

House Local Government Committee Voting Meeting
Room 60 East Wing
Harrisburg, PA 17120
April 29, 2026
10:00 AM

Agenda

Call to Order

Roll Call

Pledge of Allegiance

Legislation to be Considered

- **HB 973 (Brennan)** -- Establishes the Municipal Police Enhancement Consolidation Grant Program to be administered by the Commission on Crime and Delinquency.
 - **Amendment A-03096 (B. Miller)** – Would remove the existing provisions of the bill and replace them with a clarification of the uses of the existing Municipal Assistance Program within DCED.
 - **Amendment A-03098 (B. Miller)** – Would prohibit a municipal police department that receives a grant under the program from being eligible for another Commonwealth grant for the same activities.
 - **Amendment A-03100 (Freeman)** – Omnibus amendment that would address stakeholder concerns.
- **HB 2320 (B. Miller)** -- Permits newly elected officials of boroughs and third class cities to have their expenses paid when attending educational training provided prior to the beginning of their terms.
- **HB 2361 (Freeman)** -- Clarifies procedures and addresses obstacles in cases of municipal mergers initiated by a petition of electors rather than by the municipal governing body.
 - **Amendment A-03085 (Freeman)** – Would provide for court appointment of additional members to the transitional planning and advisory committees under certain circumstances.
- **HR 136 (Brennan)** -- Directs the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study to determine the impact on taxpayers of Pennsylvania State Police full or partial police services for municipalities that do not maintain full police coverage.
 - **Amendment A-03026 (Freeman)** – Would provide for additional representation on the advisory committee from organizations advocating on behalf of municipal governments and make an editorial change.
 - **Amendment A-03090 (B. Miller)** – Would stipulate that the impact of municipalities that fund a police department on State Police services and costs to the Commonwealth be included within the study.
 - **Amendment A-03091 (B. Miller)** – Would stipulate that the impact on the State Police if sheriffs were given policing power to help municipalities be included within the study.
- **HR 368 (Webster)** -- Directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study of changes in commercial property values and the fiscal impact on local governments and school districts and make recommendations.
 - **Amendment A-03070 (Freeman)** – Omnibus amendment that would address stakeholder concerns.
 - **Amendment A-03087 (B. Miller)** – Provides that local-level mechanisms that address municipal budget shortfalls attributable to declining commercial property values be included within the study.

Any Other Business

Adjournment

And any other business that comes before the Committee

Adjournment

Microsoft Teams meeting

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The information transmitted is intended only for the person or entity to which it is addressed and may contain confidential and/or privileged material.

Attachments:

- Sunshine Memo
- LGC Agenda for Voting Meeting on April 29 2026
- HB0973
- Analysis HB0973
- A03096-HB973
- A03098-HB973
- A03100-HB973
- HB2320
- Analysis-HB2320
- HB2361
- Analysis-HB2361
- A03085-HB2361
- HR136
- Analysis-HR0136
- A03026-HR136
- A03090-HR136
- A03091-HR136
- HR368
- Analysis-HR0368
- A03070-HR368
- A03087-HB368



Local Government Committee

State Representative Robert L. Freeman
Majority Chairman

207 Irvis Office Building • P.O. Box 202136 • Harrisburg, PA 17120-2136 • 717-783-3815

April 22, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the House Local Government Committee
FROM: Rep. Robert L. Freeman, Majority Chairman
SUBJECT: Voting Meeting Notification – April 29, 2026

Please be advised that the House Local Government Committee will hold a voting meeting on **Wednesday, April 29, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. in 60 East Wing.**

The agenda will consist of the following legislation as well as any other business that may come before the committee:

- **HB 973 (Brennan)** -- Establishes the Municipal Police Enhancement Consolidation Grant Program to be administered by the Commission on Crime and Delinquency.
- **HB 2320 (B. Miller)** -- Permits newly elected officials of boroughs and third class cities to have their expenses paid when attending educational training provided prior to the beginning of their terms.
- **HB 2361 (Freeman)** -- Clarifies procedures and addresses obstacles in cases of municipal mergers initiated by a petition of electors rather than by the municipal governing body.
- **HR 136 (Brennan)** -- Directs the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study to determine the impact on taxpayers of Pennsylvania State Police full or partial police services for municipalities that do not maintain full police coverage.
- **HR 368 (Webster)** -- Directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study of changes in commercial property values and the fiscal impact on local governments and school districts and make recommendations.

If you have any questions, please contact Jon Castelli, Executive Director at 717-783-3815 or jcastell@pahouse.net. For those planning to participate virtually, a Teams link will be forthcoming.

House Local Government Committee

Wednesday, April 29, 2026

10:00 AM

60 East Wing

AGENDA

Call to Order

Roll Call

Pledge of Allegiance

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 - **Amendment A-03098 (B. Miller)** – Would prohibit a municipal police department that receives a grant under the program from being eligible for another Commonwealth grant for the same activities.
 - **Amendment A-03100 (Freeman)** – Omnibus amendment that would address stakeholder concerns.

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- **HB 2361 (Freeman)** -- Clarifies procedures and addresses obstacles in cases of municipal mergers initiated by a petition of electors rather than by the municipal governing body.
 - **Amendment A-03085 (Freeman)** – Would provide for court appointment of additional members to the transitional planning and advisory committees under certain circumstances.

- **HR 136 (Brennan)** -- Directs the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study to determine the impact on taxpayers of Pennsylvania State Police full or partial police services for municipalities that do not maintain full police coverage.
 - **Amendment A-03026 (Freeman)** – Would provide for additional representation on the advisory committee from organizations advocating on behalf of municipal governments and make an editorial change.

- **Amendment A-03090 (B. Miller)** – Would stipulate that the impact of municipalities that fund a police department on State Police services and costs to the Commonwealth be included within the study.
- **Amendment A-03091 (B. Miller)** – Would stipulate that the impact on the State Police if sheriffs were given policing power to help municipalities be included within the study.
- **HR 368 (Webster)** -- Directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study of changes in commercial property values and the fiscal impact on local governments and school districts and make recommendations.
 - **Amendment A-03070 (Freeman)** – Omnibus amendment that would address stakeholder concerns.
 - **Amendment A-03087 (B. Miller)** – Provides that local-level mechanisms that address municipal budget shortfalls attributable to declining commercial property values be included within the study.

Any Other Business

Adjournment

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 973 Session of
2025

INTRODUCED BY BRENNAN, KENYATTA, PIELLI, SANCHEZ, GIRAL, BURGOS,
HILL-EVANS, SCHLOSSBERG, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, DOUGHERTY AND GREEN,
MARCH 19, 2025

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT, MARCH 19, 2025

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) of the Pennsylvania
2 Consolidated Statutes, in general provisions relating to area
3 government and intergovernmental cooperation, providing for
4 Municipal Police Enhancement Consolidation Grant Program and
5 establishing the Municipal Police Enhancement Consolidation
6 Grant Program Fund.

7 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
8 hereby enacts as follows:

9 Section 1. Chapter 23 of Title 53 of the Pennsylvania
10 Consolidated Statutes is amended by adding a subchapter to read:

11 SUBCHAPTER D

12 MUNICIPAL POLICE ENHANCEMENT

13 CONSOLIDATION GRANT PROGRAM

14 Sec.

15 2351. Definitions.

16 2352. Establishment of program.

17 2353. Publication and notice of program.

18 2354. Award of grants.

19 2355. Applications for grants.

1 2356. Accreditation or consolidation incentives.

2 2357. Municipal Police Enhancement Consolidation Grant Program
3 Fund.

4 § 2351. Definitions.

5 The following words and phrases when used in this subchapter
6 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
7 context clearly indicates otherwise:

8 "Application." An application submitted under section
9 2355(c) (relating to applications for grants) for a grant under
10 the program.

11 "Commission." The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and
12 Delinquency.

13 "Consolidation." The process of consolidating two or more
14 municipal police departments under Subchapter A (relating to
15 intergovernmental cooperation) or by a contract for services.

16 "Fund." The Municipal Police Enhancement Consolidation Grant
17 Program Fund established under section 2357(a) (relating to
18 Municipal Police Enhancement Consolidation Grant Program Fund).

19 "Municipal police department." A police department that has
20 been organized and established by a municipality.

21 "Municipality." A city of the second class A, city of the
22 third class, borough, township of the first class or township of
23 the second class.

24 "Program." The Municipal Police Enhancement Consolidation
25 Grant Program established under section 2352 (relating to
26 establishment of program).

27 § 2352. Establishment of program.

28 The Municipal Police Enhancement Consolidation Grant Program
29 is established and shall be administered by the commission.
30 Grants provided under the program shall be used to improve and

1 enhance the capabilities of municipal police departments,
2 incentivize consolidation and provide training and other
3 appropriate resources to municipal police officers.

4 § 2353. Publication and notice of program.

