



GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

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**Berks County
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Revenue Department Releases December 2020 Collections

Pennsylvania collected \$3.7 billion in General Fund revenue in December, which was \$465.8 million, or 14.5 percent, more than anticipated, Revenue Secretary Dan Hassell reported. Fiscal year-to-date General Fund collections total \$18.5 billion, which is **\$467.1 million, or 2.6 percent, above estimate.**

Sales tax receipts totaled \$1.0 billion for December, \$54.4 million above estimate. Year-to-date sales tax collections total \$6.4 billion, which is **\$54.4 million, or 0.9 percent, more than anticipated.**

Personal income tax (PIT) revenue in December was \$1.2 billion, \$36.0 million above estimate. This brings year-to-date PIT collections to \$7.4 billion, which is **\$36.0 million, or 0.5 percent, above estimate.**

December corporation tax revenue of \$771.3 million was \$308.8 million above estimate. Year-to-

date corporation tax collections total \$2.2 billion, which is **\$310.4 million, or 16.6 percent, above estimate.**

Inheritance tax revenue for the month was \$104.8 million, \$14.4 million above estimate, bringing the year-to-date total to \$605.0 million, which is **\$14.3 million, or 2.4 percent, above estimate.**

Realty transfer tax revenue was \$68.6 million for December, \$19.2 million above estimate, bringing the fiscal-year total to \$316.9 million, which is **\$19.2 million, or 6.5 percent, more than anticipated.**

Other General Fund tax revenue, including cigarette, malt beverage, liquor and gaming taxes, totaled \$178.5 million for the month, \$17.6 million above estimate and bringing the year-to-date total to \$994.4 million, which is **\$17.5 million, or 1.8 percent, above estimate.**

Non-tax revenue totaled \$375.6 million for the month, \$15.4 million above estimate, bringing the year-to-date total to \$665.3 million, which is **\$15.3 million, or 2.4 percent, above estimate.**

In addition to the General Fund collections, the **Motor License Fund** received \$172.9 million for the month, \$11.2 million below estimate. Fiscal year-to-date collections for the fund - which include the commonly known gas and diesel taxes, as well as other license, fine and fee revenues - total \$1.4 billion, which is **\$5.8 million, or 0.4 percent, below estimate.**

As part of the state budget recently signed by Gov. Tom Wolf, an amendment to the Fiscal Code required the Department of Revenue to revise revenue estimates for the 2020-21 Fiscal Year. Those revised estimates are reflected in the information above.

Source: PA Dept. of Revenue Press Release, 1/4/2021

Jim Miller Named Regional Director of Southwest Regional Office Leadership change follows retirement of Ronald Schwartz

Effective January 2, 2021, James "Jim" Miller became the regional director of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Southwest Regional Office. He replaces Ronald Schwartz, PE, BCEE, who recently retired after nearly 35 years of service. Miller, who previously led DEP's Northwest Regional Office for four and a half years, will manage field operations for Allegheny, Beaver, Cambria, Fayette, Greene, Washington, Westmoreland, and Somerset counties.

"Jim brings a commonsense approach to management, and his experience in a variety of roles within DEP makes him the right leader at the right time. I am confident that Jim's emphasis on relationship building will continue the Southwest's progress in recent years," said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell.

Miller has served DEP for over 30 years. Prior to being named regional director for DEP's Northwest Regional Office, he was assistant regional director for the Northcentral Regional Office for six years

after working his way up from inspector to program manager. Miller began his DEP career as an inspector in the Southeast Regional Office's waste management program. Miller holds a Bachelor of Science degree in environmental biology from the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown.

"I look forward to meeting with the various stakeholders in the southwest region and am excited for this opportunity to continue the work I've done in other regions promoting responsible development and environmental stewardship, two goals that are not mutually exclusive," said Miller.

McDonnell points to Miller and Schwartz's shared emphasis on communication and efficiency as constants for the region, "Jim and Ron are both natural problem solvers, a trait that has become a hallmark of each director's career in public service and has furthered DEP's mission."

"Ron's leadership was instrumental in DEP achieving a 90 percent reduction in the permitting backlog in the Southwest region during his tenure as regional director," added McDonnell. "On behalf of DEP, I wish him all the best in his well-deserved retirement."

John Holden, clean water program manager in DEP's Northwest Regional Office, will serve as acting regional director for that office.

Source: DEP Press Release, 1/4/2021

House Democrats announce committee chairs for 2021-22 legislative session

On January 4, 2021, House Democratic Leader Joanna McClinton, D-Phila./Delaware, announced the members of the House Democratic Caucus who will serve as Democratic chairs of the standing committees for the 2021-22 legislative session beginning Tuesday.

