

# WEEKLY SESSION NOTES

SENATE REPUBLICAN POLICY COMMITTEE – DAVID G. ARGALL, CHAIRMAN

Monday, June 22, 2015

[Senate Bill 352](#) (Vogel) would amend the Race Horse Industry Reform Act by repealing provisions related to the State Horse Racing Commission and State Harness Racing Commission and establishing the State Horse Racing Commission to regulate horse racing, the conduct of pari-mutuel wagering and the promotion and marketing of horse racing in Pennsylvania. The legislation would:

- Establish a nine-member commission composed of three appointments made by the Governor as specified in the legislation, one each by the legislative leaders, the Secretary of Agriculture or a designee and the chairman of the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board or a designee;
- Delineate requirements for commissioners' qualifications, conduct, compensation, and financial disclosure;
- Prohibit certain actions by commissioners and provide for the removal of a commissioner if a provision is violated;
- Establish, within the Commission, an Office of Horse Racing with a Bureau of Thoroughbred Horse Racing and a Bureau of Standardbred Horse Racing;
- Give the Commission jurisdiction over pari-mutuel wagering, a licensed person engaged in pari-mutuel horse racing activities, out-of-competition drug testing, and the conduct of horse racing in the Commonwealth;
- Provide for the powers and duties of the Commission in regulating horse racing where pari-mutuel wagering occurs;
- Extend the rules and regulations under the former Pennsylvania Thoroughbred Horse Racing Law, or the former Pennsylvania Harness Racing Law, but grant the Commission the authority to adopt, revise or alter the rules and regulations. Regulations for standardbred horse racing would have to be promulgated separately from those relating to thoroughbred horse racing and would have to be approved by at least one of the gubernatorial appointees and all four legislative appointees;
- Provide that each license to conduct horse racing or other activity issued prior to January 1, 2017, would remain in effect for the remainder of the licensing term unless revoked or suspended;

- Provide for the reimbursement of the Department of Agriculture for shared administrative services, shared administrative staff and shared facilities to the Commission from the State Racing Fund;
- Require the Commission to issue reports on the general operations of the Commission and each licensee's performance, to make and keep a record of all proceedings held at public meetings of the Commission, post a list annually of all itemized expenses of employees and commissioners that were or are to be reimbursed from the State Racing Fund, and publish an annual report of such information to be submitted to designated entities;
- Direct the Department of Revenue to provide financial administration of pari-mutuel wagering under the act;
- Provide for the allocation of racing days, licenses for horse race meetings, the adoption of a code of conduct, and the licensing of individuals;
- Give district attorneys the authority to investigate and to institute criminal proceedings for a violation of the act and give the Attorney General the authority to investigate and, following consultation with the appropriate district attorney, to institute criminal proceedings;
- Grant the Commission, the Attorney General and the Pennsylvania State Police the authority, without notice and without warrant, to inspect and examine all premises where horse racing is conducted or where records of such activities are prepared or maintained, inspect all equipment and supplies on such premises, seize equipment and supplies, inspect, examine and audit all books, records and documents pertaining to a licensee's operation, and seize, impound or assume physical control of records and documents;
- Establish the State Racing Fund within the State Treasury;
- Provide for the Commission to impose licensing fees and fines, with the funds collected to be deposited in the State Racing Fund; and
- Require a licensed racing entity or secondary pari-mutuel organization to pay a tax of 1.5 percent of the amount wagered each racing day and 2.5 percent of the total amount on an exacta, daily double, quinella and trifecta wager. **Passed: 25-24.**

[Senate Bill 356](#) (Folmer) would amend the Local Tax Enabling Act related to the consolidated collection of local income taxes. Among other changes, the bill would:

- Allow taxpayers to use the annual local earned income tax return form available on the Department of Community and Economic Development's (DCED) publicly accessible Internet website to file a final return;