5 The commission shall transmit notice of the availability of
6 grants under the program to the Legislative Reference Bureau for
7 publication in the next available issue of the Pennsylvania
8 Bulletin within 120 days from June 30, 2026, for grants under
9 the program for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, and by
10 August 8 for grants under the program for each fiscal year
11 thereafter.

12 § 2354. Award of grants.

13 (a) Authorization.--The commission may award grants under
14 the program to municipal police departments for any of the
15 following:

16 (1) Consolidation and improvements to infrastructure,
17 including expanding or modifying municipal police buildings
18 for the purpose of consolidation.

19 (2) Achieving accreditation standards of the
20 International Association of Chiefs of Police.

21 (3) Training and certification of municipal police
22 officers.

23 (4) Community outreach programs.

24 (b) Additional grants.--A municipal police department with
25 not more than 10 police officers shall be eligible to receive
26 additional grants under the program in accordance with the
27 certification bonus point system under section 2356 (relating to
28 accreditation or consolidation incentives) for any of the
29 following:

30 (1) Consolidation.

1 (2) Achieving accreditation standards of the
2 International Association of Chiefs of Police.

3 (c) Grant limits.--

4 (1) A grant under the program shall be:

5 (i) Not less than \$5,000 nor more than \$100,000 per
6 municipal police department for the purpose of
7 consolidation.

8 (ii) Not less than \$5,000 nor more than \$50,000 per
9 municipal police department for the purpose of achieving
10 accreditation standards of the International Association
11 of Chiefs of Police.

12 (iii) Not less than \$5,000 nor more than \$15,000 per
13 municipal police department for the purposes of training
14 and certification of municipal police officers or for the
15 purpose of community outreach programs.

16 (2) Grants may be awarded on a pro rata basis if the
17 total dollar amount of applications submitted under section
18 2355(c) (relating to applications for grants) exceeds the
19 amount of money appropriated by the General Assembly for the
20 program.

21 § 2355. Applications for grants.

22 (a) Instructions.--Within 120 days of June 30, 2026, for
23 applications for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, and by
24 September 1 for applications for each fiscal year thereafter,
25 the commission shall provide written notice of the application
26 instructions to the chief of each municipal police department or
27 the chief executive of each municipality.

28 (b) Applications.--Within 180 days of June 30, 2026, for
29 applications for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026, and by
30 October 1 for applications for each fiscal year thereafter, the

1 commission shall provide applications to the chief of each
2 municipal police department or the chief executive of each
3 municipality.

4 (c) Submission.--A municipal police department seeking a
5 grant under the program shall submit a completed application to
6 the commission within an application period prescribed by the
7 commission. The application period shall remain open for 60 days
8 each year.

9 (d) Approval or disapproval.--The commission shall approve
10 or disapprove an application received under subsection (c)
11 within 120 days after the close of the application period. An
12 application which has not been approved or disapproved by the
13 commission within 120 days after the close of the application
14 period shall be deemed approved.

15 § 2356. Accreditation or consolidation incentives.

16 The commission shall establish a certification bonus point
17 system to provide additional grant funding to a municipal police
18 department which has achieved accreditation or consolidation.

19 § 2357. Municipal Police Enhancement Consolidation Grant
20 Program Fund.

21 (a) Establishment.--The Municipal Police Enhancement
22 Consolidation Grant Program Fund is established as a separate
23 fund in the State Treasury for the purpose of making grants
24 under the program.

25 (b) Funding.--Grants under the program may be awarded from
26 money appropriated, allocated or otherwise made available to the
27 fund.

28 (c) Continuing appropriation.--All money deposited into the
29 fund and all interest accrued is appropriated to the commission
30 on a continuing basis for the purposes provided under this

1 section.

2 (d) Administration.--The commission may not allocate more
3 than \$500,000 of money in the fund for the administrative costs
4 of the program.

5 (e) Grant allocations.--After payment of administrative
6 costs under subsection (d), the money in the fund shall be
7 allocated as follows:

8 (1) Twenty-five percent of the money shall be used for
9 grants to municipal police departments that have achieved
10 consolidation.

11 (2) Seventy-five percent of the money shall be used for
12 grants to municipal police departments for the following
13 purposes:

14 (i) Achieving accreditation standards of the
15 International Association of Chiefs of Police.

16 (ii) Training and certification of municipal police
17 officers.

18 (iii) Community outreach programs.

19 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE BILL ANALYSIS

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Bill No: | HB0973 PN1056 | Prepared By: | Ryan Carpenter (717) 783-3815,6110 |
| Committee: | Local Government | Executive Director: | Jon R. Castelli |
| Sponsor: | Brennan, Timothy | | |
| Date: | 8/26/2025 | | |

A. Brief Concept

Would establish the Municipal Police Enhancement Consolidation Grant Program to assist municipalities with improving or consolidating their police departments.

C. Analysis of the Bill

This legislation would amend Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) to establish the Municipal Police Enhancement Consolidation Grant Program. The program would be administered by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency.

Applications for Grants

Starting in fiscal year 2026-2027 the commission would provide written notice of application instructions and applications to the chief of each municipal fire department or the chief executive of each municipality. Eligible municipal police departments for the program would be police departments that have been organized and established by a city of the second class A, city of the third class, borough, or township. The application period would be open for 60 days each year.

The commission would approve or disapprove applications within 120 days after the close of the application period. An application which has not been approved or disapproved by the commission within this period would be automatically approved.

Awarding of Grants

The commission may award grants to municipal police departments for any of the following:

- Consolidation and improvements to infrastructure, including expanding or modifying municipal police buildings for the purpose of consolidation.
- Achieving accreditation standards of the International Association of Chiefs of Police.
- Training and certification of municipal police officers.
- Community outreach programs.

The commission would establish a certification bonus point system to provide additional funding to a municipal police department that has achieved accreditation or consolidation. A police department with ten police officers or fewer would be eligible to receive additional grants under the program in accordance with this system for achieving consolidation or accreditation.

Grants amounts would vary based on what they are awarded for:

- A grant awarded for the purpose of consolidation would be no less than \$5,000 and no more than \$100,000.
- A grant awarded for achieving accreditation would be no less than \$5,000 and no more than \$50,000.
- A grant awarded for training and certifying officers or community outreach programs would be no less than \$5,000 and no more than \$15,000.

Grants may be awarded on a pro rata basis if the total dollar amount of applications exceed the amount of money appropriated by the General Assembly for the program.

Municipal Police Enhancement Consolidation Grant Program Fund

The Municipal Police Enhancement Consolidation Grant Program Fund would be established in the State Treasury for the purpose of making grants under the program. Grants under the program may be awarded from money that is appropriated, allocated, or otherwise made available to the fund. The commission may not allocate more than \$500,000 of money in the fund for administrative costs of the program.

Furthermore, twenty-five percent of the money in the fund shall be used for awarding grants for consolidation purposes. Seventy-five percent shall be used for awarding grants for achieving accreditation, training and accreditation officers, and community outreach.

Effective Date:

Sixty days.

G. Relevant Existing Laws

Although there are some broad state grant programs that may be used can be used to support municipal police departments, there is currently no dedicated funding to support police accreditation and consolidation.

E. Prior Session (Previous Bill Numbers & House/Senate Votes)

This legislation was introduced last session by Rep. Brennan as HB 2415. It was referred to the House Judiciary Committee but did not receive further consideration.

This document is a summary of proposed legislation and is prepared only as general information for use by the Democratic Members and Staff of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. The document does not represent the legislative intent of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and may not be utilized as such.

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 973

Sponsor: *Miller, B. #41*

Printer's No. 1056

1 Amend Bill, page 1, lines 4 through 6, by striking out all of
2 said lines and inserting

3 municipal police enhancement, accreditation and consolidation.

4 Amend Bill, page 1, lines 11 through 13; pages 2 through 5,
5 lines 1 through 30; page 6, lines 1 through 18; by striking out
6 all of said lines on said pages and inserting

7 SUBCHAPTER D

8 MUNICIPAL POLICE ENHANCEMENT,
9 ACCREDITATION AND CONSOLIDATION

10 Sec.

11 2351. Definitions.

12 2352. Additional program eligibility.

13 § 2351. Definitions.

14 The following words and phrases when used in this subchapter
15 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
16 context clearly indicates otherwise:

17 "Consolidation." The process of consolidating two or more
18 municipal police departments under Subchapter A (relating to
19 intergovernmental cooperation) or by a contract for services.

20 "Municipal police department." A police department that has
21 been organized and established by a municipality.

22 "Municipality." A city of the second class A, city of the
23 third class, borough, township of the first class or township of
24 the second class.

25 "Program." The Municipal Assistance Program within the
26 Department of Community and Economic Development of the
27 Commonwealth.

28 § 2352. Additional program eligibility.

29 (a) Additional eligibility.--From money available for the
30 program, a municipality may apply for a grant to:

31 (1) enhance the capabilities of municipal police
32 departments;

33 (2) incentivize accreditation and consolidation; and

34 (3) provide training and other appropriate resources to
35 municipal police officers.

