, PETITION PROBLEMS- The day after 12th Congressional District candidate Barbara Hafer barely met the state’s major ballot requirement, she withdrew from the campaign. Hafer said: “The Democratic Party has spoken” in favor of her opponent, Mark Critz. Critz and Hafer have garnered the most support so far among four Democrats seeking to be the party nominee to replace the late U.S. Rep. Jack Murtha, D-Johnstown. But a campaign gaffe undiscovered until Tuesday morning also played a role in her decision, Hafer conceded. Hafer said her campaign had expected to file 1,158 voter signatures with the state bureau of elections by the end of Tuesday, but the final tally of signature was only 1013. At least 1,000 valid signatures are needed to place candidates on the May 18 primary ballot. That small margin for error guaranteed a ballot petition challenge, and one she would almost certainly lose, Hafer and supporters said.

LAWMAKERS SAY FISCAL OFFICE NEEDED. SODERBERG CALLS IT REDUNDANT- A number of state lawmakers disagreed Wednesday with assertions made by Gov. Ed Rendell’s top budget advisor that the planned establishment of an Independent Fiscal Office would be an exercise in redundancy. Office of the Budget Secretary Mary Soderberg told members of the House and Senate Finance committees during a Wednesday joint hearing that the planned [Independent Fiscal Office](#) would do what her office, and others, already do. But Sen. John Eichelberger, R-Blair, told Soderberg she’s missing the point of the legislation: “The intent really is that we don’t trust the information we get from other sources.”

Legislative Developments

- **House Session Schedule**

March	15, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24
April	19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28
May	3, 4, 5, 24, 25, 26
June	7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30

- **The House** stands in recess until Monday, March 15, at 1:00 p.m. or to the call of the Chair.

House Transportation will hold a public hearing at 10:00 a.m. on Mon. March 15, 2010 in Room G-50 Irvis Office Building concerning the licensing of school bus drivers.

House Democratic Policy Committee will hold an informational meeting at 11:00 a.m. on Mon. March 15, 2010 in Room 140 Main Capitol for a informational briefing with Step by Step Learning.

House Republican Policy Committee will hold a public hearing at 11:00 a.m. on Mon. March 15, 2010 in Room 418 Main Capitol on Technology in Education & Step x Step program

House Appropriations will hold an Off the Floor meeting on Mon. March 15, 2010 in Room 140 Main Capitol. The agenda will be announced.

House Health and Human Services will hold an Off the Floor meeting on Mon. March 15, 2010 in Room 205 Ryan Office Building to consider **HB 58 (Frankel)** Amends the Clean Indoor Air Act repealing provisions relating to preemption of local ordinances; **HB 1361 (Murt)** Act establishing the Family Caregiver Support Advisory Board within the Department of Public Welfare; and providing for its powers and duties.

House Local Government will hold a public hearing at 9:30 a.m. on Tue. March 16, 2010 in Room 205, Ryan Office Building on **HB 1237 (O'Neill)** Act authorizing municipalities to acquire highway corridor conservation easements; and providing for highway corridor overlay zoning and for outdoor advertising permits; **HB 2085 (Adolph)** Amends PA Municipalities Planning Code, in zoning, prohibiting the location of advertising signs in certain locations.

House Agriculture and Rural Affairs will hold a meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Tue. March 16, 2010 in Room 60, East Wing to consider **HB 1464 (Kula)** Amends the Public Eating and Drinking Place Law further providing for definitions' **HB 2273 (Haluska)** Amends Title 3 (Agriculture), in domestic animals, further providing for application.

House Children and Youth will hold an informational meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Tue. March 16, 2010 in Room 39, East Wing on youth transitioning from foster care.

House Judiciary will hold a meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Tue. March 16, 2010 in Room G-50 Irvis Office Building to consider HB 387 (**Harhart**) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) further providing for duties of Pennsylvania State Police; **HB 2075 (Johnson)** Amends Title 18 (Crimes & Offenses), in computer offenses, providing for the offense of online impersonation; and making an editorial change **HB 1882 (Dermody)** Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) further providing for the offense of aggravated assault; HB 2189 (Grove) Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) defining the offense of dissemination of prohibited materials by minors via electronic communications; **SB 1169 (Waugh)** Amends Title 42 (Judiciary) further providing for sentencing generally and for collection of restitution, reparation, fees, costs, fines and penalties.

PA Athletic Oversight Committee will hold a public hearing at 10:00 a.m. on Tue. March 16, 2010 in Room 14, East Wing to hear the Annual Report.

House Appropriations will hold an Off the Floor meeting on Tue. March 16, 2010 in Room 140, Main Capitol. Agenda to be announced.

House Education will hold a public hearing at 9:00 a.m. on Wed. March 17, 2010 in Room 205, Ryan Office Building on **HB 483 (Longietti)** Amends the Public School Code further providing for funding for charter schools; **HB 1362 (Seip)** Amends the Public School Code prohibiting cyber charter schools from charging school districts for programs or services not provided by the school district; HB 2036 (Moul) Amends Public School Code, in charter schools, further providing for funding for charter schools and for establishment of cyber charter schools; **HB 2320 (Pallone)** Amends the Public School Code further providing for cyber charter school requirements and prohibitions, for cyber charter school enrollment and notification and for applicability; **HB 2328 (Tallman)** Amends the Public School Code further providing for cyber charter school requirements and prohibitions, for cyber charter school enrollment and notification and for applicability.

