

## Lobbying Reform Measures Earn Committee Approval

This week, the House State Government Committee, on which I serve, approved a package of lobbying reform bills I co-sponsored, to improve openness and transparency, limit lobbyist influence and ensure ethical conduct of all lobbyists operating in the Commonwealth. If adopted, the measures would represent the first major reform to the state's lobbying laws in 15 years. The bills, which are now headed to the full House for consideration are as follows:



[House Bill 1606](#) – Would require lobbyists to report every dollar spent, removing the current threshold of \$2,500.

[House Bill 1599](#) – Would disclose and register any lobbying client conflicts with the Department of State.

[House Bill 1601](#) – Would require lobbyists to file annual statements of financial interests like those already filed by public officials and employees.

[House Bill 1605](#) – Would require lobbyists to report payments to or from other lobbyists for the referral of clients.

[House Bill 1609](#) – Would require lobbyists to complete annual mandatory ethics training.

[House Bill 1600](#) – Would require campaign consultants to register with the Department of State [House Bill 1603](#) – Would prohibit campaign consultants from lobbying the state official for whom they served as a consultant,

[House Bill 1607](#) – Would prohibit any state agency or entity from - hiring an outside lobbyist. [House Bill 1608](#) – Would place restrictions on lobbying new employees of the General Assembly or executive departments or agencies who were previously registered lobbyists.

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## Committee Advances Gift Ban for Public Officials, Employees

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[\*Watch Video Here\*](#)

This week, the House State Government Committee, on which I serve, advanced a bill I co-sponsored to impose a gift ban for public officials and staff. I spoke in committee about the importance of [House Bill 1009](#) in helping to ensure ethical behavior and protect the public interest. Watch the video above. Specifically, House Bill 1009 would prohibit lobbyists from providing public officials or employees with lodging and sleeping accommodations, food and beverages, transportation, and recreation and entertainment. It also would prohibit any gift valued in the aggregate at \$250 or more in a calendar year. The bill now heads to the full House for consideration. The committee also voted to approve [House Resolution 114](#), which would urge the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to consider regulations on lawyers and certain lobbying activities to ensure transparency and to prevent conflicts of interest. One practice I find particularly problematic is the payment of referral fees to lawyers when they make referrals to lobbyists. The resolution would address this. [Listen here](#).

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**Restoring Civility While Re-Affirming the Value of Dissent**

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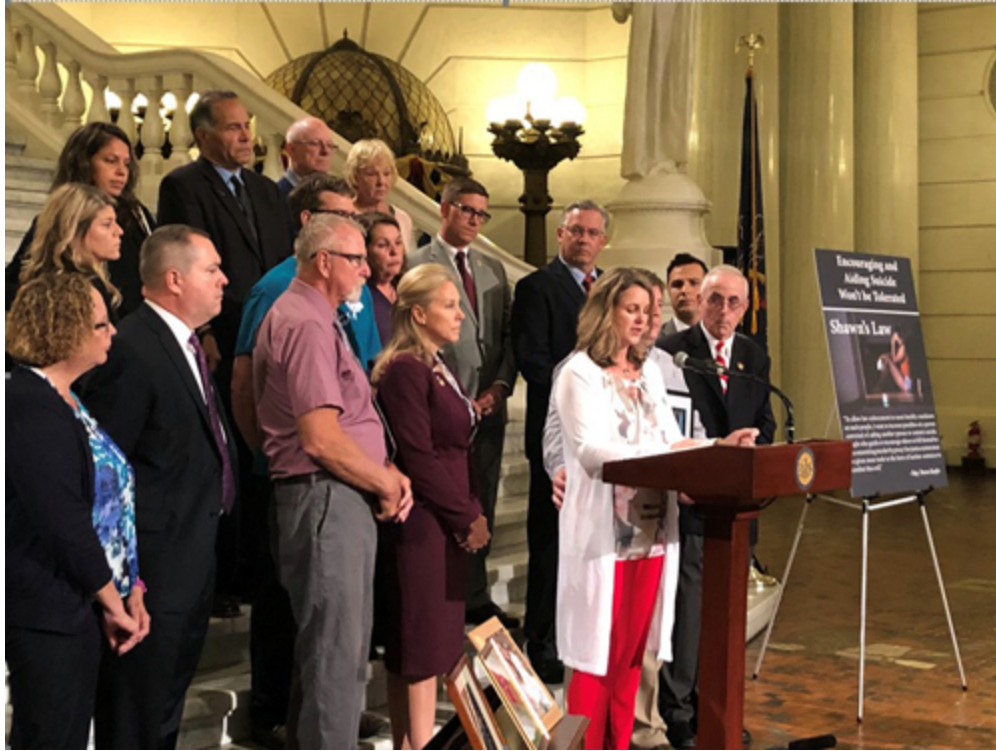