1 (b) Other eligibility.--A municipality's eligibility under
2 subsection (a) shall be in addition to any other eligibility or
3 use of funds for the program.

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 973

Sponsor: *Miller, B. # 41*

Printer's No. 1056

1 Amend Bill, page 3, by inserting between lines 23 and 24

2 (b) Limitation.--A municipal police department that receives
3 a grant under this section shall be ineligible for another grant
4 from the Commonwealth for the same activities.

5 Amend Bill, page 3, line 24, by striking out "(b)" and
6 inserting

7 (c)

8 Amend Bill, page 4, line 3, by striking out "(c)" and
9 inserting

10 (d)

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 973

Sponsor: *Freeman, #136*

Printer's No. 1056

- 1 Amend Bill, page 1, line 4, by inserting after "Enhancement"
2 and
3 Amend Bill, page 1, line 5, by inserting after "Enhancement"
4 and
5 Amend Bill, page 1, line 12, by inserting after "ENHANCEMENT"
6 AND
7 Amend Bill, page 1, lines 17 through 19, by striking out all
8 of lines 17 and 18 and "2355" in line 19 and inserting
9 2353
10 Amend Bill, page 1, by inserting after line 19
11 2354. Review process.
12 Amend Bill, page 2, line 1, by striking out "2356.
13 Accreditation or consolidation incentives." and inserting
14 2355. Award of grants.
15 2356. Limitations.
16 Amend Bill, page 2, line 2, by striking out "2357" and
17 inserting
18 2357
19 Amend Bill, page 2, line 2, by inserting after "Enhancement"
20 and
21 Amend Bill, page 2, by inserting between lines 3 and 4
22 2358. Report.
23 Amend Bill, page 2, by inserting between lines 7 and 8
24 "Accreditation." The certification of a police department by
25 the Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission or

1 another recognized accrediting body, affirming that the police
2 department meets established professional standards and best
3 practices for law enforcement operations.

4 "Applicant." A municipality or police department that
5 submits an application.

6 Amend Bill, page 2, line 9, by striking out "2355(c)" and
7 inserting

8 2353(b)

9 Amend Bill, page 2, line 14, by striking out "municipal"

10 Amend Bill, page 2, line 16, by inserting after "Enhancement"
11 and

12 Amend Bill, page 2, line 18, by inserting after "Enhancement"
13 and

14 Amend Bill, page 2, lines 19 and 20, by striking out all of
15 said lines and inserting

16 "Municipal police officer." A full-time or part-time
17 employee of a municipality who is empowered to enforce the laws
18 of this Commonwealth and the rules of the governing body of the
19 municipality.

20 Amend Bill, page 2, line 22, by striking out "borough,"

21 Amend Bill, page 2, line 23, by striking out the period after
22 "class" and inserting

23 , borough, incorporated town or home rule municipality.

24 "Police department." A public agency of a municipality
25 having general police powers and charged with making arrests in
26 connection with the enforcement of criminal or traffic laws. The
27 term includes a regional police department from which a
28 municipality receives police services or a police department
29 that provides the municipality with police services under an
30 agreement or contract.

31 Amend Bill, page 2, line 24, by inserting after "Enhancement"
32 and

33 Amend Bill, page 2, line 28, by inserting after "Enhancement"
34 and

35 Amend Bill, page 3, line 1, by striking out "municipal"

36 Amend Bill, page 3, line 2, by inserting after "incentivize"

1 voluntary

2 Amend Bill, page 3, lines 4 through 30; page 4, lines 1
3 through 30; page 5, lines 1 through 3; by striking out all of
4 said lines on said pages and inserting

5 § 2353. Applications for grants.

6 (a) Duty of commission.--The commission shall prescribe the
7 form and manner in which an application may be submitted to
8 receive a grant award under the program.

9 Amend Bill, page 5, line 4, by striking out "(c)" and
10 inserting

11 (b)

12 Amend Bill, page 5, line 4, by striking out "municipal" and
13 inserting

14 municipality or

15 Amend Bill, page 5, line 5, by striking out "shall" and
16 inserting

17 must

18 Amend Bill, page 5, line 5, by inserting after "submit"

19 to the commission

20 Amend Bill, page 5, lines 5 through 18, by striking out "to"
21 in line 5 and all of lines 6 through 18 and inserting

22 that supports accreditation or consolidation goals. The
23 commission shall accept applications on an annual basis, pending
24 the availability of funding.

25 § 2354. Review process.

26 (a) Duty of commission.--The commission shall review
27 completed applications received from eligible applicants in
28 consultation with the Governor's Office of Homeland Security,
29 the Pennsylvania State Police and the Department of Community
30 and Economic Development.

31 (b) Geographic diversity.--The commission shall ensure that
32 grant awards made under the program are geographically dispersed
33 throughout this Commonwealth.

34 § 2355. Award of grants.

35 The commission may issue a grant award to an applicant for
36 any of the following:

37 (1) Costs related to the consolidation of police
38 services, including shared equipment, vehicles and uniforms,
39 as well as reasonable modifications to share police

1 facilities to support joint operations.

2 (2) Personnel, including sworn officers, and nonsworn
3 civilians, necessary for accreditation or consolidation.

4 (3) Technology and information technology improvements,
5 including record management systems, report management
6 systems and national incident-based reporting system updates.

7 (4) Hardware and software equipment, including body-worn
8 cameras, vehicle cameras and mobile information technology
9 equipment.

10 (5) Development and implementation of policies and
11 procedures aligned with accreditation requirements and
12 evidence-based practices.

13 (6) Community engagement and crime prevention programs
14 responsive to local public safety needs and developed in
15 collaboration with local stakeholders.

16 (7) Any other eligible activity that directly supports
17 accreditation or consolidation goals.

18 § 2356. Limitations.

19 (a) Grant amount.--A grant under the program may not exceed
20 \$100,000 for eligible activities under section 2355 (relating to
21 award of grants).

22 (b) Program awards.--Grants may be awarded on a pro rata
23 basis if the total dollar amount of applications submitted
24 exceeds the amount of money appropriated for the program.

25 (c) Restriction on usage of grant money.--

26 (1) Grant money allocated under the program shall be
27 used to supplement and not supplant existing funding.

28 (2) Nothing in this section shall be construed to
29 prohibit a police department from making an application to
30 receive a grant award under the program in a subsequent year
31 for the same purpose and amount in the prior year.

32 Amend Bill, page 5, line 19, by inserting after "Enhancement"
33 and

34 Amend Bill, page 5, line 21, by inserting after "Enhancement"
35 and

36 Amend Bill, page 6, lines 2 through 18, by striking out "The
37 commission may not allocate more" in line 2 and all of lines 3
38 through 18 and inserting

39 The commission may not expend more than 3% of money
40 appropriated to the commission for the program on
41 administrative expenses.

42 § 2358. Report.

43 By December 31 following the end of the third fiscal year of
44 grant availability, the Local Government Commission shall
45 develop a written report on the funding and effectiveness of the
46 program. The commission and grantees shall provide the Local

- 1 Government Commission with all requested documentation related
- 2 to the study.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2320 Session of
2026

INTRODUCED BY B. MILLER, FREEMAN, SAPPEY, SMITH-WADE-EL AND
JAMES, MARCH 25, 2026

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT, MARCH 26, 2026

AN ACT

1 Amending Titles 8 (Boroughs and Incorporated Towns) and 11
2 (Cities) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in
3 elections of officers, further providing for officers
4 elected; and, in elected officers and elections, providing
5 for newly elected officer training.

6 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
7 hereby enacts as follows:

8 Section 1. Section 806 of Title 8 of the Pennsylvania
9 Consolidated Statutes is amended by adding a subsection to read:

10 § 806. Officers elected.

11 * * *

12 (c) Newly elected officers training.--Notwithstanding
13 subsection (b), a borough may pay the necessary expenses for a
14 newly elected borough officer to attend educational training
15 provided prior to the beginning of the newly elected officer's
16 term.

17 Section 2. Title 11 is amended by adding a section to read:

18 § 10705. Newly elected officer training.

19 A city may pay the necessary expenses for a newly elected

1 officer to attend educational training provided prior to the
2 beginning of the newly elected officer's term.

3 Section 3. This act shall take effect in 60 days.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE BILL ANALYSIS

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Bill No: | HB2320 PN3094 | Prepared By: | Ryan Carpenter (717) 783-3815 |
| Committee: | Local Government | Executive Director: | Jon R Castelli |
| Sponsor: | Miller, Brett | | |
| Date: | 4/23/2026 | | |

A. Brief Concept

Would allow for boroughs and third class cities to pay for expenses related to educational training of newly elected officers.

C. Analysis of the Bill

This legislation would amend Section 806 of Title 8 (Boroughs and Incorporated Towns) and Section 10705 of Title 11 (Cities) to authorize boroughs and third class cities to pay for necessary expenses for a newly elected borough or city officer to attend educational training prior to starting their term.

