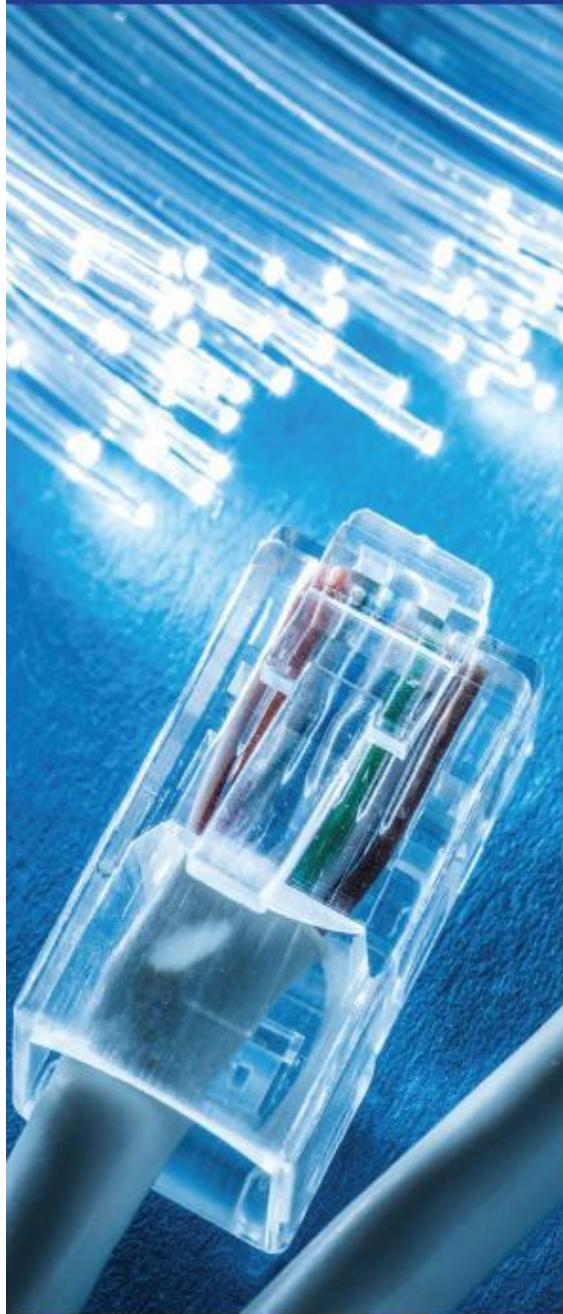


# PA Townships Value Relationship with Cable Industry



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!



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Many students will need to access online learning environments throughout the upcoming school year, and to help, **Service Electric Cablevision (SECV)** will again offer 90 free days of internet service to students and educators who do not already subscribe to SECV, as well as a free cable modem rental for the duration of the free service.

The offer only applies to those who are not currently subscribed to **SECV** internet service. Students and educators who participated in the free spring offer are welcome to participate again in the fall. Newly participating students' families must provide written proof of their child's current enrollment within **SECV's** service area; new educators must provide proof of current employment and residency within the service area.

**SECV's** service area includes Bloomsburg, Danville, Elysburg, Lewisburg, Milton, Mt. Carmel, Northumberland, Selinsgrove, Shamokin, Sunbury, Watsontown, and surrounding areas. For the safety of **SECV** employees, educators and students' families are required to install the rental modem themselves with the assistance of a technician outside of their residence. For more information or to enroll in this offer, please call **SECV** at (811) 955-7328.  
– *northcentralPA.com*

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A Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection official who is the Wolf administration's point person on the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative has been nominated by Gov. [Tom Wolf](#) to fill a vacancy in the Public Utility Commission.

[Hayley L. Book](#)'s name was sent to the Pennsylvania Senate to fill the unexpired term of [Andrew Place](#), who announced his resignation in April. The nomination was confirmed to the Business Times by the governor's office Tuesday. The PUC, normally five members, has been with four since Place departed.

Book has been senior adviser on energy and climate to DEP Secretary [Patrick McDonnell](#) since December 2019 but has extensive experience at the PUC. She was executive policy adviser to Place from November 2016 to December 2019 and before that was director of the energy office at the DEP in the first Wolf administration and, between 2013 and 2015, was executive director of the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority. She has extensive experience in energy financing, markets and state policy.

Her departure from the DEP leaves a gap in the administration's efforts to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a key environmental effort of the Wolf administration. Book [has been one of the leaders in the administration on the initiative](#) and her LinkedIn profile [said her primary focus "will be coordinating implementation" of Wolf's executive order](#) on climate change. As late as last Thursday, [Book was part of a DEP webinar and news conference about RGGI](#).

