

Budget

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and federal law put airports at a disadvantage from other non-restricted property, more can be done to expand aviation's economic impact," Scavello said. "Airport Land Development Zones will incentivize development on vacant land and buildings owned by airports and leased to private businesses."

Other viable economic initiatives in the Budget and championed by Scavello include provisions to modernize expense deductions for small businesses, allowing small business owners more flexibility and tax planning opportunities, and to provide tax incentives for small businesses to grow and invest in Pennsylvania.

As important as the economic boost provided by this plan is, which will have a projected ending balance of \$3.6 billion, the 2022-23 budget includes a \$2.1 billion transfer to the Rainy Day Fund, bringing the total balance to nearly \$5 billion.

These fiscally responsible steps are critical because many economic indicators are showing a risk of a recession on the horizon. Most recently, Pennsylvania's Independent Fiscal Office estimated a 60% chance of economic stagnation or a "growth recession" happening, and a 30% chance of a recession.

The budget includes a \$525 million increase for Basic Education Funding, \$225 million to provide additional support for the state's 100 poorest school districts, a

\$100 million increase for Special Education funding, an additional \$60 million for Pre-K Counts and \$19 million more for Head Start Supplemental Assistance.

It also includes an additional \$125 million in Education Improvement Tax Credits to ensure more students can learn in the educational environment that best suits their needs. Higher education receives a funding boost as well.

Increased funding is also dedicated in this year's budget to ensure our schools are safe and secure: \$100 million is appropriated for the Ready to Learn Block Grant program to address school-based mental health; and \$100 million in funding is directed to a new General Fund appropriation for School Safety and Security to address physical safety and security at schools.

Building on our efforts last year to help address the serious financial challenges of our nursing homes and long-term care providers, this budget includes \$150 million for costs related to nursing home staffing, \$250 million in ARPA funding for long-term living programs and \$20 million for supplementary payments to personal care homes.

"This is a solid budget that protects taxpayers today as well as in the event of even worsening economic conditions tomorrow," Scavello said. "It does all of this while increasing funding for schools and other important programs. It's a responsible spending plan."

Waste Management

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interconnected project areas:

- Vibrant Economic Climate
- Quality, Affordable Housing
- Regional Cooperation and Community Engagement

We are grateful to the core funders of the plan— Waste Management, Fidelity

Bank, First Northern Bank and Trust, and ESSA—for their generosity. We are particularly grateful to Waste Management and Fidelity for renewing their commitments of the last six years.

SBR's new director, Vincent Behe, started his position in June and is excited to get to work with all the community partners and great people of the Slate Belt in executing the new plan! His vision for SBR is to inspire others and to spark an enthusiasm for community service which goes beyond the boundaries of the organization. Those close to Vincent have described him as "determined," "motivated," and "a good leader" (and he did not pay them off to say those things, either!)."

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