House Insurance will hold a meeting at 9:30 a.m. on Wed. March 17, 2010 in Room 60, East Wing to consider **HB 2206 (DeLuca)** Amends Title 23 (Domestic Relations) in support of the indigent, repealing provisions relating to

relatives' liability; **HB 1606 (Yudichak)** Amends Admin Code establishing Office of Consumer Advocate for Health Insurance as an office within the Office of Consumer Advocate & prescribing its powers & duties; est. Consumer Advocate for Health Insurance Fund; & editorial changes; **HB 1736 (Godshall)** Amends the Public Adjuster Licensing Law, further providing for violations; **HB 1737 (Godshall)** Amends The Insurance Department Act further providing for powers and duties of the Insurance Fraud Prevention Authority and for the Insurance Fraud Prevention Trust Fund.

House Labor Relations will hold a meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Wed. March 17, 2010 in Room 39, East Wing to consider **HB 2108 (Ellis)** Amends the Whistleblower Law further providing for the definitions of "employee" and "employer," for enforcement and for penalties; **HB 2160 (Bradford)** Amends the Unemployment Compensation Law further providing for shared work program.

House Appropriations will hold an Off the Floor meeting on Wed. March 17, 2010 in Room 140 Main Capitol. Agenda will be announced.

House Democratic Policy Committee will hold a meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Wed. March 17, 2010 in Upper Merion Township Building, 175 W. Valley Forge Road, King of Prussia Reps. Vitali and Briggs will co-host a public hearing on leasing additional state forest land for natural gas drilling, including **HB 2235 (Vitali)** Act providing for a moratorium on leasing State forest lands for the purposes of natural gas exploration, drilling or production; imposing duties on the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; and providing for report contents.

House Insurance will hold a public hearing at 10:00 a.m. on Thur. March 18, 2010 in Hershey Medical Center, Media Center, Room T-2500, 600 Centerview Drive, Hershey on **HB 1865 (Burns)** Amends The Insurance Company Law providing for oncology benefit design.

House Urban Affairs will hold a public hearing at 10:00 a.m. on Fri. March 19, 2010 in Philadelphia City Hall, Penn Square, Room 400, Broad & Market Streets, Philadelphia on **HB 1914 (Cohen)** Amends Title 53 (Municipalities), in taxicabs & limousines in first class cities, further providing for definitions & for additional certificates & medallions; providing for wheelchair accessible service; & further providing for wages.

- **Senate Session Schedule**

March	15, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24 (Budget Hearings: 1, 2, 3, 4)
April	12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21
May	3, 4, 5, 24, 25, 26
June	7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30

- **The Senate** stands in recess until Monday, March 15, at 1:00 p.m. or to the call of the Chair.

Senate Judiciary will hold a public hearing at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, March 15, 2010 at the Boys Latin Charter School of Philadelphia, 5501 Cedar Avenue, Philadelphia on **SB 99 (Williams, A.)** Amends Title 42 (Judiciary & Judicial Procedure) providing for liability of parents and guardians and for pretrial diversion program.

Senate Appropriations will hold an Off the Floor meeting on Mon. March 15, 2010 in Rules and Committee Conference Room to consider **SB 85 (Musto)** Amends the Administrative Code further providing for the Environmental Quality Board; **SB 109 (Folmer)** Act requiring certain notification in certain advertising; **SB 174 (Tartaglione)** Amends the Workforce Development Act further providing for membership of the PA Workforce Investment Board; and establishing the PA Center for Health Careers; **SB 351 (Greenleaf)** Amends Titles 15 (Corporations & Unincorporated Associations) & 54 (Names), making Title 15 revisions to general provisions on corporation material & corporate powers, etc.; in Title 54, for corporate and assoc. names; & a repeal; **SB 1074 (Leach)** Amends Title 61 (Penal & Correctional Institutions) providing for State recording system for application of restraints to pregnant prisoners or detainees, for county recording system & for incarceration of pregnant women; **SB 1200 (Alloway)** Act authorizing PA to join the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact; providing for the form of the compact; imposing additional powers & duties on the Governor and Compact Administrator; & limiting suspension power applicability.

Senate Rules and Executive Nominations will hold an Off the Floor meeting on Mon. March 15, 2010 in the Rules Committee Conference Room to consider **SB 237 (Corman)** Amends the Insurance Co. Law further providing for reports, annuity transactions, & for regulation of health insurance practices concerning parity & nondiscrimination; for definitions, certain insurers, surplus line licenses & compliance; **SB 297 (Yaw)** Amends the Oil and Gas Act further providing for well reporting requirements.

