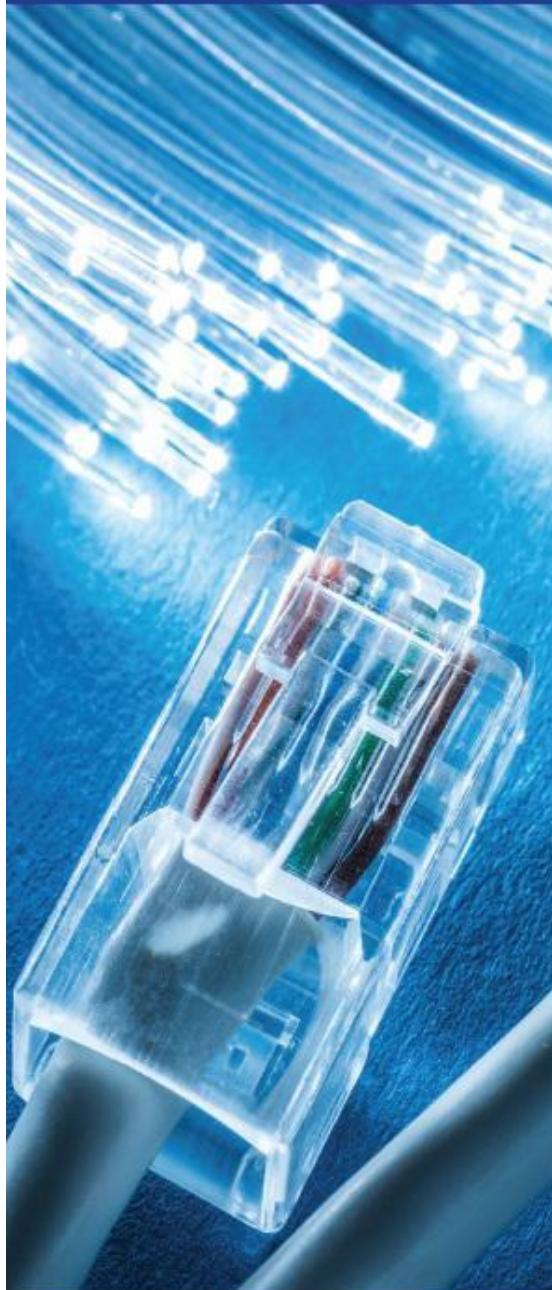


PA Townships Value Relationship with Cable Industry



The Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors salutes a longstanding working relationship with BCAP that has benefited millions of our commonwealth's citizens.

PSATS members have had successful partnerships with the commonwealth's cable companies for decades. The result has been a Pennsylvania-born technology that continues to provide entertainment, education, and communications services for generations of our state's citizens and businesses.

If there was ever a template for blending technology providers with local government, our 70-year-old working relationship with BCAP members is it.

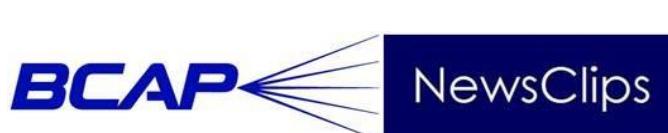
PSATS looks forward to continuing and growing its partnership with broadband cable companies in the years ahead to deliver services to ALL Pennsylvanians!



Pennsylvania State Association
of Township Supervisors

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April 7, 2020

Deadline Hollywood

Gov. Tom Wolf's decision to close down what his administration has decided are businesses that aren't life sustaining has revealed a sharp

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Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Editorial: What is essential? – State

divide among Republican and Democratic legislators over whether that was an appropriate move.

In a House State Government Committee discussion Monday, lawmakers debated two bills that sought to roll back portions of the governor's business closure order. Republican lawmakers argued that shutting down many small businesses and the construction industry is creating unnecessary hardships for consumers and harming the state's economy. But Democrats defended the governor's action. Democrats countered by saying the GOP-sponsored legislation that would allow those businesses to reopen puts company profits above human lives.