In this week's Frankly Speaking podcast, we discuss cancel culture, public dissent and the constitutional freedoms we enjoy as Americans living in Pennsylvania. [Click here to listen.](#)

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## **Governor Signs “Shawn’s Law”**

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*2019 Capitol news conference in support of Shawn's Law*

Gov. Tom Wolf recently signed into law an important suicide prevention bill I co-sponsored. [House Bill 184](#) now Act 71, will strengthen penalties for causing, aiding or soliciting a person under age 18 to die by suicide. The law also applies if the subject has an intellectual disability or autism spectrum disorder. Act 71 is referred to as Shawn's Law for Shawn Shatto, a young York County woman who took her own life after receiving a step-by-step guide on how to die by suicide from an online chat forum. Sadly, Shawn needed help, but those involved in the internet chat room offered her just one way out. Act 71 aims to hold people like this accountable when someone dies in this manner.

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## **Bills to Support Mental, Physical Health Advance**

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The House Human Services Committee has approved two bills I co-sponsored aimed at improving the overall health outcomes of Pennsylvanians. House

Bills [1561](#) and [1563](#) would amend the Mental Health Procedures Act and the Drug and Alcohol Abuse Control Act to allow the sharing of patient information among providers, facilities and insurers. The changes would also meet existing Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requirements to ensure patient confidentiality. Most importantly, they would give doctors and other medical providers access to all of the information they need to properly treat their patients. The bills are pending action by the full House.



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## STEM Competition Now Accepting Registrations

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) is now accepting registrations for the virtual 2021 Governor's STEM Competition. All Commonwealth public and non-public high schools, career and technical centers, charter schools and home-schooled students in grades 9-12 are invited to participate. Registration is open for teams of five students in grades 9-12. A team advisor must complete the registration form for all students participating in the competition by Nov. 19. The competition requires student teams to research, design and present a device or project that can make the quality of life better for Pennsylvanians. Teams must collaborate with a local member of their community or a business and industry partner to help identify a challenge faced by Pennsylvanians along with a solution to that challenge. [Learn more here.](#)

### Governor's STEM Competition



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## World Stroke Day Oct. 29

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Today is World Stroke Day, a day set aside to raise awareness about the dangers of stroke, risk factors and how to recognize when a person is having a stroke. Early recognition and treatment of stroke are vital to ensuring a person's survival and recovery. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the following are the most common signs of stroke in both men and women:

- Sudden numbness or weakness in the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body.
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or difficulty understanding speech.
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or lack of coordination.
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause.

For more information about stroke, risk factors, prevention and diagnosis, [click here](#).



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## Bald Eagle Nest Livestream Gets Upgrade

New cameras installed at the bald eagle nest near Hanover, York County, will offer fans better views of the nest and, hopefully, some fledglings this season. **HDOntap**, provider of live webcam services in more than 1,800 locations, announced it has successfully serviced the existing pan-tilt-zoom camera at the nest and added a new one. The existing point-of-view camera, which had been blocked by sticks because of the annual build-up by the resident eagles, has been replaced and repositioned to provide a view of the entire nest. Watch the stream, which is offered in cooperation with the [Pennsylvania Game Commission, here](#).