Effective Date:

Sixty days.

G. Relevant Existing Laws

Section 701.1 of Title 8 (Boroughs and Incorporated Towns) authorizes elected and appointed borough officers already in office to attend meetings and training with expenses approved and paid by council.

Section 10916(a)(2) and (3), (b) and (c) of Title 11 (Cities) authorizes elected and appointed third class city officers already in office to attend meetings and training with expenses approved and paid by council.

Neither statute currently authorizes newly elected officers to attend training with expenses paid for by their respective council.

E. Prior Session (Previous Bill Numbers & House/Senate Votes)

N/A

This document is a summary of proposed legislation and is prepared only as general information for use by the Democratic Members and Staff of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. The document does not represent the legislative intent of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and may not be utilized as such.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2361 Session of
2026

INTRODUCED BY FREEMAN, SAPPEY, SMITH-WADE-EL, JAMES AND
B. MILLER, APRIL 6, 2026

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT, APRIL 7, 2026

AN ACT

1 Amending Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) of the Pennsylvania
2 Consolidated Statutes, in alteration of territory or
3 corporate entity and dissolution, further providing for
4 definitions, for procedure for consolidation or merger, for
5 joint agreement of governing bodies, for initiative of
6 electors seeking consolidation or merger with new home rule
7 charter and for conduct of referenda, repealing provisions
8 relating to consolidation or merger agreement, providing for
9 advisory committee, consolidation or merger agreement and
10 mediation, further providing for effectuation of
11 consolidation or merger, for procedures and for court review
12 of transitional plan and providing for extension of deadlines
13 and for grant qualification.

14 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
15 hereby enacts as follows:

16 Section 1. Section 732 of Title 53 of the Pennsylvania
17 Consolidated Statutes is amended by adding definitions to read:
18 § 732. Definitions.

19 The following words and phrases when used in this subchapter
20 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
21 context clearly indicates otherwise:

22 * * *

23 "Consolidation or merger agreement." An agreement entered

1 into under section 737.1 (relating to advisory committee,
2 consolidation or merger agreement and mediation) by the
3 governing bodies of municipalities to be consolidated or merged
4 if the consolidation or merger is initiated by petition of
5 electors under section 735 (relating to initiative of electors
6 seeking consolidation or merger without new home rule charter).

7 * * *

8 "Joint agreement." An agreement entered into under section
9 734 (relating to joint agreement of governing bodies) by the
10 governing bodies of municipalities proposed to be consolidated
11 or merged if the consolidation or merger is initiated by the
12 governing bodies.

13 * * *

14 Section 2. Section 733(a) (3) and (b) of Title 53 are amended
15 to read:

16 § 733. Procedure for consolidation or merger.

17 (a) General rule.--Two or more municipalities may be
18 consolidated or merged into a single municipality, whether
19 within the same or different counties, if each of the
20 municipalities is contiguous to at least one of the other
21 consolidating or merging municipalities and if together the
22 municipalities would form a consolidated or merged municipality.
23 Consolidation or merger may be commenced by one of the
24 following:

25 * * *

26 [(3) One or more of the municipalities using a joint
27 agreement followed by approval by the electorate of the joint
28 agreement and one or more of the municipalities using
29 initiative of electors.]

30 (b) Combination of joint agreement and initiative.--When

1 consolidation or merger is commenced by a combination of joint
2 agreements and initiatives, the initiative petition and
3 municipal joint agreement shall be materially consistent.]

4 * * *

5 Section 3. Section 734(a), (b)(10) and (c) of Title 53 are
6 amended and the section is amended by adding subsections to
7 read:

8 § 734. Joint agreement of governing bodies.

9 (a) [General rule] Form.--The governing body of each
10 municipality proposed to be consolidated or merged shall enter
11 into a joint agreement [under the official seal of each
12 municipality] by ordinance to consolidate or merge into one
13 municipality.

14 (b) Elements.--The joint agreement shall include, but not be
15 limited to:

16 * * *

17 (10) The common administration and enforcement of
18 ordinances enforced uniformly within the consolidated or
19 merged municipality and the interim processing of land use
20 applications and approvals.

21 (c) Transitional planning committee.--In preparing and
22 adopting a joint agreement, the governing bodies of the
23 municipalities may appoint a transitional planning committee
24 [composed of residents of the respective municipalities,
25 including not more than one of whom may be a member of the
26 governing body of each municipality,] to study and make
27 recommendations to the governing bodies regarding transitional
28 plans and schedules, common administration and uniform
29 enforcement of ordinances, consolidation and merger of
30 departments and staff and other matters of concern to the

1 governing bodies. [The transitional planning committee, if
2 created, shall continue for a maximum of six months after the
3 effective date of the consolidation or merger to advise the new
4 governing body of the consolidated or merged municipality on
5 merging budgets, staffing and operations.] No later than 60 days
6 after certification of a favorable vote on consolidation or
7 merger, the governing bodies shall establish and appoint members
8 of a transitional planning committee if one has not already been
9 established.

10 (d) Composition.--The transitional planning committee,
11 regardless of when established, shall consist of the following
12 members:

13 (1) One member of the governing body of each
14 municipality, appointed by the governing body.

15 (2) One resident of each municipality, appointed by the
16 governing body, who is not a member of the governing body, an
17 appointed officer of the municipality or an employee of the
18 municipality.

19 (3) One employee of each municipality, appointed by the
20 governing body. If a municipality has no employee who is not
21 also a member of the governing body, the governing body shall
22 appoint an additional resident under paragraph (2) in lieu of
23 an employee under this paragraph.

24 (4) One additional resident of an affected municipality,
25 appointed by mutual agreement of the members appointed under
26 paragraph (1). If the members appointed under paragraph (1)
27 cannot reach mutual agreement, the members shall draw lots to
28 determine which resident shall be appointed.

29 (5) One nonvoting representative appointed by the
30 Secretary of Community and Economic Development.

1 (6) A chairperson elected by majority vote of the
2 transitional planning committee from among the membership of
3 the transitional planning committee.

4 (e) Continuation.--The transitional planning committee,
5 regardless of when it was established, shall continue until six
6 months after the effective date of the consolidation or merger
7 to advise the new governing body of the consolidated or merged
8 municipality on merging budgets, staffing and operations.

9 Section 4. Section 735.1(k) (3) (iii) (D) of Title 53 is
10 amended to read:

11 § 735.1. Initiative of electors seeking consolidation or merger
12 with new home rule charter.

13 * * *

14 (k) Function and duty of commission.--

15 * * *

16 (3) If a new home rule charter is found to be the most
17 advisable form of government for the proposed consolidated or
18 merged municipality, the commission shall:

19 * * *

20 (iii) Prepare and suggest for adoption by the
21 governing body of the newly consolidated or merged
22 municipality recommendations concerning:

23 * * *

24 (D) Ordinances to be uniformly enforced
25 throughout the consolidated or merged municipality,
26 which may be adopted by the new governing body of the
27 consolidated or merged municipality at its
28 organizational meeting and the interim processing of
29 land use applications and approvals, provided that
30 codification of all ordinances shall be completed as

1 specified in section 740 (relating to procedures).

2 * * *

3 Section 5. Section 736 of Title 53 is amended by adding a
4 subsection to read:

5 § 736. Conduct of referenda.

6 * * *

7 (d) Filing.--The governing bodies of the municipalities
8 approved for consolidation or merger shall file copies of the
9 following documents as follows:

10 (1) Within 30 days after certification by the county
11 board of elections of approval by the electorate, the
12 governing bodies shall file a copy of the joint agreement
13 under section 734 or the final report of the home rule study
14 commission under section 735.1 with the Department of
15 Community and Economic Development, the Department of
16 Transportation, the Governor's Office of Policy Development
17 or its successor, the Department of Education, the Department
18 of State, the State Tax Equalization Board, the United States
19 Postal Service, the Legislative Data Processing Center, the
20 court of common pleas, the board of county commissioners and
21 the county board of elections of the county in which an
22 affected municipality is located or, if an affected
23 municipality is located in more than one county, of each
24 affected county.

25 (2) Within 30 days after adoption by ordinance of the
26 consolidation or merger agreement under section 737.1
27 (relating to advisory committee, consolidation or merger
28 agreement and mediation), the governing bodies shall file a
29 copy of the agreement with the entities specified in
30 paragraph (1).

1 Section 6. Section 737 of Title 53 is repealed:

2 [§ 737. Consolidation or merger agreement.

3 (a) Form.--Upon favorable action by the electorate on
4 consolidation or merger, in cases where consolidation or merger
5 was initiated by petition of electors under section 735
6 (relating to initiative of electors seeking consolidation or
7 merger without new home rule charter), the governing bodies of
8 the municipalities to be consolidated or merged shall meet as
9 deemed necessary after the certification of the favorable vote
10 and shall within one year after certification enter into a
11 consolidation or merger agreement as follows:

12 (1) If the governing body, or part of the governing
13 body, of the consolidated or merged municipality is to be
14 elected on a district or ward basis, the agreement shall set
15 forth the district or ward boundaries and the district or
16 ward designation, by number, and the number of members of the
17 municipal governing body to be elected from each district or
18 ward. The boundaries of the districts or wards shall be
19 established to achieve substantially equal representation.