Both bills passed the committee on 15-10 party-line votes with most of the members voting remotely. Many of those who were present wore masks and gloves. The measures are now in the pipeline for full House consideration. On March 19, Wolf ordered all non-life-sustaining businesses to close but provided for a waiver process for those businesses to seek an exemption from the closure order.

The waiver process, which ended on Friday, drew criticism from lawmakers and the business community over its lack of clarity and transparency. The Wolf Administration refused to release the list of waiver recipients. That frustration, coupled with the hardships it was creating, spurred the introduction of bills the state government committee considered.

Rep. Joseph Hohenstein, D-Philadelphia, said the solution to lawmakers' concerns about Wolf's closure order was "to go directly to advocate with the governor and [the Department of Community and Economic Development] to provide a better process. We don't gain anything if we simply open floodgates to construction and retail activity that cannot be conducted safely."

But Republican lawmakers have argued their calls and emails to the governor seeking to resolve issues drew no or dismissive responses. The state government committee approved a bill sponsored by House Speaker Mike Turzai, R-Allegheny County, that would allow public and private construction activity to resume. Those companies would have to adhere to the Centers for Disease Control and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency COVID-19 specific guidelines.

Another bill, sponsored by Rep. Brad Roae, R-Crawford County, would allow retail businesses identified by the governor as not life sustaining to open. Those retailers would only be allowed one customer and one employee in the store at a time. Rep. Kevin Boyle, D-Philadelphia, along with other Democrats, voiced strong opposition to both bills. He said reopening the economy at a time when Pennsylvanians are dying from the contagious virus is irresponsible. He said the time will come when it is appropriate to talk about a phased reopening of the economy but doing it now would only blunt the state's COVID-19 mitigation response. "I could not possibly urge members more to please, please reject this bill," Boyle said. "Let's not be national news for all the wrong reasons."

Committee Chairman Garth Everett, R-Lycoming County, said the committee's passage of the bills was just the start of the legislative approval process and more work to refine them could occur later. About the bill allowing small retail shops to open, Everett noted the governor's order allowed big box stores to operate while handicapping small businesses by not allowing them to be

**needs clear criteria
for business waivers**

open. "There has to be a balance," Everett said. "This is a bill that will search for balance."

Others said businesses would not be required to open but those that meet the requirements that the legislation imposed could if they so chose. As for restarting the construction industry, a Democratic member argued it would be impossible for workers on construction projects that share a portable toilet and do work that requires them to stand less than six feet apart to adhere to CDC guidelines.

Republican Rep. Dawn Keefer of York County said all the states around Pennsylvania "are allowing some type of construction to continue on. Some of them are following CISA workforce guidelines and others are following a version of CISA so they are doing it. ... There is a medium ground here and I believe we can do it." – **Harrisburg Patriot-News**

Despite a growing number of covid-19 cases in Pennsylvania, location data shows residents have actually increased their travel.

Unacast, a phone data company, used data from mobile phones to track the average change in distance traveled by individuals in each state and country, starting from Feb. 24. The state was doing well in late March, with a sharp decrease in mobility beginning around March 16. That was around the time the state's confirmed covid-19 cases began to steadily rise, and when Gov. Tom Wolf began official precautions — closing bars, restaurants and non-life-sustaining businesses, closing turnpike restrooms and food services and issuing a stay-at-home order for seven counties. At the time, Unacast graded the state an "B" for its strengths in social distancing.

The stay-at-home order has since been expanded to include the entire state, but in the last week, Pennsylvania's score has actually declined. The state's grade is now "C-." This follows an increase in average distance traveled since March 26. At its best, around March 28, Allegheny County had seen about a 55% decrease in average mobility since February, according to Unacast. The most recent data, from April 1, shows the decrease is now only around 40% — meaning mobility increased by about 15% in three days.

In Westmoreland County, the average mobility had decreased by about 55% from March 28, but has since increased about 30%. As of April 1, the average mobility decrease since February is only about 25 percent. – **Pittsburgh Tribune-Review**

Stay safe



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