- Change certain estimated income tax payment due dates so they no longer occur before the close of the quarter;
- Provide for the filing of estimated tax by taxpayers whose major source of income is farming;
- Restrict a political subdivision, tax collection committee, or tax officer from prohibiting a taxpayer from filing any return or declaration in person or by first class mail; and
- Prohibit a political subdivision, tax collection committee, or tax officer from imposing a penalty for failure to timely file a quarterly estimated tax return for which no payment of estimated tax was due. [Passed: 49-0.](#)

[Senate Bill 655](#) (Browne) would amend Section 1732-A of the Fiscal Code to extend the State Workers' Insurance Board's ability to make investments in equities from June 30, 2015 to June 30, 2019. [Passed: 49-0.](#)

[Senate Resolution 149](#) (Wozniak) is a concurrent resolution urging Congress to take all necessary action to prohibit any force structure changes, to prohibit any transfer of AH-64 Apache helicopters from the National Guard, and to maintain the Army National Guard at 350,200 soldiers until the National Commission on the Future of the Army has reported its findings. The resolution also urges the United States Army to reverse its decision to deactivate the 55<sup>th</sup> Armored Brigade Combat Team and to reverse its decision to transfer any National Guard AH-64 Apache helicopters to active duty. [Adopted: 49-0.](#)

[Senate Resolution 155](#) (Vance) honors community health centers and their 50 years of providing quality and affordable primary and preventative health care services. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

### **Tuesday, June 23, 2015**

[Senate Bill 299](#) (Baker) would amend Title 35 (Health and Safety) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to provide incentives for municipal volunteers of fire companies and nonprofit medical service agencies. Specifically, the legislation would allow a municipality that levies an earned income tax to establish, by ordinance, a tax credit against an individual's tax liability for active service as a volunteer. The municipality would have to set forth in the ordinance the total amount of the tax credit that would be offered to an individual. At least 30 days prior to adoption, the municipality would have to give public notice of its intent to adopt an ordinance or resolution establishing a tax credit and conduct at least one public hearing on the issue. A municipality that establishes a tax credit would have to notify the State Fire Commissioner. The legislation would establish the qualifications and requirements for the certification of a volunteer in active service for receipt of the tax credit. An active volunteer would have the right to appeal a claim that has been rejected by a governing body. An active volunteer who was injured during a response to an emergency call and could no longer serve as an active volunteer because of the injury would be eligible for the tax credit for the succeeding five years. False reporting to obtain the tax credit would be considered a first degree misdemeanor punishable by a fine of \$2,500. [Passed: 49-0.](#)

[Senate Bill 398](#) (White) would amend Title 20 (Decedents, Estates and Fiduciaries) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to require driver's license and identification card applications to include the question "Do you wish to have the organ donor designation printed on your driver's license?" In addition, the statement "Pennsylvania strongly supports organ and tissue donation because of its life-saving and life enhancing opportunities" would be added to the form. **Passed: 49-0.**

[Senate Bill 775](#) (Eichelberger) would repeal the Third Class City Code and incorporate it into the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes as Part V (Third Class Cities) of Title 11 (Cities) with minor changes. Except for the updated sections listed in the legislation, the bill would be construed as a continuation of the Third Class City Code. **Passed: 49-0.**

[Senate Resolution 157](#) (Teplitz) designates June 26, 2015 as "Remember Everyone Deployed Friday (Red Friday)" in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 158](#) (Dinniman) designates the week of July 12 through 18, 2015 as "Pretrial, Probation and Parole Supervision Week" in Pennsylvania and commends community corrections professionals as a source of positive change and improved public safety in the Commonwealth. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

### **Wednesday, June 24, 2015**

[House Bill 131](#) (Barrar) would amend Act 287 of 1982 to require that veterans, their spouses and dependent children attending state-related and state-owned institutions of higher learning, public institutions of higher learning and community colleges be charged in-state tuition, provided they are a resident as provided for in the bill on the first day of the semester or term. In addition, veterans, their spouses and dependent children attending a community college in Pennsylvania, would be charged the local sponsor rate, provided they are a resident as provided for in the bill on the first day of the semester or term. Further, a community college, public institution of higher learning, and a state-related or state-owned institution would be required to charge resident tuition rates to any active military personnel and their dependents taking online courses or receiving online services. **Passed: 49-0.**

