



PA AFL-CIO Commends Governor Shapiro’s Focus on Affordability, Workforce Development, Energy Initiatives

Governor’s Budget Proposal Invests in Working Families across Rural, Suburban, and Urban Pennsylvania – recognizing the challenges facing communities from Philadelphia to Erie and everywhere between.

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For Immediate Release

HARRISBURG, PA (Feb. 3, 2026) — [The Pennsylvania AFL-CIO](#) (PA AFL-CIO) issued the following statement after Governor Josh Shapiro presented the 2026-2027 PA Executive budget proposal today.

“Governor Shapiro understands working people and the struggles they are facing in Pennsylvania,” said Angela Ferritto, president, Pennsylvania AFL-CIO. “From initiatives and investments in child care and public education to housing and energy affordability, this budget includes investments that help working families advance during difficult times.”

“At a time when affordability is top of mind for PA working families, increasing the minimum wage to \$15 per hour ensures workers can make a wage worth working for—a necessary increase after 15 years of stagnation that would result in fewer families needing to rely on safety-net programs.”

“Mass transit provides a critical function for workers, families, and a strong economy. We encourage the legislature to act and establish a full, dedicated funding source that will prevent a repeat of the crises experienced over the past year.”

“The PA AFL-CIO also applauds the governor for joining us in our quest to support rural communities with an additional \$19 million for the Well Plugging Account. This would provide a path forward and a source of hope for communities facing job loss, blight, high cost of living, and plummeting tax bases. This new funding will help to cap abandoned oil and gas wells that threaten Pennsylvania’s health and environment – and serve as scar on abandoned communities, where jobs have dwindled during the clean energy transition. We urge the Governor to ensure that this work is done by skilled union laborers, ready to take on this for this critical repair across rural Pennsylvania.

“Passed in 2024, the Solar for Schools program was a crucial step in accelerating the construction of solar projects, creating good-paying union jobs, and revitalizing communities across the Commonwealth. Governor Shapiro’s additional investment of \$25 million in Solar for Schools will continue the program and lift up the building trades as a whole,” said Ferritto.

“Solar for Schools is an opportunity for education, environmental, and labor interests to come together: to imagine new ways to make our communities sustainable and livable for working people and the next generation with a valuable energy resource,” said Maurice Cobb, secretary-treasurer, Pennsylvania AFL-CIO.

“These initiatives represent real investments in real people,” said Cobb. “To succeed, they must be paired with new, sustainable revenue streams. We support the Governor’s call to generate that revenue through the legalization and regulation of adult-use cannabis and games of skill. By working together with unions and other stakeholders, Pennsylvania can thoughtfully and respectfully introduce them with great benefit to the economy of the Commonwealth.

“It is unfortunate that Public Sector OSHA was again omitted from the budget proposal, marking a decades long neglect of public sector workers that could and should be remedied. PA House Democrats passed the legislation last session, and we are grateful for their recognition that should remain priority legislation.

“Extending OSHA protections to the nearly 600,000 public sector workers across Pennsylvania ensures they enjoy the same rights to safe and healthy working conditions enjoyed by their private sector counterparts,” said Cobb. “Public sector workers have some of the most dangerous jobs in the Commonwealth, and the Commonwealth, in turn, has a responsibility to protect their workplace safety.”

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The Pennsylvania AFL-CIO represents 700,000 workers from 51 International Unions, and 1,422 Locals in all of Pennsylvania's 67 counties.