Senate Republican Policy Committee will hold a public hearing at 9:30 a.m. on Tue. March 16, 2010 in Hearing Room 1, North Office Building on DEP's permitting process and possible solutions to make the process more "user friendly"

Senate Judiciary will hold a meeting at 11:30 a.m. on Tue. March 16, 2010 in Room 8-E-A East Wing to consider the nominations of Joseph Van Jura, Esq. and Lewis Wood Wetzel, Esq. as Judges, Court of Common Pleas, Luzerne County; John R. Tuttle as a member of the PA Board of Probation and Parole and **SB 707 (Eichelberger)** Joint Resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, providing for marriage between one man and one woman; **SB 1198 (Greenleaf)** Amends Title 61 (Penal and Correctional Institutions) establishing the Safe Community Reentry Program; and providing for the powers and duties of the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole and the Department of Corrections; **SB 1238 (Greenleaf)** Amends Title 61 (Penal & Correctional Institutions), in county jail oversight board in counties of the second class and second class A, further providing for subchapter, definitions & county jail oversight board, & for editorial changes; **SR 256 (Ward)** Resolution urging the Congress of the United States to enact H.R. 4542, the "Stopping Criminal Trials for Guantanamo Terrorists Act of 2010; **HB 1720 (Caltagirone)** Amends Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) prohibiting organized retail theft.

Senate Consumer Protection and Prof. Licensure will hold a meeting at 12:00 p.m. on Tue. March 16, 2010 in Room 461 Main Capitol to consider **SB 990 (Waugh)** Amends the Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors Act, further providing for qualifications for license; **HB 464 (White, J)** Amends act regulating the sale & resale for profit & carrying on of the business of selling or reselling tickets for admission to places of amusement; for licensing; suspension of license; providing for ticket purchasing software & penalties.

Senate Finance will hold a public hearing at 9:00 a.m. on Wed. March 17, 2010 in Room 8E-A, East Wing on public pension issues.

Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs will hold a meeting at 9:30 a.m. on Wed. March 17, 2010 in Hearing Room 1, North Office Building a Joint briefing with Senate Environmental Resources & Energy to update members on efforts to develop and implement at Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Senate Environmental Resources and Energy will hold at a meeting at 9:30 a.m. on Wed. March 17, 2010 in Hearing Room 1, North Office Building a Joint briefing with Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs to update members on efforts to develop and implement at Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Senate Communications and Technology will hold a meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Wed. March 17, 2010 in Room 8E-B East Wing to consider **SB 964 (Robbins)** Amends the Social Security Number Privacy Act, further providing for the effective date of the act; **SB 1147 (Robbins)** Amends the Social Security Number Privacy Act further providing for use of Social Security numbers alternatives; **SR 260 (Folmer)** Resolution designating Tuesday, April 20, 2010, as "Pennsylvania Health Care Information Technology Awareness Day" in this Commonwealth.

Senate Education will hold a public hearing at 12:00 p.m. on Wed. March 17, 2010 in Hearing Room 1, North Office Building on mandate waivers.

Senate Urban Affairs and Housing will hold a public hearing at 11:00 a.m. on Thur. March 18, 2010 in Cora Services, 8540 Verree Road, Philadelphia to discuss urban modernization.

Other Articles

- 03-12-2010 [Chairman Evans - Message from the Chair: Biennial Budget?](#)
(Press Release)
- 03-12-2010 [Study: Taxing junk food could alleviate obesity](#)
Sounds like a no-brainer, but researchers say they now have long-term proof that price and pounds go together like Ben & Jerry's. Not that everyone believes that extra taxes - like the 2-cents per ounce tax on sugary drinks Philadelphia's mayor has proposed - would solve... - [THE INTELLIGENCER](#)
- 03-11-2010 [PA State Fire Cmsnr: Remember to Change Batteries in Alarms When Changing Clocks](#)
(Press Release)
- 03-10-2010 [No backup plan if I-80 tolls rejected](#)
State officials concerned about highway, transit funding Wednesday, March 10, 2010 By Tom Barnes, Post-Gazette Harrisburg Bureau HARRISBURG -- State transportation officials stressed Tuesday there is no "plan B" for funding road and bridge improvements if federal officials fail... - [POST-GAZ.](#)
- 03-08-2010 [Rule would require sprinklers in new Pa. homes](#)
(AP) — TARENTUM, Pa. - Beginning next year, all new one- and two-family houses built in Pennsylvania will be required to have an automatic fire sprinkler system... - [AP](#)

[Employers lash out over unemployment tax spike](#)

03-07-2010

After hiring 19 employees in the middle of a recession last year, Jessica Azur can't figure out how Pennsylvania can slap her family's information technology company in Moon with a 60 percent increase in the rate it is taxed for the state's jobless benefits fund.... - [TRIB](#)

[The Spread of Superbugs. By NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF](#)

03-07-2010

Until three months ago, Thomas M. Dukes was a vigorous, healthy executive at a California plastics company. Then, over the course of a few days in December as he was planning his Christmas shopping, E. coli bacteria ravaged his body and tore his life apart. Mr. Dukes is a reminder that as long as we're examining our health care... - [NY TIMES](#)