

New Property Tax Elimination Bill Introduced at PA Capitol



[*Watch Video Here*](#)

On Thursday, I introduced new legislation to eliminate school property taxes and establish a more modern and reliable way to fund education in the Commonwealth. The complexity of the current school funding model is so intertwined and convoluted that previous efforts to change it have been unsuccessful. But the current rate of increase in school property taxes is unsustainable, is pricing seniors out of their homes and hurting many others. I have spent the past four years listening to taxpayers, addressing concerns and working out a fair and balanced formula for the total elimination of property taxes in the Commonwealth. I was joined at a Capitol news conference Thursday by members of the Citizens' Property Tax Advisory Group, whose members have worked with me on the property tax issue for several years. To watch the news conference, click the video box above.

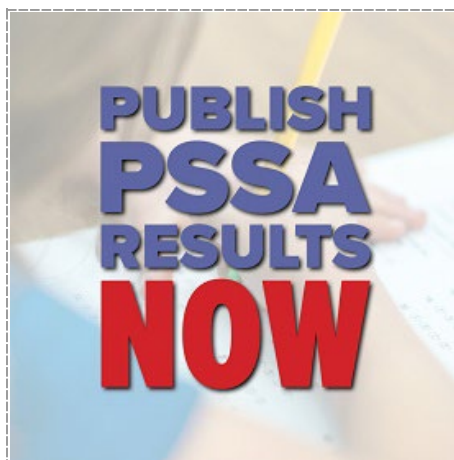
FFA Holds Legislative Breakfast



I was so thankful to attend the FFA Week legislative breakfast and to be surrounded by such incredibly impressive young people. Their leadership and talent provide so much promise for our future. Agriculture and our nation are in great hands!

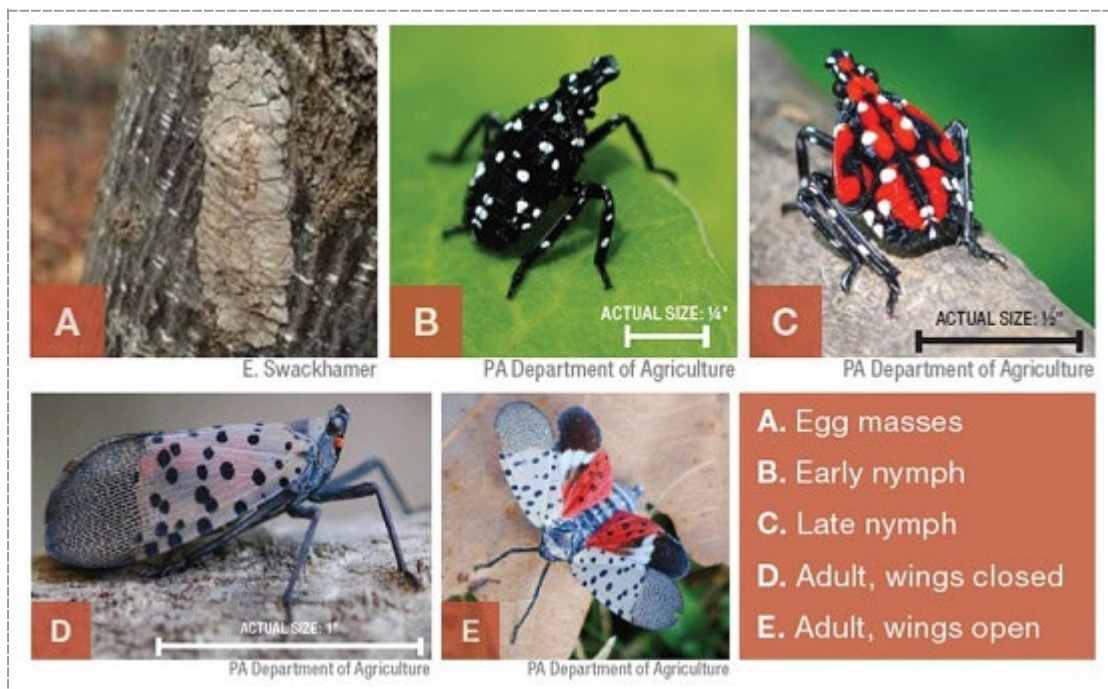
PDE Must Publish School Assessments Now

Did you know the Pennsylvania Department of Education has not yet released Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) examination results from tests taken last spring? The data from those tests is vital as we attempt to understand and address the learning loss that occurred among students despite the best efforts of their teachers and parents during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Department of Education acknowledged the delay in results in written testimony to the House Education Committee in November and pledged to provide the results in “the coming weeks.” Now, three months later, there is still no compilation of state exam



