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**San Francisco Chronicle**

**California requires cellphone towers to add backup power**

Northampton County will spend \$825,000 of its federal COVID-19 stimulus money to help needy students, senior citizens and veterans get internet access. County council voted Thursday to allot about 3% of the \$27.6 million provided via the CARES Act to buffer the effects of the coronavirus pandemic. Most of the money will go to school districts: Bethlehem, Easton, Bangor, Northampton and Nazareth will each get \$100,000, while the smaller Wilson, Saucon Valley and Pen Argyl school districts will each receive \$50,000.

**TVTechnology**

**Peacock Has Strong First-Day Mobile App Uptake**

**Politico**

**Twitter's security holes are now the nation's problem**

Online education was becoming important even before the pandemic closed Pennsylvania schools in March, Bethlehem Area Superintendent Joseph Roy told council. About 25% of district families have no internet access or inconsistent service, and having a telephone connection is not good enough for schoolwork, he said. "When a family is struggling to put food on the table ... one of the first things to go is internet service," Roy said. "It's like a utility" akin to water or electricity, he said, speaking in favor of the county resolution. "Why not all the kids?" Councilwoman Margaret Ferraro asked during council's discussion, referring to needy children at private and charter schools.

**MarketWatch**

**Abigail Disney 'confused' by Disney reopening its Florida theme parks — and she still wants to be taxed more**

Tina Smith of the county's Department of Community and Economic Development said that students with financial need can apply directly to the county for vouchers to get internet service from local cable companies. The Bethlehem district is in Northampton and Lehigh counties. The vouchers approved Thursday will be available only to Northampton County residents. Councilman Kerry Myers, a Navy veteran, inquired about how financial need would be determined for military veterans to get free internet access. County officials did not have an immediate answer. — **WFMZ-TV, Allentown**

**The Hill**

**FCC votes to make '988' new suicide hotline number**

A deadlocked Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission could not agree Thursday on a plan to lift a COVID-inspired moratorium on service shutoffs, so an order preventing utilities from terminating service to non-paying customers will stay in place for now.

**Washington Post**

**William Barr cites Disney, Apple in speech accusing U.S. companies of 'kowtowing' to China**

The commission split along party lines, 2-2, effectively defeating a measure supported by two Democratic members to create a study group to report back next month on recommendations for lifting the moratorium. The two Republican commissioners said the commission should allow utilities to begin sending out termination notices in August for customers who had fallen behind in payments.

**Fierce Video**

Advocates for consumers and low-income customers have pressed the PUC to continue the moratorium, saying that many Pennsylvanians have lost work because of the coronavirus lockdown and are unable to pay their bills. The Republicans said that sufficient consumer protections are already in place, and the longer the moratorium remains in effect, the more money will go unpaid to

[\*\*NBCUniversal rolls out a whopping 11 new ad formats\*\*](#)

*Reuters*

[\*\*Netflix names content chief Ted Sarandos co-CEO, forecasts weaker growth\*\*](#)

*Bloomberg*

[\*\*Cisco Fires Workers for Racial Comments During Diversity Forum\*\*](#)

*Lebanon Daily News*

[\*\*Wolf withholding millions in pandemic relief funding from Lebanon County\*\*](#)

utilities, which ultimately will be recovered from all ratepayers through higher rates. "We believe the commission should take responsibility for the consequences of imposing the termination moratorium," said John F. Coleman, Jr., a Republican. "This includes the consequences of asking those who have paid their utility bills on time to pay for those who have not. The difficult choices surrounding this matter will only become more cumbersome over time."

The commission approved an emergency order on March 13 to put a moratorium in place as Gov. Tom Wolf was in the midst of a cascade of shutdown orders to help stop the spread of the virus. The emergency order effectively extended the normal winter moratorium on shutoffs that is in place from November through the end of March. The PUC also encouraged utilities to restore service to customers who had been previously shut off.

The state's electric, gas and water utilities last month reported that by the end of May, about 845,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers were sufficiently behind in payments that they would be subject to termination, an increase of 9.6%, or 75,000, from a year ago. Of the accounts in arrears, about 790,000 are residential customers, including 211,000 classified as low-income families. About 475,000 of the total customers get electricity service. The number of gas customers in arrears, 280,000, was actually nearly 8% lower than a year ago because gas bills were lower this year because of the mild winter.