[House Bill 189](#) (Sonney) would amend the Liquor Code to provide for the direct shipment of wine, reduce the markup on special liquor orders, allow for the direct shipment of special orders, and add provisions for the Pennsylvania Wine Marketing Program and Research Program Board. The proposed legislation would:

#### **Direct Wine Shipment**

- Define a direct wine shipper as a person licensed as a producer of wine by the Liquor Control Board (LCB) or by another state or country that accepts orders placed for wine from within the Commonwealth;

- Allow a direct wine shipper licensee to ship up to thirty-six cases of up to nine liters per case in a calendar year to a Commonwealth resident for their personal use and not for resale, provided the resident is at least 21 years of age;
- Establish the requirements and fee (\$100) for applicants for a direct wine shipper license;
- Require an annual report from licensees to the LCB on the total amount of wine shipped;
- Require a licensee to obtain proof of age before wine is shipped;
- Mandate specific labeling on all boxes or exterior containers of wine shipped directly;
- Require a licensee to pay all taxes due on sales to residents of the Commonwealth calculated as if the sales were in the Commonwealth. Direct wine shipment sales would be subject to sales and use tax and a wine excise tax of \$1 per gallon;
- Provide a penalty for a person convicted of reselling or offering to resell wine obtained from a direct wine shipper; and
- Require the LCB to submit annual reports to the legislature on the number of direct wine shipper licensees and the quantity of wine sold.

*Pennsylvania Wine Marketing and Research Program Board*

- Provide for the addition of four members to the Pennsylvania Wine Marketing and Research Program Board with the appointments to be made by designated legislative leaders;
- Require the Board to establish a competitive grant program to award grants for the purpose of increasing the production of Pennsylvania-made wines and enhancing the Pennsylvania wine industry;
- Direct the Board to conduct an annual evaluation of each grant and submit an annual report to the General Assembly on the actions of the Board and the grants awarded; and
- Provide that the \$1 excise tax collected from the direct shipment of wine be deposited into the General Fund and that \$250,000 annually be transferred from the General Fund to a restricted account for appropriation to the Wine Marketing Board for the purpose of awarding grants.

*Special Liquor Orders*

- Specify that the LCB's current 30 percent markup would not apply to special liquor orders, but provide for a 10 percent markup and allow for handling fees for special orders that come to a store;

- Provide that a licensed importer or vendor could place special orders on behalf of a customer and deliver those orders directly to customers. However, those orders could not be delivered until payment for the order has been forwarded to the LCB and delivery authorized. A handling fee could not be assessed on an order delivered directly to a customer;
- Provide that the 10 percent licensee discount would not apply to special order sales; and
- Allow the LCB to refuse to process a special order and preclude a vendor or importer from processing an order under certain conditions. **Passed: 31-18.**

**Senate Bill 370** (White) would amend Title 35 (Health and Safety) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to extend, from five years to ten years, the period of time during which consolidated volunteer fire companies would be eligible to receive the combined total of each individual company's grant. The same extension would be applied to consolidated volunteer ambulance services. An additional change would permit grant funds to be used to train and educate the general public regarding fire prevention. **Passed: 49-0.**

**Senate Bill 397** (Alloway) would amend Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to further regulate bail bondsmen. The proposed legislation would:

- Establish that no person could engage in the business of a bail bondsman unless the person has been licensed by the Department of Insurance as an insurance producer and possesses a casualty line of authority;
- Provide that, in order for a bail bondsman to conduct business in a county, he or she must file stipulated documents with the office of the county clerk;
- Require a bail bondsman to have an office that is geographically located in the Commonwealth and is eligible to receive original process and other legal documents;
- Provide for the suspension or nonrenewal of a license for failure to pay forfeitures;
- Authorize the Department of Insurance to promulgate regulations to implement portions of the act;
- Outline the process for revocation and forfeiture of bail, stipulate how payment will be made, and provide the process for recovery of forfeited funds;
- Permit a bail bondsman or insurer to bring a private cause of action against a competitor that has engaged in an activity that is in violation of any provisions of the act;
- Provide for the responsibility of a third party surety to report a violation of a bail bond condition and institute a civil penalty system; and

- Grandfather individuals licensed as professional bondsmen prior to the act as licensed insurance producers under this legislation. [Concurrence in House Amendments: 49-0.](#)

[Senate Bill 663](#) (Vulakovich) would amend Title 23 (Domestic Relations) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to allow for the involuntary termination of parental rights if a parent is the parent of a child conceived as a result of rape, statutory sexual assault, sexual assault, institutional sexual assault or incest for which the parent has been convicted. The individual would still be responsible for the support of the child. The measure would prohibit a court from awarding any type of custody to the parent of a child conceived as a result of a sexual offense for which the parent was convicted. However, a court could award custody if the parent who was the victim of the sexual offense does not object to the custody award; or the child is of suitable age and consents to the custody order and the court determines that the award of custody is in the best interest of the child. [Passed: 49-0.](#)

[Senate Bill 737](#) (Hutchinson) would amend Title 34 (Game) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to allow a semiautomatic rifle to be used to hunt coyotes and woodchucks in accordance with the regulations of the commission, except during regular firearm season for deer, regular firearm season for bear, and spring and fall season for turkey. [Passed: 49-0.](#)

[Senate Resolution 138](#) (Vulakovich) directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study Commonwealth expenditures for salaries and other compensation and benefits of members of state boards and commissions. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 159](#) (Tartaglione) recognizes the month of September 2015 as “National Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Month” in Pennsylvania. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

[Senate Resolution 160](#) (Tartaglione) recognizes September 10, 2015 as “World Suicide Prevention Day” in Pennsylvania. [Adopted by Voice Vote.](#)

#### **Thursday, June 25, 2015**

[Senate Bill 307](#) (Yudichak) would amend the Administrative Code of 1929 to require the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to appoint a counsel to the Environmental Quality Board who would also serve as an independent counsel to members of the board. The independent counsel would be compensated from the appropriation for the general government operations of DEP. At the discretion of the board, the independent counsel would assist members on all matters before the board including the review of rulemaking petitions submitted, the drafting and development of amendments to proposed and final rulemaking and procedural matters. All communication between the independent counsel and a board member or the board would be considered privileged and confidential. The privilege could be waived only by the board. [Passed: 49-0.](#)

[Senate Bill 609](#) (Mensch) would create the Prostate Cancer Surveillance, Education, Detection and Treatment Act. The proposed legislation would require the Department of Health to establish a 15-member task force for the purpose of investigating and making recommendations to the Department concerning prostate cancer and the development of a program of information



and education regarding prostate cancer. The task force would be required to convene its first meeting within 90 days of the effective date of the act and within one year of that first meeting issue a report with recommendations to the Secretary of Health. The legislation directs the DOH to develop a program of information and education regarding prostate cancer; develop a program to assist male residents in accessing prostate cancer screening regardless of insurance coverage; cooperate with other governmental departments and professional associations in disseminating educational information; and to identify and apply for public and private grants and funding to carry out provisions of the act. The act would expire on June 30, 2019. **Passed: 49-0.**

**Senate Bill 747** (Vogel) would amend the Medical Care Availability and Reduction of Error (Mcare) Act to limit punitive damages, except in cases alleging intentional misconduct, to 250 percent of the compensatory damages awarded against any of the following:

- A personal care home or an assisted living community licensed by the Department of Human Services under the Public Welfare Code;
- A long-term care nursing facility licensed by the Department of Health under the Health Care Facilities Act; and
- An officer, employee or agent of these entities while acting in the course and scope of their employment.

