Advocacy is critical to the mission of the Association. Since 1911, the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs (PSAB) has sought to preserve, promote, and advance legislation and public policy in the best interests of 956 borough communities.

Through past advocacy efforts, PSAB helped to:

• Enact a modernized Borough Code.
• Advocate for Right-to-Know Law reforms.
• Support measures to eliminate blight by advocating for the creation of land banks and increased funding for blight remediation.
• Seek relief for unfunded mandates.

Read more about the progress of PSAB’s legislative priorities for the 2019-20 session.

The following outlines the progress on and subject of priorities for the 2019-20 legislative session.
Borough Code Changes & Local Decision Making

PSAB supported legislation to change the requirements for setting the annual tax levy from an ordinance to a resolution if the borough is keeping the same tax rate or lowering the rate.

*Action:* This became law under Act 51 of 2019.

PSAB supported legislation that would create a referendum to allow voters to choose if their municipality would stay completely dry, allow limited sales, or convert to wet. *Resolution 2017-16*

*Action:* This became law under Act 48 of 2019.

PSAB will seek legislation to revise compensation schedules and rates for elected officials, which have not been raised in over 20 years. *Resolutions 2017-9 & 2016-3*

*Action:* PSAB supports HB 1529 and SB 688.

Boroughs having an at-large system with no wards and less than 3,000 in population can reduce the number of council members. PSAB supports legislation to increase the threshold required to petition the Court of Common Pleas under Section 818 of the Borough Code from 5 to 15 percent. *Resolution 2017-7*

*Action:* PSAB supports SB 495 and HB 1036.
PSAB supports an amendment to Section 1141 of the Borough Code adding the ability of borough council to appoint a person, a partnership, association, or corporation as the borough manager. Resolution 2014-5

PSAB supports legislation to clarify that boroughs do not need to bid traffic signal maintenance and repair contracts when using Liquid Fuels funds.

**Action:** PSAB supports HB 1467.

PSAB supports legislation to raise the current cap on real estate property tax millage for general borough purposes from its ceiling of 30 mills to 35 mills. Resolution 2014-6

**Right-to-Know Law, Legal Advertising, & Sunshine Law**

PSAB supports measures to correct unintended consequences of the Right-to-Know Law on municipalities, including allowing boroughs to charge for commercial requests; allowing for a 10-day response time; and clarifying that bank numbers and passwords are private. PSAB also seeks to clarify the definition of vexatious requests. Resolution 2019-3; 2019-15; and 2014-9

**Action:** PSAB supports HB 860 and HB 283.

Because newspapers of general circulation are diminishing, PSAB supports allowing municipalities to electronically publish meeting notices on their website to comply with the Sunshine Law. Resolution 2014-11
PSAB opposes any measures that would further restrict the use of executive sessions and require those sessions to be recorded.

**Stormwater, Infrastructure, Community Development, & Technology**

PSAB supported efforts to increase the Keystone Communities Program to $15 million. *PSAB Resolution 2019-10*

**Action:** The 2019-20 budget increased funding for this program to $22 million.

PSAB opposes efforts to exempt utilities from municipal land use and right-of-way regulation or grant them utility status or the right to use eminent domain. *Resolution 2017-10*

**Action:** PSAB opposes HB 1400.

PSAB seeks legislative remedies to expand broadband technology into rural and underserved areas.

**Action:** PSAB supports HB 305 and SB 470.

PSAB seeks legislation to amend the PA State Highway Law to mandate PennDOT maintain all stormwater infrastructure servicing state roads in borough communities. *Resolution 2019-4 and 2016-5*

**Action:** PSAB supports SB 101 and HB 1775.

PSAB supports the $4.5 billion Restore PA proposal to address critical infrastructure and technology improvements, provided it does not eliminate the local impact fee. *Resolution: 2019-5*

**Action:** PSAB supports HB 1585 and SB 725.
PSAB supports legislation that would allow boroughs to assess fees for stormwater management activities, without the need to establish a municipal authority. Resolution 2016-11

**Action:** PSAB supports HB 474.

PSAB seeks to amend the Municipal Claims and Tax Liens Law to clarify municipalities’ authority to lien real property for unpaid utility rate bills including stormwater fees. Resolution 2018-1

PSAB seeks legislation to increase the allowable annual expenditure for the purchase of computers and software using Liquid Fuels funds from $1,000 to $1,500.

**Action:** PSAB supports HB 1467.

**Public Safety**

PSAB will advocate for legislative remedies addressing recruitment and retention, training, and funding of local emergency service providers.