results. Speaker of the House Bryan Cutler (R-Lancaster) and House Education Committee Chairman Curt Sonney (R-Erie) sent a [letter to Secretary of Education Noe Ortega](#) last week demanding the PSSA results be released immediately. In response, PDE announced it will release the results publicly on March 1. Ortega said results were delayed because student participation was so low that state officials questioned whether the data would be “valid, reliable and representative.” Only about 71% of students took the PSSAs due to student COVID-related absences. The normal participation rate is more than 97%.

Smash Those Spotted Lanternfly Eggs!



The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture is encouraging all of us to do our part to combat the spread of the invasive spotted lanternfly. Agriculture officials are asking the public to be on the lookout and destroy egg masses before the weather warms up and the eggs have a chance to hatch. Officials suggest power-washing equipment and vehicles, inspecting the undercarriages of vehicles and inspecting other hard surfaces such as patio furniture, grills or play equipment. More information about this invasive species [is available here](#).

Help for Struggling Farm Workers



The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has created a helpline for farm workers who are experiencing anxiety or depression. The number is **833-897-2474**. High rates of suicide among those working in farming, fishing and forestry have been documented for many years. [Learn more about the helpline here.](#) Remember, too, that the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is available 24 hours a day at 800-273-TALK (8255).

Attorney General Issues Warning About AirTag Misuse

The Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General has issued a consumer alert concerning the malicious misuse of Apple AirTags to track owner locations and belongings without their knowledge or consent. Individuals have reported finding unknown AirTags attached to their cars, in their purses or coat pockets, and other personal property. Others have reported receiving alerts on their phones that their location information is being shared, even if they have not found an AirTag or other connected accessory on their person.



To protect yourself and your belongings:

- Listen for unfamiliar beeping. When an AirTag is separated from a familiar device for some time, it will make a beeping noise. If you hear this, try to locate its source.
- Watch for “Item Detected Near You” notifications on iPhones. If your iPhone has been close to an unfamiliar AirTag or other accessory for a prolonged period of time, you may receive this notification on the Find My application.
- Owners of Android devices are urged to download Tracker Detect from the Google Play Store. If you hear unfamiliar beeping, you can use Tracker Detect to find any unfamiliar AirTags within your Bluetooth range.
- Not all unfamiliar AirTags are malicious. While it is important to be careful, AirTags are sometimes legitimately lost by their users, and your device will alert you regardless. If an AirTag has been reported lost, your Find My notification will give you information to allow you to return it.
- Check for updated guidance. Apple has issued guidance on how to deal with unknown AirTags or Find My alerts. If you come across any issues, check with Apple for updated guidance.
- Update your Apple device’s operating system. Apple is implementing new safety measures, so make sure you update your Apple device’s operating system regularly.

For additional details about the tips above, [click here](#).

Finally, consumers who believe they may have found a misused Apple AirTag in their belongings should contact local law enforcement.

PHEAA to Offer Webinars

The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) will host several statewide webinars in the coming weeks.

- On Monday, **Feb. 28**, and Monday, **April 18**, from 6-7 p.m., it will present an overview of the 2022-23 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) process. The event will guide students and families through a step-by-step process for filing the FAFSA and state grant application.

- On Monday, **March 7**, from 6-7 p.m., and Monday, **March 28**, from noon to 1 p.m., PHEAA will host a webinar on understanding the financial decision students need to make concerning higher education, including higher education costs, types of financial aid available and how to apply for financial aid.

- Finally, on Wednesday, **April 13**, from 6-7 p.m., PHEAA will present a webinar on planning and goal setting that high school juniors should be working on to prepare for the financial aid process they will face as seniors.



To register for any of the seminars, please visit PHEAA.org/virtual.

Community Supports Local Firefighters



What a wonderful time for community support and encouragement at the Lawn Fire Company sub, soup and pie sale last weekend. Proceeds from events such as these help to support our firefighters and EMS operations, which protect local citizens and their property. Most who do perform this crucial work are volunteers. We have so much to be thankful for!