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Final Pennsylvania Budget Approved for 2026-27

By State Rep. Ann Flood

Yesterday, the Pennsylvania House returned to Harrisburg to vote on the Commonwealth's 2026-27 state budget. After carefully reviewing the final agreement, I voted in favor of the budget.

While no budget is perfect, I believe this agreement protects Pennsylvania taxpayers by preserving the Rainy Day Fund, avoiding broad-based tax increases and keeping combined reporting out of the final budget, preventing a significant tax increase on Pennsylvania businesses.

I was pleased to protect the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) and Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit (OSTC) programs. These programs provide families with additional educational options and help ensure students, especially those from lower-income families, have access to quality learning opportunities that may otherwise be out of reach. The budget includes an additional \$10 million to expand career and technical education programs, helping more students develop the skills needed for future careers.

The budget dedicates \$170 million annually over the next 10 years to provide a long-overdue cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for eligible pre-Act 9 retirees, including retired municipal police officers, firefighters and teachers who retired before 2001. These individuals dedicated their careers to serving our communities, and this long-awaited COLA is well deserved.

The budget invests \$775 million in shovel-ready rural roads and bridge projects, strengthening communities and improving infrastructure throughout the Commonwealth.

While this budget includes areas where more work remains to be done, I believe it represents a responsible compromise that protects taxpayers, preserves educational opportunities, supports retirees who served our communities and invests in critical infrastructure. These priorities are why I voted in favor of the 2026-27 state budget.

Big Boy 4014 Brings Railroad History to Life

By State Rep. Ann Flood

History rolled through Centre County last Wednesday, and I was grateful to be there alongside my district director, Lisa, and so many others to witness this remarkable moment.

I had the opportunity to join the Big Boy Watch Party aboard the Nittany & Bald Eagle Railroad's America's Semiquincentennial Locomotive, which features artwork created by a local artist from the region. The special trip traveled from Bellefonte



to Tyrone to welcome the legendary Union Pacific Big Boy No. 4014 during its Pennsylvania tour.

Known as the world's largest operating steam locomotive, Big Boy No. 4014 was an unforgettable sight. Seeing it alongside America's Semiquincentennial Locomotive was a once-in-a-lifetime experience and a wonderful way to celebrate our nation's railroad heritage as we continue celebrating America's 250th anniversary.

As a member of the House Transportation Committee, it was especially meaningful to celebrate the rich railroad history that continues to connect communities across our Commonwealth.

Thank you to everyone who helped organize this memorable event and to all who made the day so special.