20 (2) The agreement shall set forth terms for:

21 (i) The disposition of the existing assets of each
22 municipality.

23 (ii) The liquidation of the existing indebtedness of
24 each municipality.

25 (iii) The assumption, assignment and disposition of
26 the existing liabilities of each municipality, either
27 jointly, separately or in certain defined proportions, by
28 separate rates of taxation within each of the constituent
29 municipalities until consolidation or merger becomes
30 effective pursuant to section 738 (relating to

1 effectuation of consolidation or merger).

2 (3) The agreement shall set forth the governmental
3 organization of the consolidated or merged municipality
4 insofar as it concerns elected officers and shall contain a
5 transitional plan and schedule applicable to elected
6 officers.

7 (4) The agreement shall provide for common
8 administration and uniform enforcement of ordinances within
9 the consolidated or merged municipality.

10 (5) The agreement shall also provide, consistent with
11 existing law, for the implementation of a uniform tax system
12 throughout the consolidated or merged municipality which
13 shall provide the revenue necessary to fund required
14 municipal services.

15 (6) The agreement shall mandate full implementation of
16 the consolidation or merger plan within four years following
17 the date of certification.

18 (b) Filing.--Within 30 days following certification of
19 electorate approval by the county boards of election, a copy of
20 the consolidation or merger agreement under this section or the
21 joint agreement under section 734 (relating to joint agreement
22 of governing bodies) shall be filed with the Department of
23 Community and Economic Development, the Department of
24 Transportation, the Governor's Office of Policy Development or
25 its successor, the Department of Education, the State Tax
26 Equalization Board and the Legislative Data Processing
27 Committee. A copy shall also be filed with the court of common
28 pleas and the board of county commissioners of the county or
29 counties in which municipalities affected are located.]

30 Section 7. Title 53 is amended by adding a section to read:

1 § 737.1. Advisory committee, consolidation or merger agreement
2 and mediation.

3 (a) Advisory committee.--Upon favorable action by the
4 electorate on consolidation or merger, if the consolidation or
5 merger was initiated by petition of electors under section 735
6 (relating to initiative of electors seeking consolidation or
7 merger without new home rule charter), the governing bodies of
8 the municipalities to be consolidated or merged shall meet
9 within 60 days after certification of the favorable vote to
10 establish an advisory committee. The advisory committee shall
11 consist of the following members:

12 (1) One member of the governing body of each
13 municipality, appointed by the governing body.

14 (2) One resident of each municipality who is not a
15 member of the governing body, an appointed officer of the
16 municipality or an employee of the municipality, appointed by
17 the governing body.

18 (3) One employee of each municipality, appointed by the
19 governing body. If a municipality has no employee who is not
20 also a member of the governing body, the governing body shall
21 appoint an additional resident under paragraph (2) in lieu of
22 an employee under this paragraph.

23 (4) One additional resident of an affected municipality,
24 appointed by mutual agreement of the members appointed under
25 paragraph (1). If the members appointed under paragraph (1)
26 cannot reach mutual agreement, the members shall draw lots to
27 determine which resident shall be appointed.

28 (5) One nonvoting representative appointed by the
29 Secretary of Community and Economic Development.

30 (6) A chairperson elected by majority vote of the

1 advisory committee from among the membership of the advisory
2 committee.

3 (b) Consolidation or merger agreement.--Within five months
4 after the establishment of the advisory committee, the advisory
5 committee shall present to the governing bodies of the
6 municipalities a consolidation or merger agreement. The
7 agreement shall include all of the following:

8 (1) Each matter required to be specified in the petition
9 under section 735(c)(2), (3), (4), (5), (6) and (7).

10 (2) If the governing body, or a part of the governing
11 body, of the consolidated or merged municipality is to be
12 elected on a district or ward basis, the district or ward
13 boundaries, the district or ward designation by number and
14 the number of members of the municipal governing body to be
15 elected from each district or ward. The boundaries of the
16 districts or wards shall be established to achieve
17 substantially equal representation.

18 (3) Terms for all of the following:

19 (i) The disposition of the existing assets of each
20 municipality.

21 (ii) The liquidation of the existing indebtedness of
22 each municipality.

23 (iii) The assumption, assignment and disposition of
24 the existing liabilities of each municipality, either
25 jointly, separately or in certain defined proportions, by
26 separate rates of taxation within each constituent
27 municipality until consolidation or merger becomes
28 effective under section 738 (relating to effectuation of
29 consolidation or merger).

30 (4) The governmental organization of the consolidated or

1 merged municipality insofar as it concerns elected officers
2 and a transitional plan and schedule applicable to elected
3 officers.

4 (5) The common administration and uniform enforcement of
5 ordinances within the consolidated or merged municipality and
6 the interim processing of land use applications and
7 approvals.

8 (6) The implementation, consistent with existing State
9 law, of a uniform tax system throughout the consolidated or
10 merged municipality that provides the revenue necessary to
11 fund required municipal services.

12 (7) Full implementation of the consolidation or merger
13 plan within four years after certification of the favorable
14 vote.

15 (c) Failure to reach agreement.--If the advisory committee
16 is unable to approve a consolidation or merger agreement by
17 majority vote within the time period under subsection (b), the
18 advisory committee shall issue a report within that time period
19 specifying both of the following:

20 (1) The matters under subsection (b) approved by a
21 majority of the advisory committee.

22 (2) The matters for which agreement was not reached,
23 including competing approaches to those matters.

24 (d) Acceptance or rejection by ordinance.--Within one year
25 after certification of favorable action by the electorate, the
26 governing body of each municipality to be consolidated or merged
27 shall, by ordinance, accept or reject the consolidation or
28 merger agreement presented by the advisory committee. Adoption
29 of an ordinance under this subsection shall be subject to an
30 action in mandamus. If a governing body rejects the agreement in

1 whole or in part, the ordinance shall specify the provisions of
2 the agreement that the governing body finds objectionable and
3 describe how those provisions would fail to provide for an
4 orderly transition to the new government or would be
5 inconsistent with this title or other State law.

6 (e) Mediation.--If the advisory committee issues a report
7 under subsection (c) or if a governing body rejects the
8 consolidation or merger agreement in whole or in part under
9 subsection (d), the chairperson of the advisory committee shall
10 petition the court of common pleas to provide for mediation of
11 the agreement. Upon petition, the court shall appoint three
12 impartial individuals who reside within the county or counties
13 in which the municipalities are located, but not within the
14 municipalities, as mediators. The mediators shall coordinate
15 with the governing bodies and the advisory committee and shall
16 limit review and mediation to only those matters in dispute
17 identified in the report under subsection (c) or in an ordinance
18 under subsection (d). After notice to interested parties and
19 publication of the petition as directed by the court, the
20 mediators shall hold a hearing and review the proposed
21 consolidation or merger agreement. No later than 90 days after
22 the petition is filed, a majority of the mediators shall submit
23 to the court a report and recommendations for a consolidation or
24 merger agreement. Within 30 days after submission of the report,
25 the court shall confirm the report unless the court finds, by a
26 preponderance of the evidence, that a provision recommended in
27 the report would fail to provide for an orderly transition to
28 the new government or would be inconsistent with this title or
29 other law. The court may direct publication of the availability
30 of the report and require notice to interested parties.

1 (f) Exceptions.--Within 30 days after the filing of the
2 report under subsection (e), an interested person or political
3 subdivision may file exceptions to the report. The court shall
4 schedule a hearing on the exceptions and provide notice of the
5 hearing. After the hearing, the court may sustain or dismiss the
6 exceptions and confirm the report or refer the report back to
7 the same or new mediators for another report.

8 (g) Final adoption.--Within 60 days after final adjudication
9 of a mediation under subsection (e), the governing body of each
10 municipality to be consolidated or merged shall adopt the
11 consolidation or merger agreement by ordinance. Notwithstanding
12 any other law, adoption of an ordinance under this subsection
13 shall be subject to an action in mandamus.

14 Section 8. Sections 738, 740(a) and 741(a) of Title 53 are
15 amended to read:

16 § 738. Effectuation of consolidation or merger.

