**PLACE COUNTY LOGO HERE (Optional)**

**NEWS RELEASE**

**DATE**

**CONTACT**:

County Contact

Phone number and email address

**[Your County] joins counties statewide**

**in push for 2023 legislative priorities**

In late January, county leaders across Pennsylvania unveiled [six key county government legislative priorities](https://pacounties.org/advocacy/priorities), led by a call to reauthorize the current 911 statute and provide adequate, sustainable funding for 911 across the commonwealth.

A strong, connected 911 system is critical to ensuring services can be provided efficiently in situations of mass emergency and can keep up with the pace of ever-changing technological advances to maximize emergency services delivery.

**[QUOTE ABOUT LOCAL 911 SYSTEM OR NEED FOR FUNDING/REAUTHORIZATION]**

In addition to 911 funding and reauthorization, counties have also prioritized:

* County Inmates with Mental Health Issues
* County Mental Health Base Funding Increase
* Addressing the Needs of Children and Youth Who Have Complex Behavioral Health Issues
* Broadband Access and Development
* Promoting Election Integrity

The 2023 priorities were selected by county commissioners, council members and chief clerks across Pennsylvania as the issues with the greatest significance and the most potential for positive impact to counties in the coming year.

**[QUOTE ABOUT YOUR COUNTY GOVERNMENT’S COMMITMENT TO ENHANCING THE LIVES OF ALL RESIDENTS, FROM THEIR MENTAL HEALTH TO THEIR TECHNOLOGICAL CAPABILITIES]**

NOTE: The following capsules can be used as they are, altered to be more localized or deleted entirely.

More on Pennsylvania Counties’ 2023 Priorities:

**On County Inmates with Mental Health Issues**Achieving this priority would mean individuals with mental health issues would have access to services and diversion programs to keep them out of jail. Further, those who end up in the correction system could have access to services to help rehabilitate them and reduce further costly interactions with the criminal justice system.

**On Mental Health Base Funding Increase**

Counties support increasing annual, sustainable investments in the state’s mental health community base funding to help counties maintain and bolster the existing safety net of services, before adding any additional programs and services. Counties are also pushing for immediate allocation of the $100 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds to mental health in line with the Behavioral Health Commission’s recommendations.

**On Addressing the Needs of Children and Youth Who Have Complex Behavioral Health Issues**

As part of this priority, counties will continue working closely with the Department of Human Services to develop a partnership role for addressing complex cases and plans to educate the General Assembly while also developing contracting standards for “no eject, no reject” policies.

**On Broadband Access and Development**

Counties want every Pennsylvanian to have the ability to access the internet adequately, safely and affordably, regardless of income, geography or individual circumstance.

**On Promoting Election Integrity**

Reforms to Pennsylvania’s Election Code are needed to resolve ambiguities and help counties continue to promote the integrity of our elections. Pre-canvassing and extending the mail-in ballot application deadlines remain the most important changes counties are seeking to improve election administration.

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