"Our committees do the heavy lifting. They are the places where legislation is refined and decisions are made that can either extend more power to the people or give it to the special interests -- and those

committees need a steady hand and a strong vision to lead them," McClinton said. "I am confident these proven leaders are more than up to the challenge and will always make sure any legislation advanced to the full House of Representatives must put the people first."

The list of Democratic committee chairs follows:

- ***Aging & Older Adult Services Committee*** - Rep. Steve Samuelson, Northampton County
- ***Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee*** - Rep. Eddie Day Pashinski, Luzerne County
- ***Children & Youth Committee*** - Rep. Pam DeLissio, Montgomery & Philadelphia counties
- ***Commerce Committee*** - Rep. John Galloway, Bucks County
- ***Consumer Affairs Committee*** - Rep. Robert Matzie, Beaver & Allegheny counties
- ***Education Committee*** - Rep. Mark Longietti, Mercer County
- ***Environmental Resources & Energy Committee*** - Rep. Greg Vitali, Delaware & Montgomery counties
- ***Finance Committee*** - Rep. Kevin Boyle, Philadelphia
- ***Game and Fisheries Committee*** - Rep. Ed Neilson, Philadelphia
- ***Gaming Oversight Committee*** - Rep. Scott Conklin, Centre County
- ***Health Committee*** - Rep. Dan Frankel, Allegheny County
- ***Human Services Committee*** - Rep. Angel Cruz, Philadelphia
- ***Insurance Committee*** - Rep. Tony DeLuca, Allegheny County
- ***Judiciary Committee*** - Rep. Tim Briggs, Montgomery County
- ***Labor & Industry Committee*** - Rep. Gerald Mullery, Luzerne County
- ***Liquor Control Committee*** - Rep. Dan Deasy, Allegheny County
- ***Local Government Committee*** - Rep. Bob Freeman, Northampton County
- ***Professional Licensure Committee*** - Rep. Jake Wheatley, Allegheny County
- ***State Government Committee*** - Rep. Margo Davidson, Delaware County

- ***Tourism & Recreational Development Committee*** - Rep. Mary Jo Daley, Montgomery County
- ***Transportation Committee*** - Rep. Mike Carroll, Lackawanna & Luzerne counties
- ***Urban Affairs Committee*** - Rep. Mike Sturla, Lancaster County
- ***Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness Committee*** - Rep. Chris Sainato, Lawrence County

Source: Rep. Joanna E. McClinton Press Release, 1/4/2021

Speaker Cutler Names House Committee Chairs

On January 5, 2021, Speaker of the House Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster) announced the members of the House Republican Caucus who will serve as chairs of the House standing committees for the 2021-22 Legislative Session. Under the rules of the House of Representatives, members with seniority are designated for a chair; however, the decision to assign a specific individual to a committee also considers preference, direct feedback from members as well as other factors.

"Each of these respected and successful lawmakers brings years of experience, expertise and drive to their respective positions," Cutler said. "Committees are the backbone of our legislative process. This is where the voice of the people is shaped into policy ideas that eventually become law. I look forward to seeing what each of these chairs can accomplish with their committees over the next two years."

- ***Aging and Older Adult Services Committee*** - Rep. Gary Day (R-Lehigh/Berks)
- ***Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee*** - Rep. Dan Moul (R-Adams)
- ***Children and Youth Committee*** - Rep. Sheryl Delozier (R-Cumberland)
- ***Commerce Committee*** - Rep. Brad Roae (R-Crawford/Erie)
- ***Consumer Affairs Committee*** - Rep. Jim Marshall (R-Beaver/Butler)
- ***Education Committee*** - Rep. Curt Sonney (R-Erie)

- ***Environmental Resources and Energy Committee*** - Rep. Daryl Metcalfe (R-Butler)
- ***Finance Committee*** - Rep. Mike Peifer (R-Pike/Wayne)
- ***Game and Fisheries Committee*** - Rep. Keith Gillespie (R-York)
- ***Gaming Oversight Committee*** - Rep. Sue Helm (R-Dauphin/Lebanon)
- ***Health Committee*** - Rep. Kathy Rapp (R-Warren/Crawford/Forest)
- ***Human Services Committee*** - Rep. Frank Farry (R-Bucks)
- ***Insurance Committee*** - Rep. Tina Pickett (R-Bradford/Sullivan/Susquehanna)
- ***Judiciary Committee*** - Rep. Rob Kauffman (R-Franklin)
- ***Labor and Industry Committee*** - Rep. Jim Cox (R-Berks/Lancaster)
- ***Liquor Control Committee*** - Rep. Jeff Pyle (R-Armstrong/Butler/Indiana)
- ***Local Government Committee*** - Rep. Carl Walker Metzgar (R-Somerset/Bedford)
- ***Professional Licensure Committee*** - Rep. David Hickernell (R-Lancaster/Dauphin)
- ***State Government Committee*** - Rep. Seth Grove (R-York)
- ***Tourism and Recreational Development Committee*** - Rep. David Millard (R-Columbia)
- ***Transportation Committee*** - Rep. Tim Hennessey (R-Chester/Montgomery)
- ***Urban Affairs Committee*** - Rep. Jerry Knowles (R-Schuylkill/Berks/Carbon)
- ***Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee*** - Rep. Karen Boback (R-Luzerne/Lackawanna/Wyoming)

