



CCAP 2023 RESOLUTIONS

The following resolutions were adopted at the CCAP 2023 Annual Conference. Under the Association's bylaws procedures, they were considered and voted on by the full CCAP membership at the Conference business meeting on August 8, 2023. The resolutions amend the *Pennsylvania County Platform*, the Association's cumulative policy statement. The *Platform* is available on the CCAP website, www.pacounties.org.

RESOLUTION NO. 1 (*Submitted by the CCAP Assessment and Taxation Committee*) -The Association supports uniform treatment of utility or grid scale solar and wind projects for the purposes of assessment in Pennsylvania, particularly related to exceptions as machinery and equipment.

As utility and grid scale solar development continues to occur, questions regarding how to handle these projects for assessment purposes have arisen. The Assessors Association of Pennsylvania (AAP), a CCAP affiliate, has suggested that language in the County Consolidation Assessment Law related to windmills be mirrored for consistency, particularly to require non-proprietary lease and income information be submitted to the assessment office by September 1, and to exclude the valuation of solar panels as machinery or equipment.

RESOLUTION NO. 2 (*Submitted by the CCAP Community and Economic Development Committee*) - The Association supports legislation allowing counties to develop and implement locally-suitable tax incentives to spur community and economic development.

Current discussions around community revitalization have surrounded community and economic as separate but co-occurring topics, which is reflected by the amendment.

RESOLUTION NO. 3 (*Submitted by the CCAP County Governance Committee*) - The Association supports an amendment to the County Pension Law giving counties the option to offer a Cost-of-Living Adjustment to annuitants less than or equal to the annual cost-of-living index.

This language addresses a longstanding issue related to county pensions and the inability of counties to offer partial COLA increases to annuitants due to the statutory requirement that any COLA increase equal the amount of the CPI rate, no more or no less. Legislation has been offered in several recent legislative session to offer counties flexibility to offer an increase up to, but no more than, the CPI rate, if they chose to offer one at all.

RESOLUTION NO. 4 (*Submitted by the CCAP Elections Reform Committee*) - The Association supports means to increase the pool of available poll workers and facilitate their ability to serve by: Allowing government employees to be poll workers, except for those with conflict of interest

as defined by statute; Allowing employees to take leave without penalty, whether paid or unpaid, to serve as poll workers; Allowing a poll worker who is a registered elector in the county to be designated to serve in any precinct in the county that has a vacancy within 30 days of election day; and increasing the compensation cap for poll workers in the Election Code.

The statutory cap on poll worker compensation can create challenges for counties who would like to increase pay as a means of recruiting and retaining poll workers. The amendment reflects support for an increase in this cap to offer additional options to counties.

RESOLUTION NO. 5 (Submitted by the CCAP Energy, Environment and Land Use Committee) - The Association supports action by the administration and General Assembly to broadly view and address issues associated with energy development to minimize negative impacts on local communities throughout all development phases, from exploration through production, delivery and closure, including water quality, water quantity, flood encroachment, pipelines, local land use, maintenance of county and municipal roads and bridges, permitting, planning, human services, criminal justice, record maintenance, housing, economic development, local economies and emergency management.

The addition of "local land use" appears to have been an oversight not being included in this plank as it covers virtually all other aspects concerning county roles and responsibilities.

RESOLUTION NO. 6 (Submitted by the CCAP Energy, Environment and Land Use Committee) - The Association opposes legislation that would allow for private third-party review of environmental permits or that would prohibit the use of conservation districts to review such permits, and instead supports efforts to provide reasonable timeframes based on the type and complexity of the permit application for environmental permit reviews and provide sufficient funding and staff resources to DEP's regional offices to address the increasing number of permit applications.

Due to a variety of issues within DEP's regional offices (including staffing issues), permit applications are not always being reviewed in a timely fashion, sometimes taking as long as 18-24 months to complete. Committee members expressed support for a definitive timeframe to review permits depending on the type and complexity of the permit under review and whether some permits may be able to be approved locally versus going through DEP headquarters.

RESOLUTION NO. 7 (Submitted by the CCAP Resolutions and Policy Committee) - The Association supports legislation to empower counties to assess a special millage by referendum, or to empower counties or their delegates to assess fees to fund county solid waste and recycling programs within the county.

The CCAP Assessment and Taxation Committee and the CCAP Energy, Environment and Land Use Committee recommended retention. The Resolutions and Policy Committee divided the plank out of the consent agenda for separate consideration, and amended the plank to support additional options for counties to provide funding for recycling programs.

RESOLUTION NO. 8 (Submitted by Chester County) - The Association supports a change to the DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program to allow agriculture use to continue when purchasing farmland so long as agricultural best management practices are applied.

DCNR's Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) is designed to preserve open space. While it is a valuable program for preserving open space, whenever this funding is utilized to preserve farmland, all agricultural use (unless incidental) must cease. This leads to a loss of valuable farmland while trying to permanently preserve land and does not allow for multi-use land (ex. agricultural use along with active and passive recreational use).

RESOLUTION NO. 9 (Submitted by the CCAP Human Services Committee) - The Association supports dedicated funding from the Commonwealth or federal government to fully support a statewide component of a nationwide Health and Human Services Information and Referral system with no negative impact on county budgets or services.

The Committee recommends fully amending this plank to provide more clarity on counties' position on dedicated state and federal funding for health and human services information and referral systems.