Place, of Waynesburg, resigned in April. His term was to end in 2025. PUC currently has four commissioners: Chairman [Gladys Brown Dutrieuille](#), Vice Chairman [David Sweet](#) and commissioners [John F. Coleman](#) and [Ralph V. Yanora](#). The PUC, with more than 500 employees, [regulates public utilities in the commonwealth](#). Its headquarters is in Harrisburg, but it has regional offices in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia and Scranton. – **Pittsburgh Business Times**

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Pennsylvania utility regulators will reconsider an emergency order that [prevents utilities from terminating service](#) to non-paying customers because of the pandemic. Gladys Brown Dutrieuille, the chair of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission, said the state "finds itself in a different place than in early March," when the order was put in place, and has asked for public comments on whether the moratorium on shutoffs should be changed.

Dutrieuille seemed willing to allow utilities to resume shutoffs, with some new safeguards for consumers. "While it would be easy to simply keep the absolute moratorium in place, protecting 100% of the customers for the duration, I do not believe that is sustainable," she said [in a letter seeking public comment](#) by an Aug. 18 deadline. She intends to bring the matter up for a vote at the PUC's Aug. 27 meeting.

The PUC's two previous attempts to modify the moratorium stalled because of 2-2 party-line deadlocks. In June, the commission rejected a proposal by two [Republican](#) commissioners to allow utilities to resume shutting off non-paying customers. In July, the commission failed to pass a Democratic proposal to [create a study group](#) to make recommendations about how to lift the moratorium.

Dutrieuille, a Democrat, said this week that a prolonged moratorium on shutoffs was reducing utility revenues and increasing customer defaults. But the pandemic and its economic effects continue, and she said the PUC should also consider adding new consumer protections if it lifts the ban. "Maintaining a total moratorium for a time period that is too lengthy may only work to accelerate the accrual of arrearages for many utility customers and place them at increased risk of default and termination in the future, when large bills inevitably become due," she wrote. Also, she said maintaining a total moratorium may frustrate efforts to place customers in assistance programs.

The Energy Association of Pennsylvania, the utility trade group that has asked for the moratorium to be lifted, says there already are a wide range of consumer protections in place, including required payment arrangements, low-income assistance, and advance notification of shutoffs. "From our perspective, this is not going to be like the Wild West if the ban is lifted," Terrance J. Fitzpatrick, the association's president, said in an interview.

Dutrieuille in July proposed adopting a range of new protections, including doubling the termination notice to 20 days, waiving all reconnection fees and late-payment charges for residential and small commercial customers, allowing additional medical excuses for customers, and relaxing rules for income verification. For years, utilities have been prohibited from shutting off customers during five winter months. Typically, when the moratorium ends at the end of March, customers rush to enroll in payment programs to service interruption.

But the moratorium was extended this year because of the coronavirus outbreak. It includes all customers of gas, electric, water, wastewater, telecommunications and steam services by PUC-regulated companies (most municipal utilities are not regulated by the PUC). Consumer advocates have asked the PUC to [retain the ban on service shutoffs](#). The state's electric, gas and water utilities reported earlier this summer that by the end of May, about 845,000 customers were so far behind that their service could be ended, an increase of 9.6% from a year ago. Of the accounts in arrears, about 790,000 are residential customers, including 211,000 classified as low-income families.

About 146,000 of Peco's residential, commercial and industrial electric customers were in arrears — 9% of its 1.6 million customers, the company said in May. Meanwhile, utilities have seen a dramatic shift in electrical usage in response to reductions in the commercial sector and increases in customers telecommuting. Along with their jobs, employees have also taken home some of their employers' energy bill. Peco said that residential usage in the second quarter was 8% greater than a year ago, after the numbers are adjusted to account for changes in weather. Usage among commercial customers, which includes retail and offices, declined by 14% during the same period, said Steven Singh, the utility's vice president of technical services.

