

## Pennsylvania Perspective for Monday, March 17, 2025

### Pennsylvania

#### Gov. Shapiro Criticizes Dems' Strategy in Government Shutdown Fight

During an appearance on Real Time with Bill Maher, Governor Josh Shapiro criticized U.S. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer for not leveraging more concessions from Republicans in the recent government funding bill. The governor also discussed President Donald Trump's tariffs and cuts to the Department of Education, and did not rule out a future presidential run. The Philadelphia Inquirer has [more](#).

#### Bipartisan Bill to Repeal Death Penalty Gains Momentum in PA

A bipartisan group of Pennsylvania lawmakers introduced a bill last week to repeal the death penalty and replace it with life imprisonment without parole for first-degree murder. Gov. Shapiro supports the repeal and has pledged to maintain a moratorium on executions. PennLive has [more](#).

#### Hundreds of Fired Federal Workers Apply for PA State Jobs

Gov. Shapiro's outreach program has led to 700 laid-off federal employees applying for state jobs in Pennsylvania. The state is offering workshops and support to help these workers transition, following significant federal job cuts under the Trump administration. WESA has [more](#).

#### Mixed News for PA Highways in Latest Report

Pennsylvania's highways face challenges with congestion and structurally deficient bridges, but the state has improved its overall ranking from 41st to 37th. Significant progress includes better disbursements and fatality rates, though congestion remains a major issue. Center Square Pennsylvania has [more](#).

#### PA AG Probes Sunoco Pipeline Leak for Environmental Crimes

The Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office is investigating potential environmental crimes related to a Sunoco pipeline leak that contaminated household wells in Upper Makefield. The investigation follows rising concerns and criticism from local officials and residents over the company's response. The Bucks County Courier Times has [more](#).

#### COVID-19's Lasting Impact on PA's Business Landscape

The COVID-19 pandemic permanently altered business operations in Pennsylvania, accelerating shifts towards e-commerce and hybrid work. Remote work has reshaped downtown economies, reducing foot traffic and commercial real estate values in urban centers like Harrisburg and Pittsburgh, while rural areas face infrastructure challenges. The hospitality industry continues to face challenges such as workforce shortages and rising costs. City & State Pennsylvania has [more](#).

### Philadelphia

#### Budget Talks Begin with Mayor Parker's \$6.7B Proposal



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Mayor Cherelle Parker has proposed a \$6.7 billion budget for Philadelphia, focusing on tax cuts, housing, and public safety. Despite intense negotiations, significant changes to the budget are rare, with most adjustments being minor. The Philadelphia Inquirer has [more](#).

## Pittsburgh

### Recount Confirms O'Connor Edged Out Gainey for Dem Endorsement

A recount confirmed Allegheny County Controller Corey O'Connor narrowly won the Democratic Committee's endorsement for Pittsburgh mayor, defeating incumbent Mayor Ed Gainey by four votes. The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review has [more](#).

### PRT Proposes Major Cuts to Allegheny County Transit Services

Facing flat state funding, the end of pandemic aid, and lagging ridership, PRT plans significant service cuts and fare hikes unless state lawmakers provide substantial funding increases. The proposed cuts, the steepest in 25 years, could take effect in early 2026. PublicSource has [more](#).

## Federal

### Beltway Briefing—Fast and Furious Tariffs

Both the Republican and Democratic parties have consistently failed to meaningfully address the growing national debt and deficit across multiple administrations. Has this ongoing fiscal neglect paved the way for movements like MAGA to present alternative solutions aimed at restoring economic competitiveness? Listen to the latest episode featuring Public Strategies' Howard Schweitzer, Mark Alderman, and Towner French [here](#).

### President Trump Signs Stopgap Spending Bill to Avert Government Shutdown

President Trump signed a stopgap spending bill into law, keeping the federal government funded through September and avoiding a partial shutdown. The bill maintains current spending levels with slight increases for defense and reductions in domestic funding. U.S. Senator John Fetterman of Pennsylvania was among the Democrats who voted in favor of the bill. The Pennsylvania Capital-Star has [more](#).

### PA Republicans Urge Trump to Revoke Medicaid Expansion as Oz Faces Senate Hearing

Pennsylvania state Senate Republicans are [lobbying](#) the Trump administration to rescind Medicaid waivers that expand services for low-income families, citing cost concerns. Meanwhile, Mehmet Oz [testified](#) before the U.S. Senate, avoiding a commitment to oppose Medicaid cuts as he seeks confirmation to lead the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

### Dems Launch Town Hall Series in GOP Districts

The Democratic National Committee and allied groups are organizing town halls in Republican-held districts to highlight opposition to President Trump's agenda and GOP incumbents' avoidance of traditional town halls. The events aim to focus on vulnerable Republican House districts, including PA-07 and PA-08. The Pennsylvania Capital-Star has [more](#).

### How Federal Workforce Cuts, Tariffs Are Impacting PA

Recent federal workforce cuts have [led](#) to significant job losses in Pennsylvania, affecting both urban and rural areas. Meanwhile, new tariffs imposed on steel and aluminum have led to retaliatory levies from Canada, [affecting](#) Pennsylvania's exports like motorcycles, coffee, and chocolate.



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