17 Municipalities consolidated or merged shall continue to be
18 governed as before consolidation or merger until the date
19 stipulated in the transitional plan and schedule provided for in
20 sections 734 (relating to joint agreement of governing bodies)
21 and [737 (relating to consolidation or merger agreement)] 737.1
22 (relating to advisory committee, consolidation or merger
23 agreement and mediation), or the transitional plan provided for
24 by a study commission pursuant to section 735.1 (relating to
25 initiative of electors seeking consolidation or merger with new
26 home rule charter). Subject to the provisions of section
27 735.1(q), new officials required to be elected shall take office
28 on the first Monday of January following the municipal election
29 designated in the transitional plan and schedule. At that
30 municipal election, the necessary officers of the consolidated

1 or merged municipality shall be elected in accordance with the
2 terms of the general law affecting municipalities of the kind or
3 class of the consolidated or merged municipality or, in case of
4 a consolidated or merged municipality operating under a home
5 rule charter or optional plan of government, in accordance with
6 the charter or optional plan or with general law affecting home
7 rule or optional plan municipalities, as applicable. The
8 officers elected at that municipal election shall be elected for
9 terms of office under the plan and schedule set forth in the
10 consolidation or merger agreement authorized by section 734 or
11 [737] 737.1, or the transitional plan provided for by a
12 commission pursuant to section 735.1, as the case may be. They
13 shall take office as officers of the consolidated or merged
14 municipality on the first Monday of January following the
15 municipal election at which they were elected, and upon
16 assumption of office, the consolidated or merged municipality
17 shall begin to function and the former municipalities
18 consolidated or merged into it shall be abolished.

19 § 740. Procedures.

20 (a) Ordinance book.--After consolidation becomes effective,
21 a new ordinance book shall be used by the municipality, and,
22 except for a municipality consolidated or merged under section
23 735.1 (relating to initiative of electors seeking consolidation
24 or merger with new home rule charter), the first document to be
25 recorded in it shall be the [consolidation agreement.] joint
26 agreement under section 734 (relating to joint agreement of
27 governing bodies) or the consolidation or merger agreement under
28 section 737.1 (relating to advisory committee, consolidation or
29 merger agreement and mediation), as applicable.

30 * * *

1 § 741. Court review of transitional plan.

2 (a) General rule.--Except as provided in subsection (b),
3 after the approval of a referendum pursuant to section 736
4 (relating to conduct of referenda) and the adoption of a
5 transitional plan and schedule under section 734 (relating to
6 joint agreement of governing bodies) or 737.1 (relating to
7 advisory committee, consolidation or merger agreement and
8 mediation), any person who is a resident of a municipality to be
9 consolidated or merged may petition the court of common pleas to
10 order the appropriate municipal governing bodies to[:

11 (1) implement the terms of a transitional plan and
12 schedule adopted pursuant to section 734 (relating to joint
13 agreement of governing bodies) or 737 (relating to
14 consolidation or merger agreement); or

15 (2) adopt or amend a transitional plan or schedule if
16 the court finds that the failure to do so will result in the
17 unreasonable perpetuation of the separate forms and
18 classifications of government existing in the affected
19 municipalities prior to the approval of the referendum.]
20 implement the terms of the transitional plan and schedule.

21 * * *

22 Section 9. Title 53 is amended by adding sections to read:

23 § 742. Extension of deadlines.

24 Upon petition of the chairperson elected under section 734(d)
25 (6) (relating to joint agreement of governing bodies) or
26 737.1(a)(6) (relating to advisory committee, consolidation or
27 merger agreement and mediation), the court of common pleas may
28 extend a time period under this subchapter. The court may grant
29 an extension only for the minimum period necessary to reasonably
30 ensure completion of the consolidation or merger.

1 § 743. Grant qualification.

2 (a) Eligibility.--To the extent not prohibited by Federal
3 law, a consolidated or merged municipality shall retain
4 eligibility for a grant pending, available or authorized for a
5 municipality consolidated or merged under this subchapter to the
6 extent the municipality would have been eligible for the grant
7 notwithstanding the consolidation or merger. Eligibility under
8 this subsection shall continue for not more than seven years
9 after certification of the favorable vote on consolidation or
10 merger. Eligibility under this subsection shall also apply to a
11 department, agency or authority of a municipality consolidated
12 or merged under this subchapter. A consolidated or merged
13 municipality and its departments, agencies and authorities may
14 not receive more than one award under the same grant program for
15 the same purpose solely by reason of the consolidation or
16 merger.

17 (b) Grants previously awarded.--To the extent not prohibited
18 by Federal law:

19 (1) A municipality consolidated or merged under this
20 subchapter, and a department, agency or authority of the
21 municipality, shall not be disqualified from receiving the
22 proceeds of a grant awarded before the consolidation or
23 merger solely because of the consolidation or merger.

24 (2) A grant awarded to a volunteer fire department or
25 other person doing business within, for or on behalf of a
26 municipality consolidated or merged under this subchapter
27 shall not be interrupted, abbreviated or rescinded solely
28 because of the consolidation or merger.

29 Section 10. This act shall apply to a consolidation or
30 merger commenced under 53 Pa.C.S. § 733(a) on or after the

1 effective date of this section.

2 Section 11. This act shall take effect in 60 days.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE BILL ANALYSIS

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Bill No: | HB2361 PN3140 | Prepared By: | Ryan Carpenter (717) 783-3815 |
| Committee: | Local Government | Executive Director: | Jon R. Castelli |
| Sponsor: | Freeman, Robert | | |
| Date: | 4/23/2026 | | |

A. Brief Concept

Would amend the Municipal Consolidation or Merger act to clarify the procedures for consolidation and mergers initiated by a petition of electors as well as specify grant eligibility for merged or consolidated municipalities.

C. Analysis of the Bill

This legislation would amend the Municipal Consolidation or Merger Act (Sections 731-741 of Title 53) to make the following changes to the merger or consolidation process.

Definitions

The legislation would provide definitions for "consolidation and merger agreement" and "joint agreement" for those consolidations or mergers initiated by the voters or the governing bodies of two more municipalities, respectively, for more clarity throughout the act.

Transitional Planning Committee

Following a favorable referendum on a consolidation or merger initiated by the governing bodies of two or more municipalities, the governing bodies shall establish a transitional planning committee no later than 60 days after certification of the vote. The transitional planning committee shall consist of:

- One member of the governing body of each municipality appointed by the governing body.
- One resident of each municipality appointed by the governing body, who is not a member of the governing body, an officer, or an employee of the municipality.
- One employee of each municipality appointed by the governing body.
- One additional resident of an affected municipality, appointed by mutual agreement of the governing bodies appointed under (1). If they cannot reach agreement, the members of the governing bodies shall draw lots to determine which resident shall be appointed.
- One non-voting representative appointed by the Secretary of the Department of Community and Economic Development.

The transitional planning committee shall select a chairperson by majority vote of its members.

The transitional planning committee shall continue to exist until six months after the effective date of the consolidation or merger to advise the new governing body of the consolidated or merged municipality.

Advisory Committee and Consolidation or Merger Agreement

Within sixty days of certification a favorable referendum of a voter-initiated consolidation or merger, the governing bodies of the municipalities that will be consolidated or merged shall form an advisory committee. The advisory committee shall consist of:

- One member of the governing body of each municipality appointed by the governing body.

- One resident of each municipality, who is not a member of the governing body, an officer, or an employee of the municipality, appointed by the governing body.
- One employee of each municipality appointed by the governing body.
- One additional resident of an affected municipality, appointed by mutual agreement of the governing bodies appointed under (1). If they cannot reach agreement the members of the governing bodies shall draw lots to determine which resident shall be appointed.
- One non-voting representative appointed by the Secretary of the Department of Community and Economic Development.

The advisory committee shall select a chairperson by majority vote of its members.

Within five months after its establishment, the advisory committee shall present to the governing bodies of the municipalities a consolidation or merger agreement. The consolidation or merger agreement shall include the following:

- The name of the municipalities to be merged or consolidated.
- The name of the consolidated or merged municipality.
- The type and class of the consolidated or merged municipality.
- Whether the merged or consolidated municipality shall be governed:
 - Solely by the respective municipal code and other general applicable laws to its municipal classification.
 - An optional plan, optional charter, or home rule charter previously adopted by one of the merged or consolidated municipalities.
 - A new optional plan, optional charter, or home rule charter.
- How many districts or wards, if any, the consolidated or merged municipality will be divided into.
- Terms for addressing existing assets, indebtedness, and liabilities possessed by each municipality.
- The organization of elected officers.
- Administration of ordinances.
- The implementation of a uniform tax system.
- Full implementation of the consolidation or merger plan within four years of the favorable referendum vote.

If the advisory committee is unable to approve a consolidation or merger agreement, it shall issue a report specifying which matters were approved by a majority vote and which ones it did not reach agreement on.

Within a year after certification of a favorable election, the governing of each municipality shall approve or reject the agreement by ordinance. If a governing body rejects the agreement, its ordinance shall specify the provisions of the agreement that it finds objectionable and describe how those provisions would fail to provide for an orderly transition to the new government or would be inconsistent with state law.

If the advisory committee or one of the governing bodies disapproves part of agreement, the chairperson of the advisory committee shall petition the court of common pleas for mediation. The mediators shall be three impartial individuals who reside in the county in which the municipalities are located, but do not reside in the municipalities themselves. Mediation shall be limited to only the specific matters in dispute in the advisory committee's report on the agreement or the governing body's ordinance.