Punitive damages, when awarded, could not be less than \$100,000, unless a lower verdict is returned by the trier of fact. Further, the Insurance Commissioner would be directed to study the amount of punitive damages reported to Mcare as being paid by health care providers since March 20, 2005. Within one year of the effective date of the act, the Insurance Commissioner would be required to submit the findings of this review to the chairmen and minority chairmen of the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee and the House Insurance Committee.

**Passed: 40-9.**

**Senate Bill 792** (Wozniak) would amend the First Class Township Code to consolidate existing corporate powers of township commissioners to enact and administer construction, occupancy, and property maintenance regulations by adding a new article providing for property maintenance codes and the Uniform Construction Code. The legislation clarifies that the Uniform Construction Code would apply to the construction, alteration, repair and occupancy of all buildings and structures within a first class township. Additionally, the legislation would establish provisions related to the enactment and enforcement of property maintenance codes by township commissioners. The legislation would reserve the power of townships to enact and enforce building codes and property maintenance codes. **Passed: 49-0.**

**Senate Bill 793** (Hutchinson) would amend the Second Class Township Code to consolidate existing corporate powers of township supervisors to enact and administer construction, occupancy, and property maintenance regulations by adding a new article providing for property maintenance codes and the Uniform Construction Code. The legislation clarifies that the Uniform Construction Code would apply to the construction, alteration, repair and occupancy of all buildings and structures within a second class township. Additionally, the legislation would



establish provisions related to the enactment and enforcement of property maintenance codes by township supervisors. The legislation would reserve the power of townships to enact and enforce building codes and property maintenance codes. [Passed: 49-0.](#)

[Senate Bill 811](#) (Hughes) is the Capital Budget Act of 2015-2016. The bill would authorize the maximum indebtedness that the Commonwealth could incur during the fiscal year for capital projects specifically itemized in a capital budget project itemization act. The legislation would authorize: \$750,000,000 for buildings and structures; \$20,000,000 for furniture and equipment; \$175,000,000 for transportation assistance projects; \$335,000,000 for redevelopment assistance projects; and \$10,000,000 for flood control projects. [Passed: 49-0.](#)

[Senate Bill 812](#) (Hughes) would appropriate \$43,946,000 from the Professional Licensure Augmentation Account within the General Fund to the Department of State for the operation of the Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs, including the State Board of Auctioneer Examiners, during the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year. Other appropriations listed in the bill for operational costs during the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year include: \$8,184,000 to the State Board of Medicine; \$1,523,000 to the State Board of Osteopathic Medicine; \$245,000 to the State Board of Podiatry; and \$560,000 to the State Athletic Commission. [Passed: 49-0.](#)

[Senate Bill 814](#) (Hughes) would appropriate \$1,306,000 from a restricted revenue account within the General Fund to the Office of Small Business Advocate in the Department of Community and Economic Development for its operational expenses for the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year. [Passed: 47-2.](#)

[Senate Bill 815](#) (Hughes) would appropriate \$5,268,000 from a restricted revenue account in the General Fund to the Office of Consumer Advocate in the Office of Attorney General for its operational expenses for the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year. [Passed: 49-0.](#)

[Senate Bill 816](#) (Hughes) would appropriate \$44,011,000 from the Public School Employees' Retirement Fund to the Public School Employees' Retirement Board for its operational and administrative expenses for the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year. [Passed: 49-0.](#)

[Senate Bill 817](#) (Hughes) would appropriate \$23,743,000 from the State Employees' Retirement Fund to the State Employees' Retirement Board for its operational and administrative expenses for the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year. [Passed: 49-0.](#)

[Senate Bill 818](#) (Hughes) would appropriate \$8,442,000 from the Philadelphia Taxicab and Limousine Regulatory Fund and \$2 million from the Philadelphia Taxicab Medallion Fund to the Philadelphia Parking Authority for the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year. [Passed: 47-2.](#)