Thursday's deadlock repeated the outcome of the PUC's meeting in June, when the two Republicans proposed lifting the moratorium on shutoffs. That measure also failed by a 2-2 vote. The commission normally has five members, but Wolf has not yet nominated a replacement to fill a vacancy that opened in April. On Thursday, Gladys Brown Dutrieuille, the commission's chair, suggested convening a "stakeholder initiative" comprised of the utilities, consumer and business advocates, low-income advocates and the PUC staff to report back by Aug. 3 on recommendations. Her motion was supported by David W. Sweet, the vice chair. But the Republicans, including Coleman and Commissioner Ralph V. Yanora, said that the study group would delay any PUC action, and the opportunity for some customers to apply for supplemental federal low-income utility assistance would be lost.

Two legal advocacy groups that Dutrieuille identified as part of the "stakeholder initiative," Community Legal Services and Pennsylvania Utility Law Project, urged the PUC on Tuesday to extend the moratorium, saying that utility shutoffs would be devastating to Pennsylvanians. "People do not know when they will be able to work again, and many are still waiting for unemployment income to come in," the low-income advocates said. "Evictions and foreclosures have been stayed, but without similar protections against utility shutoffs, it will be impossible for households to take the steps necessary to stay safe and healthy, exacerbating the public-health crisis." – ***Philadelphia Inquirer***

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The hallmark event of the [\*\*annual Pennsylvania Society\*\*](#) weekend that draws several thousands of the state's political movers and shakers to New York City during the holiday season is cancelled this year due to COVID-19 concerns.

It is believed to be the first time the century-old Society's annual dinner has not been held and one of the few years when the Society's Gold Medal for Distinguished Achievement will not be awarded. "Canceling the annual dinner was not an easy decision, but it was the only decision," said the Society's President Edward Sheehan, Jr. "So much remains in doubt regarding the severity of the COVID-19 virus this fall and winter. Our leadership council simply was not comfortable putting our members and their guests at risk. By announcing now, we provide attendees with time to adjust their holiday plans."

The 2020 Society dinner had been scheduled for Saturday, December 5, at the New York Hilton Midtown. That pricey affair is traditionally the culmination of most of the soirees, packed receptions, fund-raisers and seminars that are held across Manhattan over a long weekend of political gossiping and relationship building. The highlight of the dinner is often the awarding of the Gold Medal to a Pennsylvanian whose actions have benefited the commonwealth. Among its recipients over the years are such Pennsylvania greats as Arnold Palmer, Charles Schwab, James Michener, Andrew Carnegie, and General Dwight D. Eisenhower. The Pennsylvania Society contributes to a Pennsylvania charity chosen by that year's Gold Medal recipient.

But with no recipient this year, Sheehan said the Pennsylvania Society will focus on a salute to the state's frontline workers "who have sacrificed much during an unprecedented health crisis for their fellow Pennsylvanians. The Pennsylvania Society is all about celebrating service to the commonwealth we all love, and so we can think of no better focus this year than celebrating these selfless men and women."

Don't think for a minute, though, that this year's cancellation spells the end of Society weekend in the Big Apple. "We very much look forward to returning to New York in December 2021 and resuming the presentation of our Gold Medal for Distinguished Achievement," Sheehan said.

The event for more than a decade has had its detractors who have called for it to be moved to a location in Pennsylvania but attendees say having it in-state wouldn't be the same. Granted, it might save them a bundle of money but they would miss out on the magical atmosphere that Manhattan has to offer at Christmastime and on seeing people they often see at the Capitol in a social setting. Beyond that, Society-goers say it would break the tradition that the well-to-do Pennsylvanians living in New York City started in 1899 when they gathered to discuss events in their home state and decided to make it an annual affair. — **Pennlive**

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Heather Heidelbaugh, the Republican nominee trying to defeat Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro in his bid for a second term, posted a campaign video this week knocking him for not denouncing Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner's call for a reconciliation commission to examine flaws in the criminal justice system. It didn't go as she planned. The video uses the faces of Philadelphia police officers killed in the line of duty. John McNesby, president of the Fraternal Order of Police in the city, was

furious. "Keep our dead heroes out of your political ads ... especially without permission," McNesby tweeted, urging his followers to contact Heidelbaugh's campaign.

Heidelbaugh spokesperson Dennis Roddy, in response, complained that she waited months for a sit-down with the FOP and never received a reply to her request. "It was very clear the FOP is going to endorse Josh Shapiro," he said. "We couldn't even get a meeting." McNesby stuck to his guns, calling for Heidelbaugh to remove the officers from her video. "This isn't about Josh or the FOP," he said. "I could care less who people vote for." Shapiro's camp denounced the use of the fallen "shameful" and a "desperate political attack ad." – **Chris Brennan's "Clout" column in *Philadelphia Daily News***