Within 90 days after the petition is filed, a majority of the mediators shall submit to the court a report and recommendations for the agreement. Within 30 days after submission, the court shall confirm the report unless it finds, by a preponderance of evidence, that a provision recommended in the report would fail to provide for an orderly transition or is consistent with state law. Within 60 days after final adjudication of mediation, the governing body of each municipality shall adopt the agreement by ordinance.

Post-Referendum Filings

The governing bodies of the municipalities approved for consolidation or merger shall file copies of the ensuing documents as follows:

- Within 30 days after certification by the county board of elections of approval by the electorate a copy of the joint agreement or adoption ordinances for a consolidation or merger agreement by the governing bodies, the municipalities shall file the respective agreements with:
 - The Department of Community and Economic Development.
 - The Department of Transportation
 - The Governor's Office of Policy Development
 - The Department of Education.
 - The Department of State
 - The State Tax Equalization Board
 - The United States Postal Service
 - The Legislative Data Procession Center
 - The Court of Common Pleas.
 - The Board of County Commissioners and the Election Board of the county in which an affected municipality is located.

Extension of Deadlines

Upon petition of the chairperson of a transitional planning committee or an advisory committee, the court of common pleas may extend a time period provided for in the merger or consolidation process. The court may grant an extension only for the minimum period of time necessary to ensure completion of the consolidation or merger.

Grant Qualification

A consolidated or merged municipality shall retain eligibility for a grant pending, available, or authorized to the extent it would have been eligible for the grant notwithstanding the consolidation or merger. Eligibility shall continue for no more than seven years after the certification of a merger or consolidation referendum.

Furthermore, a municipality shall not be disqualified from receiving the proceeds of a grant awarded before consolidation or merger solely because of the consolidation or merger. This includes departments, agencies, authorities, and volunteer fire departments serving the municipality. Furthermore, a consolidated or merged municipality may not receive more than one award under the same grant program for the same purpose solely by reason of the consolidation or merger.

Applicability

The provisions of this legislation shall apply to a consolidation or merger commenced on or after the effective date this act.

Effective Date:

Sixty days.

G. Relevant Existing Laws

Subchapter C (Consolidation and Merger) of Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) provides for the municipal consolidation or merger process. It applies to every county except a county of the first class, every city except for cities of the first or second class, and every borough, incorporated town, or township.

Currently, a municipal consolidation or merger can be initiated through the governing bodies of municipalities or the voters in the municipalities. In the first pathway, the governing bodies would develop a joint agreement detailing the proposed consolidation or merger and present it to voters in all of the municipalities to be merged or consolidated for approval. The governing bodies currently may form a transitional planning committee at any point in the process but are not required to.

In the second pathway, at least 5% of eligible voters in the municipalities proposed to be merged or consolidated may file petitions with the county board of elections where the municipalities are located in. If a majority of voters in each municipality approve the petition in a referendum, then the governing bodies of each municipality shall meet and develop a consolidation or merger agreement.

The current process contains many ambiguities, particularly with a consolidation or merger initiated by voters. The law currently does not provide for the establishment of an advisory committee to develop an agreement for such processes approved by the voters, leaving it to the governing bodies of the municipalities to be consolidated or merged.

E. Prior Session (Previous Bill Numbers & House/Senate Votes)

N/A

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LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 2361

Sponsor: *Freeman, # 135*

Printer's No. 3140

1 Amend Bill, page 4, lines 27 and 28, by striking out "members
 2 shall draw lots to" in line 27 and all of line 28 and inserting
 3 court of common pleas shall appoint the additional
 4 member who must be a resident of an affected municipality.

5 Amend Bill, page 9, lines 26 and 27, by striking out "members
 6 shall draw lots to" in line 26 and all of line 27 and inserting
 7 court of common pleas shall appoint the additional
 8 member who must be a resident of an affected municipality.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 136 Session of
2025

INTRODUCED BY BRENNAN, HANBIDGE, KENYATTA, PIELLI, SANCHEZ,
GIRAL, BURGOS, HILL-EVANS, DELLOSO, HADDOCK, SCHLOSSBERG,
CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, BOROWSKI, MALAGARI, DONAHUE, DEASY AND GREEN,
MARCH 19, 2025

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT, MARCH 19, 2025

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a
2 study and establish an advisory committee to determine the
3 impact on Pennsylvania taxpayers of Pennsylvania State Police
4 full or partial police services for municipalities that do
5 not maintain full police coverage.

6 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania State Police provides full-time and
7 part-time police coverage to municipalities that do not maintain
8 a local police department; and

9 WHEREAS, In 2017, Colonel Tyree Blocker, Commissioner of the
10 Pennsylvania State Police, disclosed that the per capita cost of
11 those services was \$234 per person, per year for the 2.5 million
12 Pennsylvanians who live in municipalities that rely on some
13 level of Pennsylvania State Police coverage; and

14 WHEREAS, In 2013, the Pennsylvania State Police supplied 417
15 municipalities with part-time police coverage and 1,266 with
16 full-time service; and

17 WHEREAS, That amount has continued to increase, and in 2021,
18 the Pennsylvania State Police provided 428 municipalities with

1 part-time police coverage and 1,293 with full-time service; and
2 WHEREAS, The Motor License Fund, intended to be dedicated to
3 funding infrastructure projects, has historically been tapped as
4 an additional source of revenue to fund the Pennsylvania State
5 Police, including to provide police coverage for municipalities
6 with a limited police department or no police department at all;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, In the current budget and in expected future
9 budgets, hundreds of millions of dollars of Motor License Fund
10 revenues are being redirected back from the Pennsylvania State
11 Police to the original intended purpose of funding
12 transportation infrastructure, just as more and more
13 municipalities are relying on the Pennsylvania State Police for
14 coverage; and

15 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania legislators have an obligation to
16 protect all Pennsylvania communities, law enforcement and
17 infrastructure in an equitable manner; therefore be it

18 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the Joint
19 State Government Commission to conduct a study and establish an
20 advisory committee to determine the impact on Pennsylvania
21 taxpayers of Pennsylvania State Police full or partial police
22 services for municipalities that do not maintain full police
23 coverage; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That the advisory committee be composed of the
25 following members:

- 26 (1) The Secretary of Revenue or a designee.
27 (2) The Commissioner of Pennsylvania State Police or a
28 designee.
29 (3) The Secretary of Transportation or a designee.
30 (4) A representative of an organization that advocates

1 for chiefs of police.

2 (5) A representative of an organization that advocates
3 for municipal governments.

4 (6) Other individuals or representatives from
5 organizations selected by the Joint State Government
6 Commission;

7 and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission, in
9 conducting the study, include findings and recommendations
10 regarding:

11 (1) The cost of Pennsylvania State Police full-time and
12 part-time police coverage to municipalities that do not have
13 their own local police department.

14 (2) The impact of that cost on the tax burden borne by
15 Pennsylvania taxpayers.

16 (3) The impact on police costs of municipalities which
17 do maintain a local police department regarding providing
18 police responses or services to neighboring municipalities
19 that do not maintain a local police department.

20 (4) The impact of an increasing number of municipalities
21 relying on Pennsylvania State Police for police coverage on
22 the ability of the Pennsylvania State Police to sustainably
23 provide services throughout this Commonwealth.

24 (5) An estimation of the level of fee that would be
25 necessary to cover the cost of Pennsylvania State Police
26 coverage to municipalities that do not have their own local
27 police department and municipalities that provide only
28 partial coverage if the State required a per capita fee to be
29 paid by municipalities relying entirely on the Pennsylvania
30 State Police coverage and to require municipalities and

1 individuals that receive part-time coverage to pay a fee
2 equal to one-third the per capita rate.

3 (6) The revenue and policy implications for police and
4 infrastructure if the Commonwealth were to impose the fee
5 calculated in the previous finding.

6 (7) The number of residents that rely entirely on the
7 Pennsylvania State Police for police service or that receive
8 part-time coverage from the Pennsylvania State Police.

9 (8) The comparative millage rates in municipalities that
10 pay for local police coverage and millage rates in towns that
11 rely solely on the Pennsylvania State Police for police
12 coverage.

13 (9) Any other costs or factors the Joint State
14 Government Commission considers appropriate in understanding
15 the impact on taxpayers of Pennsylvania State Police coverage
16 of municipalities that do not maintain a local police
17 department;

18 and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the Joint State Government Commission issue a
20 report of its findings and recommendations to the House of
21 Representatives no later than one year from the adoption of this
22 resolution.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE BILL ANALYSIS

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Bill No: | HR0136 PN1066 | Prepared By: | Jon R. Castelli (717) 783-3815 |
| Committee: | Local Government | Executive Director: | Jon R. Castelli |
| Sponsor: | Brennan, Timothy | | |
| Date: | 6/6/2025 | | |

A. Brief Concept

Directs the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study of the impact on Pennsylvania taxpayers of Pennsylvania State Police full or partial police services for municipalities that do not maintain full police coverage.