[Senate Bill 819](#) (Hughes) would appropriate \$69,640,000 to the Public Utility Commission (PUC) for the operation of the commission for the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year. The bill would also appropriate \$2,095,000 in federal funds to the PUC to enforce the regulations of the Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act and \$966,000 in federal funds for motor carrier safety. [Passed: 49-0.](#)

[Senate Bill 820](#) (Hughes) would establish the Gaming Control Appropriation Act of 2015. The bill would appropriate monies from the State Gaming Fund for salaries, wages, and necessary expenses related to gaming, as follows:

- Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board, \$39,900,000;
- Pennsylvania State Police, \$27,700,000;
- Department of Revenue, \$9,513,000; and
- Attorney General, \$1,192,000. **Passed: 49-0.**

[Senate Bill 875](#) (Bartolotta) would create the Treated Mine Water Act. The legislation would provide immunity to a mine operator providing treated mine water to an oil and gas operator for offsite usage by the oil and gas operator under certain conditions. Further, an oil and gas operator acquiring treated water could not be held liable for the treatment or abatement of the mine drainage or mine pool water. The legislation would not relieve either operator from any of their respective obligations under current law. Treated mine water that meets the effluent limits of the National Pollutant Discharge Eliminations System permit for the source mine and is being used in an oil or gas development project would not be considered a solid waste under the Solid Waste Management Act. The measure would define “treated mine water” as water from an active or closed coal mine that is treated by a mine operator under a permit issued by the Department of Environmental Protection. **Passed: 34-15.**

[Senate Resolution 161](#) (Dinniman) recognizes the month of September 2015 as “Prostate Cancer Awareness Month” in Pennsylvania and acknowledges the importance of raising public awareness of the threat and causes of prostate cancer. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[Senate Resolution 162](#) (Dinniman) designates the month of September 2015 as “Mushroom Month” in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

[House Bill 911](#) (Barrar) would amend Title 35 (Health and Safety) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to update Pennsylvania’s emergency communications law. Among other modifications, the measure would:

- Update and clarify the powers and duties of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA), including the creation of a Statewide 911 Plan and the appointment of a State 911 coordinator;
- Establish a 911 Board with state, local and professional voting members, as well as non-voting members from numerous statewide organizations and state agencies;
- Require the Board to advise PEMA on regulations and guidelines as outlined in the legislation and to promote regional use of technology, information sharing and next generation 911 technology;

- Outline the powers and duties of the counties to ensure the provision of a 911 system and the development and maintenance of a county 911 plan;
- Establish the 911 Fund in the State Treasury to consist of the proceeds of a \$1.65 surcharge on all 911 communication service or prepaid wireless devices providing 911 communications, any money appropriated by the General Assembly, public and private money from any source, and interest from the Fund;
- Provide for the disbursement from the Fund to counties for reasonably necessary costs associated with the 911 system. Counties and third class cities would have to adopt a resolution or ordinance to opt into the funding from the Commonwealth and be audited to ensure proper use of funds;
- Provide requirements for shared residential and business multi-line telephone service to ensure that 911 calls result in a distinct display for each individual living unit and at least the building and floor location of the caller from a business;
- Make it a third degree misdemeanor for an individual to use or disclose data in conflict with the act without the consent of the subscriber or customer;
- Require PEMA to submit a report and recommendations to the General Assembly on the impacts of current and anticipated technological and market changes on the provision of 911 communications services, the structure and adequacy of the surcharge, and other revenue options to support 911 services; and
- Direct PEMA to conduct a comprehensive inventory of each county's public safety answering point's (PSAP) facilities, hardware, software etc. to determine the status of each PSAP's 911 system stage of advancement to "next generation 911" as defined in the legislation. **[Concurrence in House Amendments to Senate Amendments: 49-0.](#)**