The increase in residential energy consumption is primarily due to additional heating and air-conditioning costs, Singh said, rather than increased use of electronic equipment. Heating and air-conditioning costs account for about 38% of a typical household's energy use, according to the U.S. Energy

Information Administration. The PUC said that any comments about modifying the moratorium on shutoffs must be both [electronically filed at the PUC's website](#), [www.puc.state.pa.us](http://www.puc.state.pa.us), and emailed to the PUC's secretary at [rchiavetta@pa.gov](mailto:rchiavetta@pa.gov) by next Tuesday, Aug. 18. – ***Philadelphia Inquirer***

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Fox News is rolling out a new service that will stream programming from its cable-news channels to audiences overseas. The network said Tuesday that Fox News International would offer viewers a live-stream of Fox News Channel, as well as Fox Business, and make its debut later this month in Mexico. The service will launch in Spain, Germany and the U.K. in September, and will be available in 20 countries by the end of the year. Fox News will charge subscribers \$6.99 a month for the service.

Media companies have pushed to develop new streaming services, as consumers increasingly turn to viewing shows and content online instead of on television. The Fox international streaming platform will allow “our devoted audience overseas access to their trusted source for news and insightful analysis,” said Suzanne Scott, chief executive of the Fox News media business. In the U.S., [Fox launched Fox Nation](#), which features content from a range of Fox News hosts and other shows. That streaming option costs \$5.99 a month after a lower-price first-month trial, according to its website.

Executives at Fox Corp., the parent company of Fox News, said earlier this month that Fox Nation had more than doubled its subscriber base during the company’s most recent fiscal year. Fox Corp. and News Corp., the parent company of The Wall Street Journal, share common ownership. – ***Wall Street Journal***

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Facebook Inc. removed nearly 40% more content that it categorized as terrorism in the second quarter compared with the first three months of the year, the company said. Facebook removed about 8.7 million pieces of such content—which includes, according to the company’s definition, nonstate actors that engage in or advocate for violence to achieve political, religious or ideological aims—in the second quarter of this year, up from 6.3 million in the first quarter.

That increase “was largely driven by [improvements in our proactive detection technology](#) to identify content that violates [Facebook’s] policy,” a company spokeswoman said. For “organized hate” groups, a separate category, the company said [it took down four million pieces of content](#), down from 4.7 million in the first quarter. And in [a third category, hate speech](#), the company said it dramatically increased removals of such posts from Facebook and its Instagram platform. It said it removed 3.3 million pieces of hate speech from Instagram in the second quarter, more than triple the amount the previous quarter, and 22.5 million pieces from Facebook, more than double what it removed in the first quarter. The company credited its technology’s expansion into several languages, including Spanish, Arabic and Indonesian, for the increase.

Instagram removed about 388,800 pieces of terrorist content, down from 440,600 in the first quarter, but it removed more organized hate content in the second quarter—266,000 pieces versus 175,100 in the previous quarter. White supremacist groups have been a focus for the social-media giant. Since October of last year, the company said it completed 14 network takedowns to remove 23 organizations in violation of Facebook’s policies. The majority of those takedowns, nine of the 14, targeted “hate and/or white supremacist groups,” including the KKK, the Proud Boys, Blood & Honour and Atomwaffen, the company said.

Facebook has put more than 250 white supremacist groups on its list of dangerous organizations, company officials earlier said, putting them alongside jihadist organizations such as al Qaeda. The tech giant also recently [banned a large segment of the boogaloo movement](#) from its platform. Adherents of the

loosely-organized boogaloos include white supremacists. Facebook removed the boogaloo accounts after a targeted investigation by human analysts, officials said. The company has increasingly turned to humans to assess networks that actively try to avoid its automated content-monitoring tools.

Facebook's latest figures come after the company said in June it took down [posts and ads for President Trump's re-election campaign](#) because they violated the company's policy against "organized hate." The campaign ads claimed that "Dangerous MOBS of far-left groups" are causing mayhem and destroying cities and called on supporters to back Mr. Trump's battle against antifa, a loosely organized activist movement that [the White House has blamed for unrest](#).

The ads featured a large, red downward-pointing triangle. The inverted red triangle is a marking Nazis used to designate political prisoners in concentration camps, according to the Anti-Defamation League and other groups. The Trump campaign said that the triangle is a common antifa symbol, though some experts on extremist groups have disputed that.

Other social-media platforms have also faced pressure to remove information tied to groups classified as terrorist organizations. Last year, Twitter Inc. suspended [accounts linked to Palestinian group Hamas](#) and Iran-backed militant group Hezbollah. U.S. lawmakers had criticized Twitter for allowing those entities to remain active on the platform even though the State Department designated both as terrorist organizations. Social-media companies have also faced tensions over how to handle misleading posts. Twitter earlier this year [labeled tweets by Mr. Trump](#) about mail-in ballots as misinformation, highlighting a widening divide among big tech platforms on how they handle political speech as the U.S. presidential election approaches.

— *Wall Street Journal*



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