Source: Speaker Bryan Cutler Press Release, 1/5/2021

DEP Lifts Drought Watch or Warning for 20 Counties, Three Counties Remain on Watch

After a meeting of the Commonwealth Drought Task Force, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

(DEP) today lifted drought watch or warning for 20 counties, returning them to normal status. Three counties remain on drought watch.

Drought watch or warning has been lifted for Bradford, Cameron, Columbia, Cumberland, Elk, Forest, Jefferson, Juniata, Lycoming, McKean, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Potter, Snyder, Sullivan, Tioga, Union, Warren, and Wyoming counties.

Centre and Clearfield counties remain on drought watch. Clinton County is also on drought watch, having improved from drought warning conditions.

"We're getting close. Recent rainfall brought good news for many counties," said DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell. "But three counties have a little ways to go to return to normal conditions. We ask all water consumers on drought watch to remain mindful and continue to reduce their water use a modest amount."

Consumers on drought watch are asked to reduce their individual water use 5-10 percent, or three to six gallons of water per day.

DEP has notified water suppliers in Centre, Clearfield, and Clinton counties of the need to monitor their supplies and update their drought contingency plans as necessary. Varying localized conditions may lead water suppliers or municipalities to ask residents for more stringent conservation actions.

Several public water suppliers in these counties are requiring consumers to reduce their water use or requesting voluntary reductions. Suppliers in a few other counties are still asking for voluntary reductions as water levels recover. Find the list at <http://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Water/Planning/Conservation/Drought/Pages/default.aspx>.

There are many ways to reduce water use indoors, including:

- Don't let the faucet run while brushing your teeth or shaving. Shorten the time you let the water run to warm up before showering. Use a bucket to catch the water and reuse it to water your plants.

- Run the dishwasher and washing machine only with full loads.
- Repair household leaks. For example, a leaking toilet can waste up to 200 gallons of water daily.
- Sweep your sidewalk, deck, or driveway, rather than hosing it off.
- Replace older appliances with high-efficiency, front-loading models that use about 30 percent less water and 40-50 percent less energy.
- Install low-flow plumbing fixtures and aerators on faucets.

Find more tips to save water at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
<https://www.epa.gov/watersense/start-saving>.

DEP makes drought watch, warning, or emergency declaration recommendations based on four numeric indicators. The agency gets stream flow and groundwater level data from a statewide network of gauges maintained by the U.S. Geological Survey. In addition, DEP monitors precipitation and soil moisture. DEP also factors in information it receives from public water suppliers.

There are normal ranges for all four indicators, and DEP makes its drought status recommendations after assessing the departures from these normal ranges for all indicators for periods of 3-12 months. Declarations are not based on one indicator alone. For details on indicator monitoring, see this **fact sheet: Drought Management in Pennsylvania**
<http://www.depgreenport.state.pa.us/elibrary/GetDocument?docId=60995&DocName=DROUGHT%20MANAGEMENT%20IN%20PENNSYLVANIA.PDF>.

DEP shares these data and its recommendations with other state and federal agency personnel who make up the Commonwealth Drought Task Force. Drought watch and warning declarations are determined by DEP, with the concurrence of the task force. Drought emergency declarations follow the same process, with final approval by the Governor.

A drought emergency has not been declared for any county.

The next Drought Task Force meeting will be held on Thursday, January 21, 2021.

Source: DEP Press Release, 1/7/2021

Senator Vogel Named Deputy Senate President Pro-Tempore

Senate President Pro Tempore Jake Corman (R-34) today appointed Senator Elder Vogel (R-47) to serve as Deputy President Pro Tempore for the 2021-22 Legislative Session.

"Please know effective today, January 7, 2021, you shall serve as the Deputy President Pro Tempore for the Senate Republican Caucus," Senator Corman wrote in a letter to Senator Vogel announcing the appointment. "As you know, this is a newly created leadership position. This position shall serve as the presiding officer of the Senate in the absence of the President Pro Tempore and will assist the President Pro-Tempore in the day-to-day duties of the Senate."