### **Friday, June 26, 2015**

**[Senate Bill 77](#)** (Alloway) would amend Title 34 (Game) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to make changes regarding dog training areas. The bill would:

- Decrease the minimum size of a dog training area from 100 acres to 50 acres;
- Permit hunting or trapping of a furbearer or other protected game animal on a dog training area by the permittee or any other person authorized in writing by the permittee during seasons established by the Game Commission;
- Limit big game hunting on a dog training area to those with permission from the permittee, unless the area is conspicuously posted open to the public for big game hunting;

- Require posting of the dog training area prior to October 1 of each year noting the purpose of the area; and
- Make it unlawful for a person to:
  - trap for any game or wildlife on a dog training area without written permission from the permittees;
  - enter onto a posted dog training area without the written permission of the permittee;
  - destroy or vandalize any facilities within a dog training area; or
  - kill, injure or interfere with a dog engaged in training or field trials in a permitted area or to interfere with a person training dogs or participating in field trials events or lawfully engaged in hunting or trapping within a permitted dog training area. **Passed: 49-0.**

[Senate Bill 129](#) (Wiley) would amend the County Pension Law to provide that a cost-of-living adjustment given to retired county employees would not have to be calculated retroactively to the date of the previous cost-of-living adjustment and would not have to apply to the cost-of-living index for each year since the previous cost-of-living increase. Before approving any cost-of-living adjustment, the County Retirement Board would have to obtain an actuarial note regarding the proposed adjustment. A cost-of-living adjustment could only be provided if certain funding levels specified in the bill are met. The funding level calculation would have to be reported to the Public Employee Retirement Commission in conjunction with established reporting requirements. The bill would also add a definition of “cost-of-living index” to mean the consumer price index for all urban consumers for the Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland area. **Passed: 49-0.**

[Senate Bill 524](#) (Scarnati) would amend Title 61 (Prisons and Parole) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to establish a non-narcotic medication assisted substance abuse treatment grant pilot program within the Department of Corrections (DOC). Grants under the program would be limited to FY 2015-16 and to counties eligible for funding. The legislation delineates eligibility requirements and how the grant funding would have to be used by a recipient county. The powers and duties of the DOC in establishing the program would include: the establishment of criteria for grant funding, development of training materials, and promulgation of rules and regulations. Grant awards would be at the discretion of the DOC and limited to amounts annually appropriated for the program. The proposed legislation would require naltrexone to be approved as part of a prior authorization process by any Medicaid managed care plan operating under contract with the Commonwealth for offenders enrolled in the pilot program. The Department of Human Services would be required to issue a bulletin notice instructing Medicaid managed care plans that approval of naltrexone would have to be granted if the eligible offenders are enrolled in the pilot program. Within 18 months of the effective date of the act, DOC would be required to issue to designated legislative committees a report containing specified

information. Nothing in the act would create an entitlement or a right of an eligible offender to receive treatment upon release from a county correctional institution. **Passed: 49-0.**

**Senate Bill 813** (Hughes) would appropriate \$71,966,000 from the Workmen's Compensation Administration Fund to the Department of Labor and Industry for the administration of the Workers' Compensation Act and the Pennsylvania Occupational Disease Act for Fiscal Year 2015-2016. The bill would also appropriate \$194,000 from a restricted revenue account within the Workmen's Compensation Administration Fund to the Office of Small Business Advocate for Fiscal Year 2015-2016. In addition, the sum of \$3 million would be transferred from the Workmen's Compensation Administration Fund to the Uninsured Employers Guaranty Fund. **Passed: 49-0.**

**Senate Resolution 163** (Browne) recognizes September 25, 2015 as "International Ataxia Awareness Day" in Pennsylvania. **Adopted by Voice Vote.**

*Executive Session*

Timothy A. Reese – Treasurer of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. **Confirmed: 48-1.**

Nominations to Various Boards and Commissions. **Confirmed: 48-1.**

(2015-092)