RESOLUTION NO. 10 (Submitted by the CCAP Human Services Committee) - The Association supports equity and transparency in funding formulas for human services programs. To that end, the Association recognizes that the vast array of human services funding formulas used to determine allocations for services may not produce realistic financial outcomes for all counties, as a result of demographic and other changes that may not be reflected in the formula factors. The Association supports commonwealth examination of formula driven funding for county human services programs, and commensurate changes in statute, regulation and policy, to assure equity from county to county. The Association supports a requirement that adjustments to formulas driven by population or other demographics incorporate the most current US Census data. If other adjustments are needed to assure current factors are used in determining county allocations, proposed adjustments must include an analysis of how funds will be reduced in some counties while increasing for others, and permit counties to retain current allocation levels if the county can provide evidence that anticipated outcomes are being achieved.

Funding formulas for human services programs are not well understood in terms of what factors are included and what weights they may have, and who determines the formula. The amendment reflects a desire for greater transparency in how human services funding formulas are developed.

RESOLUTION NO. 11 *(Submitted by the CCAP Community and Economic Development Committee)* - The Association supports a requirement that counties be permitted to offer input and feedback, including but not limited to federally designated identification number (FDIN), organization name, partnering entities, number of broadband service locations (BSLs) served, number of unserved BSLs to be covered, technology used, maximum upload and download speeds, cost, date to be completed, matching fund amount, requested grant amount, and a concurrence or non-concurrence recommendation on grant applications to the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority, to be incorporated into the grant selection process.

Through working with the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority (PBDA) on the local government feedback process for grant applications, DCED legal counsel determined there could not be complete application review by local government entities. The amendment above captures the process and criteria for local government feedback as discussed by the CCAP Broadband Task Force and PBDA staff.

RESOLUTION NO. 12 *(Submitted by the CCAP Emergency Management and Veterans Affairs Committee)* - The Association opposes forced or coerced consolidation of all or part of county public safety answering points (PSAPs), but supports incentives and removal of impediments to sharing PSAP services such as equipment, training, communications infrastructure, trunking lines, and system redundancies.

Counties are not opposed to optional consolidation of PSAPs, as long as it is at the discretion of the counties without coercion or implied force. The amendment captures the change to reflect county choice in any PSAP consolidation efforts.

RESOLUTION NO. 13 *(Submitted by the CCAP Technology Committee)* - The Association urges federal and state government to assist county and local government by providing the broadest possible interoperability between public safety agencies across voice, data and geo-data, and wireless technologies, and by providing additional spectrum to address interoperability and dead zone problems created by congestion and interference with commercial services. The association also supports the transparency of provider broadband and cell coverage data being made available to all counties.

The Technology Committee proposes the addition of communication provider data transparency as part of counties efforts to address digital accessibility, availability, and equity. Getting accurate and timely information from providers has been challenging and has shown to impact counties broadband and NG911 initiatives.

RESOLUTION NO. 14 *(Submitted by the CCAP Emergency Management and Veterans Affairs Committee)* - The Association supports legislation to require communications entities, including but not limited to internet service providers, cable operators and radio stations to transmit emergency messages.

The communication and technology landscape has changed significantly over the past few years and will continue to evolve as technology and communications evolve. By capturing

communications entities overall and eliminating language tied to specific technologies, the plank can better capture future emergency notification needs.

RESOLUTION NO. 15 (Submitted by the CCAP Emergency Management and Veterans Affairs Committee) - The Association supports restitution as-a mechanism for all emergency responders, including volunteers, to recover the costs of specialized responses such as trail or forest rescues from an individual or organization when determined to be based on general negligence.

While the plank still captures the position that emergency responders, both volunteer and paid, should be able to recover costs associated with special response, the amendments aim to better connect the recovery of expenses to general negligence and charges that would, in theory, reimburse responders.

RESOLUTION NO. 16 (Submitted by the CCAP Emergency Management and Veterans Affairs Committee) - The Association supports legislative and administrative action to adequately fund EMS operations across the commonwealth at both the state and local levels, including an annual adjustment for any rate increases and an increase of the statutory cap for municipal millage rates for EMS without referendum.

As the EMS crisis continues in Pennsylvania, more legislative proposals on funding opportunities have been discussed, including opportunities to leverage specific designated taxes for EMS. Counties share concerns for the EMS climate, including funding, but want to be cautious of any funding diversions that could negatively impact other county functions or programs.

RESOLUTION NO. 17 (Submitted by the CCAP County Governance Committee) - The Association supports efforts to ensure the Commonwealth meets its obligations to adequately fund public libraries, including: Restoration of the Public Library Subsidy to at least FY 2001-2002 levels; Increasing County Coordination Aid to incentivize county and local support to libraries; Using up-to-date county funding and population statistics to guide the state's financial support and development of libraries; Funding for Library Access including restoration of the Statewide Library Card program; Restoration of funding for Libraries for the Visually Impaired and Disabled which provides library services for the state's most vulnerable citizens; Providing inflation adjustments to all funding going forward; and Reviewing library funding distribution formulas every five years.

Counties continue to edge towards being the funder of first resort for public library systems. Counties express concerns related to the commonwealth's continued lack of attention to adequately fund public libraries as they continue to pick up the responsibility of the state to fund these services. The intent is to express more clearly and directly that the commonwealth bears responsibility for funding, and counties should be more forceful in their call to adequately fund libraries.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent agenda, which contains primarily existing Platform elements scheduled for periodic review and minor technical or editorial changes, was adopted by the full CCAP membership pursuant to the Association's bylaws procedures at the 2023 Annual Conference Business Meeting on August 8, 2023.