

WEEKLY SESSION NOTES

SENATE REPUBLICAN POLICY COMMITTEE – MARIO M. SCAVELLO, CHAIRMAN

Monday, March 22, 2021

There were no final passage votes taken in the Senate on Monday.

Tuesday, March 23, 2021

[House Bill 14](#) (Gregory) would amend Article I, Section 11 of the Pennsylvania Constitution to create a two-year period in which victims of childhood sexual abuse could commence an action in cases where a statutory limitations period has already expired or the claim would otherwise be barred or limited by a statutory cap on damages, sovereign immunity or by governmental or official immunity. As a proposed constitutional amendment, the legislation must pass the General Assembly in two consecutive sessions and then be presented to the voters for approval.

Passed: 44-3.

Wednesday, March 24, 2021

[Senate Bill 89](#) (Pittman) would amend Title 74 (Transportation) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to repeal Section 2107 to abolish the Balanced Multimodal Transportation Policy Commission. **Passed: 47-0.**

[Senate Bill 191](#) (J. Ward) would amend the Pennsylvania Construction Code Act to provide an exclusion for historical agricultural buildings if certain conditions outlined in the legislation are satisfied. The bill would define “historical agricultural building” as an agricultural building initially constructed before January 1, 1999, that is used for occupancy by the general public for social events. **Passed: 28-19.**

[Senate Bill 411](#) (Browne) would amend Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) and Title 61 (Prisons and Parole) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to consolidate overlapping duties of the Department of Corrections and the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole. The legislation would transfer the Board of Pardons to Title 61 by adding a new Chapter 73 and making related repeals under the Administrative Code. The Board of Pardons would remain independent, but the Department of Corrections would provide facilities, administrative support, and other assistance to the Board upon request. The measure would also change the name of “The Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole” to “The Pennsylvania Parole Board.” The Board would be authorized to establish special conditions of supervision for paroled offenders. Conditions of supervision would have to be based on the risk presented by the offender. It would also have the power to promulgate regulations establishing general conditions of supervision applicable to every paroled offender. The bill would permit two-person panels that make decisions on parole, re-parole, return or revocation to meet and take action via videoconferencing with the exception of in-person testimony pursuant to the Crime Victims Act.

The legislation would amend the provisions of Title 61 relating to victim statements and participation in hearings to require the Victim Advocate to provide notice to victims and family members and to the Board. An additional provision would designate parole agents as peace officers and give them police power and authority throughout the Commonwealth. The Department of Corrections would be required to establish statewide standards for supervision or qualifications of probation personnel. The measure would further establish that a “parole violator center” is a type of facility to which a technical parole violator could be sent. A “parole violator center” would be defined as “an area within the secure perimeter on the grounds of a state correctional institution or contracted county jail that has been designated to house offenders detained or recommitted by the board for a technical parole violation.” The appropriation for the Board and the Board of Pardons would each be in separate line items. **Passed: 46-1.**

(2021-062)