PSAB seeks legislation to increase the allocation of the Foreign Fire Insurance Tax returned to volunteer firefighter relief associations. Resolution 2016-13

PSAB supports legislation to charge municipalities larger than 4,000 in population a per-person fee for utilizing state police services. Resolution 2017-3 & Resolution 2015-12

PSAB has long advocated the use of radar by municipal police and will continue to advocate for this tool as responsible speed timing technology. Resolutions 2018-4; 2017-8; 2016-2; 2015-18; & 2014-2

**Action:** PSAB supports SB 607 and HB 352.
Recycling

PSAB seeks remedies to the Covered Device Recycling Act of 2010 to allow new options for recycling bulky electronic waste like TVs and computers. Resolution 2016-7

*Action:* PSAB supports SB 52.

PSAB supports legislation authorizing counties and boroughs to levy reasonable fees to pay for mandated recycling programs under Act 101.

Labor Mandates

PSAB seeks legislation to amend Prevailing Wage Law to exempt roadway milling maintenance on local roads. PSAB also seeks to increase the threshold to $200,000 with an annual indexing mechanism. Resolutions 2018-11; 2016-12; & 2015-8

*Action:* PSAB supports HB 581, SB 318, and HB 614.

PSAB supports legislation to reform the Policemen and Firemen Collective Bargaining – Act 111 – and split the cost of arbitration between parties to level the playing field in contract negotiations. Resolutions 2015-10 & 2014-12

PSAB advocates for legislation to address costs for municipal police court appearances and fine-associated labor expenses, which have not increased in years. These fines do not cover labor costs for officers to enforce these laws, especially if they go to court. Resolutions 2018-6 & 2016-10
Recent Legislative Successes

Act 48 of 2019 requires a referendum to allow voters to choose if their municipality would stay completely dry, allow limited sales, or convert to wet.

Act 51 of 2019 changes the requirements for setting the annual tax levy from an ordinance to a resolution if the borough is keeping the same tax rate or lowering it.

Act 99 of 2018 allows boroughs to make contracts or purchases without advertising, bidding, or price quotations during an emergency. At its next public meeting, council must adopt a resolution stating the actual emergency and the terms of the procurement.

Act 135 of 2018 amends the Borough Code to provide for a shorter concise publication of annual financial reporting information in a newspaper of general circulation.

Act 150 of 2018 raised the bidding threshold for the sale of borough personal property from $1,000 to $2,000.

Act 156 of 2018 allows an agency to hold an executive session to discuss, plan, or review matters and records that are deemed necessary for public safety, emergency preparedness, or security of property.
Bills to Watch – Learn about legislation moving through the legislature that could impact your borough.

Contact Your Legislator – Get contact information for state and federal lawmakers.

Legislative Priorities – Read more about resolutions adopted at PSAB’s Annual Conference.

Resolutions Process – Find out about your role in the resolutions process, including how your borough or County Boroughs Association can submit resolution and how your borough can nominate a voting delegate.

Links of Interest – Get connected to state and federal agencies and programs.

Testimony – Read what PSAB staff and members said about legislative measures being debated before the General Assembly.

Get connected online at boroughs.org/legislative.
Borough officials come together to advocate on behalf of borough communities. As part of this important process, resolutions can be put forth by County Boroughs Associations (CBAs) and/or boroughs as a basis for public policy changes in Harrisburg and in Washington, D.C.

Language clearly expressing the intent to offer and establish an official policy resolution must be submitted in writing to PSAB offices by April 8, 2020. Sample resolutions are available on boroughs.org/legislative. The Resolutions and Policy Committee, made up of appointees from CBAs, is the only reviewing body in the process which can reject, by majority vote, a resolution submitted by the membership. The Resolutions and Policy Committee will meet on Sunday, June 7, 2020 during the PSAB Annual Conference.

PSAB also encourages CBAs to submit its annual appointees to the Resolution and Policy Committee by May 8, 2020 to Stephanie Drake at sdrake@boroughs.org. Without participation on this committee, your borough and CBA lose vital influence in public policy developments facing boroughs.

Adopted resolutions at the PSAB Annual Conference are then included in the PSAB Municipal Policy Statement, which is PSAB’s public policy document of record.

To support these efforts, PSAB hosts Advocacy Day which is held during the PSAB Annual Conference. During this event, members meet with legislators and staff to discuss issues of importance to their communities. PSAB’s executive leadership teams also travels to Washington, DC to meet with federal lawmakers to discuss important issues like unfunded mandates.

Learn more about this process at boroughs.org/legislative.
ACT NOW
AND LET US KNOW.

Did you act on a PSAB legislative action alert or contact your legislator about an issue important to your borough? Let us know. Send an email to actnow@boroughs.org.

PSAB may also periodically send you questionnaires requesting your help in identifying priorities. Your responses will help us to shape the Association’s legislative agenda.

STAY IN THE KNOW.

Sign up for email alerts at boroughs.org.

PSAB Conferences & Education

Newly Elected Municipal Officials Boot Camp
January through March 2020

PSAB 109th Annual Conference
A Salute to the Past:
Together Everyone Achieves More
June 7-10, 2020
Hershey Lodge

PSAB Fall Leadership Conference
Oct. 16-18, 2020
Wyndham Gettysburg
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Revised 9/19