C. Analysis of the Bill

Would direct the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study to determine the impact on Pennsylvania taxpayers of Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) full or partial services for municipalities that do not maintain full police coverage.

In conducting the study, the commission would be required to establish an advisory committee comprised of the following members:

- The Secretary of Revenue or their designee.
- The Commissioner of the Pennsylvania State Police or their designee.
- The Secretary of Transportation or their designee.
- A representative of an organization that advocates for chiefs of police.
- A representative of an organization that advocates for municipal governments.
- Other individuals or representatives from organizations selected by the Joint State Government Commission.

In conducting the study, the Commission would be required to include findings and recommendations regarding the following:

- The cost of State Police full-time and part-time police coverage to municipalities that don't have their own local police department.
- The impact of such cost on the tax burden borne by Pennsylvania taxpayers.
- The impact on police costs of municipalities which do not maintain a local police department with regard to providing police services to neighboring municipalities that do not maintain a local police department.
- The impact of an increasing number of municipalities which rely on the PSP for police coverage on the ability of the PSP to sustainably provide police services throughout the Commonwealth.
- An estimation of the level of fee that would be necessary to cover the cost of PSP coverage to municipalities that do not have their own local police department as well as municipalities that provide only partial coverage if the state required a per capita fee to be paid by municipalities relying entirely on the PSP coverage and to require municipalities and individuals that receive part-time coverage to pay a fee equal to one-third the per capita rate.
- The revenue and policy considerations for police and infrastructure if the Commonwealth were to impose the fee calculated in the previous finding.
- The number of residents that rely entirely on the PSP for police services or that receive part-time coverage from the PSP.
- The comparative millage rates in municipalities that pay for local police coverage and millage rates in towns that rely solely on the PSP for police coverage.
- Any other costs or factors the Commission considers appropriate in understanding the impact on state taxpayers of PSP coverage of municipalities that do not maintain a local police force.

The Joint State Government Commission would be required to issue a report of its findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives no later than one year from the date of the adoption of this resolution.

Effective Date:

Would be effective upon adoption by the House.

G. Relevant Existing Laws

Municipalities are not statutorily required to establish their own police departments, although they possess the authority to do so.

E. Prior Session (Previous Bill Numbers & House/Senate Votes)

This resolution was introduced by Rep. Brennan last session as HR 438 and referred to the State Government Committee. It was reported from the committee on a party-line vote of 14-11 but did not receive further consideration by the House.

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LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 136

Sponsor: *Rep. Freeman*

Printer's No. 1066

1 Amend Resolution, page 3, lines 2 and 3, by striking out "A
2 representative of an organization that advocates" in line 2 and
3 all of line 3 and inserting

4 Representatives of organizations that advocate for the
5 various types and classes of municipal corporations within
6 this Commonwealth.

7 Amend Resolution, page 4, line 10, by striking out "towns"
8 and inserting
9 municipalities

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 136

Sponsor: *Miller, B. #41*

Printer's No. 1066

1 Amend Resolution, page 4, by inserting between lines 12 and

2 13

3 (9) The impact of municipalities that fund a police
4 department on the Pennsylvania State Police services and the
5 costs to the Commonwealth.

6 Amend Resolution, page 4, line 13, by striking out "(9)" and

7 inserting

8 (10)

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 136

Sponsor: *Miller, B. #41*

Printer's No. 1066

1 Amend Resolution, page 4, by inserting between lines 12 and
2 13

3 (9) The impact on the Pennsylvania State Police if
4 sheriffs are given policing power to help municipalities.

5 Amend Resolution, page 4, line 13, by striking out "(9)" and
6 inserting

7 (10)

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 368 Session of
2025

INTRODUCED BY WEBSTER, HILL-EVANS, FREEMAN, RIVERA AND SANCHEZ,
NOVEMBER 7, 2025

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT, NOVEMBER 12, 2025

A RESOLUTION

1 Directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to
2 conduct a comprehensive study of changes in commercial
3 property values in this Commonwealth, assess the fiscal
4 impact on local governments and school districts and make
5 recommendations.

6 WHEREAS, Communities across the United States are
7 experiencing historically low office occupancy, and the national
8 office vacancy rate reached an all-time high of 20.7% in 2025,
9 driven in part by increased remote work and gradual return-to-
10 office policies; and

11 WHEREAS, Elevated vacancy rates can depress commercial
12 property values, which may reduce assessed values and the
13 property taxes paid by owners; and

14 WHEREAS, Declining commercial values and the resulting
15 erosion of property tax revenue can strain municipal budgets,
16 with some jurisdictions projecting shortfalls on the order of \$1
17 billion or more over the next several years due to falling
18 commercial property tax receipts; and

19 WHEREAS, Reduced property tax revenue poses a substantial

1 risk to local education budgets, as approximately 55% of public
2 school funding in this Commonwealth comes from local sources,
3 and roughly 44¢ of every school dollar is derived from local
4 property taxes; and

5 WHEREAS, Persistent revenue declines can impair the ability
6 of school districts to fund programs and services, with
7 disproportionate effects on middle-income and low-income
8 communities; and

9 WHEREAS, The fiscal pressures associated with reduced
10 commercial property tax revenue may shift costs to residents if
11 school districts or municipalities must raise taxes to sustain
12 essential services; therefore be it

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives direct the
14 Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a
15 comprehensive study of changes in commercial property values in
16 this Commonwealth, assess the fiscal impact on local governments
17 and school districts and make recommendations; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That the study, at a minimum, do all of the
19 following:

20 (1) Examine the current state of commercial property
21 values in this Commonwealth, including recent trends in
22 valuation, assessment and appeals.

23 (2) Identify Commonwealth-level mechanisms that address
24 local budget shortfalls attributable to declining commercial
25 property values and evaluate their effectiveness.

26 (3) Provide best-practice recommendations for counties
27 and school districts on assessment practices and tools to
28 minimize volatility in district budgets;

29 and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee

1 be authorized to request from Commonwealth agencies, departments
2 and municipalities any data or information not protected from
3 public disclosure by Federal or State law that is necessary to
4 conduct the study; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee,
6 within one year after the adoption of this resolution, transmit
7 a report of its findings and recommendations to the General
8 Assembly and post the report on the Legislative Budget and
9 Finance Committee's publicly accessible Internet website.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE BILL ANALYSIS

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Bill No: | HR0368 PN2587 | Prepared By: | Jon R. Castelli (717) 783-3815 |
| Committee: | Local Government | Executive Director: | Jon R. Castelli |
| Sponsor: | Webster, Joe | | |
| Date: | 4/23/2026 | | |

A. Brief Concept

Requires the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study the state of commercial property values in Pennsylvania, assess the fiscal impact on local governments and school districts and make recommendations on assessment practices and tools to minimize volatility in municipal and school district budgets.

C. Analysis of the Bill

HR 368 directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a comprehensive study of changes in commercial property values throughout the Commonwealth and to assess the fiscal impact of such on local governments and school districts and make recommendations.

Specifically, the Committee would be required to do the following:

- Examine the current state of commercial property values in the Pennsylvania, including recent trends in valuation, assessment and appeals.
- Identify state-level mechanisms that address local budget shortfalls attributable to declining commercial property values and evaluate their effectiveness.
- Provide best-practice recommendations for counties and school districts on assessment practices and tools to minimize volatility in district budgets.

The resolution authorizes the Committee to request data or information (not protected from public disclosure by Federal or State law) from Commonwealth agencies and municipalities which is necessary to conduct the study.

The Committee would have one year from the date of the adoption of the resolution to complete the study and issue a report of its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly. The report must also be posted on the Committee's publicly accessible Internet website.

Effective Date:

The resolution would be effective upon adoption by the House of Representatives.

G. Relevant Existing Laws

N/A

E. Prior Session (Previous Bill Numbers & House/Senate Votes)

N/A

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LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 368

Sponsor: *Rep. Freeman*

Printer's No. 2587

1 Amend Resolution, page 2, line 17, by striking out "make" and
2 inserting

3 issue its findings and

4 Amend Resolution, page 2, line 23, by striking out
5 "Commonwealth-level mechanisms" and inserting

6 current Commonwealth statutes, regulations, programs,
7 policies and procedures

8 Amend Resolution, page 2, line 25, by inserting after
9 "effectiveness"

10 , and provide recommendations

11 Amend Resolution, page 2, line 27, by striking out "and
12 school districts"

13 Amend Resolution, page 2, line 28, by inserting after "in"
14 municipal and school

15 Amend Resolution, page 3, lines 2 and 3, by striking out "not
16 protected from public disclosure by Federal or State law that
17 is"

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 368

Sponsor: *Miller, B. #41*

Printer's No. 2587

- 1 Amend Resolution, page 2, line 23, by inserting after
- 2 "Commonwealth-level"
- 3 and local-level