Senator Vogel said he was honored by the appointment and looks forward to undertaking his new role as a part of the Senate Republican Leadership team.

"I want to thank President Pro Tempore Corman for the appointment to this newly created position. It is humbling to be a part of the Senate Leadership team and I look forward to working with everyone in the future," Senator Vogel said. "We have tough times ahead with the current COVID-19 Pandemic and the economy, and I am hopeful for what we can accomplish together."

Senator Vogel has represented the 47th Senatorial District -- which currently includes all of Lawrence County and parts of Beaver and Butler Counties -- since 2009. He has served as Chairman of the Senate Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee since 2011.

Source: Senator Vogel Press Release, 1/7/2021

Bartolotta Joins Senate Republican Leadership Team

On January 7, 2021, Senator Camera Bartolotta (R-46) was appointed to serve as part of the Senate Republican Leadership team for the 2021-22 Legislative Session.

As Senate Majority Caucus Administrator, Bartolotta will be responsible for scheduling for the caucus. She will take the place of Senator Kim Ward (R-39), who was elected to serve as Senate Majority Leader for the upcoming session.

"I am deeply grateful to be appointed to serve as a member of the Senate Republican Leadership team because it gives an even stronger voice to the communities I am honored to represent," Bartolotta said. "This appointment offers a new opportunity to fight for the interests of southwestern Pennsylvania and shape the General Assembly's agenda in the months and years ahead."

Bartolotta said that her new leadership position will not change her priorities, which include making necessary reforms to restore faith in Pennsylvania's electoral system, creating a stronger environment for job growth, helping families and communities impacted by the pandemic and providing checks and balances to a Governor's authority during disaster declarations.

She also plans to continue working on critical issues that were not completed during the 2019-20 Legislative Session, including providing full practice authority to nurse practitioners, pursuing criminal justice reforms, supporting veterans and encouraging job growth in the communities she represents.

Source: Senator Bartolotta Press Release, 1/7/2021

Scavello Appointed to Senate Leadership Position

Senator Mario Scavello (R-40) has been appointed by Senate President Pro Tempore Jake Corman (R-34) to the Pennsylvania Senate leadership position of Senate Majority Policy Chairman for the 2021-22 legislative session.

The committee works with Republican senators to develop legislation important to their districts and the commonwealth as a whole. The panel holds hearings to inform members and bring together stakeholders on key issues across Pennsylvania.

"I am honored to begin serving in this position and playing a key role in exploring issues important to the 40th Senatorial District and all Pennsylvanians," Scavello said. "We are facing many challenges in the new year, and I look forward to bringing people together to examine ideas and work on solutions."

Senator Scavello was elected to the Senate in 2014 and has been a strong voice for his district and is looking forward to using his new leadership position to be an even stronger voice for those in his community and across Pennsylvania. Scavello's prior Chairmanship positions include the Senate Game and Fisheries Committee and the Senate Community, Economic and Recreational Development Committee, and he is a long-standing member of the Senate Appropriations Committee. He most recently chaired the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee in the 2019-20 legislative session.

For more information on Senator Scavello, please visit his website at <https://www.senatorscavello.com/>.

Source: Senator Scavello Press Release, 1/8/2021

EPA Proposes Removing Superfund Designation from Part of North Penn Area 6 Site

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has proposed the deletion of 1.66 acres of soil and groundwater at the North

Penn Area 6 Superfund Site in Lansdale, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, from EPA's National Priorities List (NPL).

The North Penn Area 6 Site comprises multiple properties contaminated primarily with volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in the soil and groundwater. One of the properties located at 135 East Hancock Street in Lansdale Borough was formerly occupied by the Tate Andale Company and later by the Rogers Mechanical Company. EPA removed the contaminated soil and installed groundwater treatment at the property.

"Deletion from the NPL is an important milestone because it signals that a portion of the cleanup is complete and that part of the site no longer poses a risk to human health and the environment," said EPA Mid-Atlantic Regional Administrator Cosmo Servidio. "The attention and focus that EPA has placed on the Superfund program is making a real difference in the lives of people living in communities near Superfund sites across the country."

Approximately 6.5 acres of soil and groundwater at the 10-acre property were previously deleted from the NPL in a separate partial deletion action completed by EPA on March 3, 2017, and this area has since been redeveloped into residential townhomes.

The public is invited to comment on this proposed partial deletion. Comments on this proposed deletion must be submitted to EPA on or before January 29, 2021.

For more information on the currently proposed deletion and how to submit comments:
<https://www.regulations.gov/document?D=EPA-HQ-SFUND-1989-0008-0288>

More information on EPA's efforts at the site: <https://www.epa.gov/superfund/palmerton>.

Source: EPA Press Release, 1/7/2021

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