

# HARRISBURG ONLINE

HARRISBURG'S FAVORITE NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1993

Presented by *Greenlee Partners*

March 17, 2025  
Happy St. Patrick's Day!



*The State House will  
convene at 12 PM*

## SHUTDOWN AVERTED

On Friday, the U.S. Senate advanced a six-month spending bill despite divisions among Democrats, with Senate Minority Leader **Chuck Schumer** backing the measure to help avoid a government shutdown. The bill, signed into law by President **Donald Trump** on Saturday, includes a small increase in defense spending and \$13 billion in cuts to non-defense programs. While the final vote passed largely along party lines, an earlier procedural vote revealed deep Democratic divisions as 10 members sided with Republicans to prevent a filibuster. Critics called the bill a "blank check" for Trump, arguing it failed to curb his administration's ongoing spending cuts.

## INCOMING THREE-PETE

The Hershey Bears have officially clinched a spot in the Calder Cup Playoffs, becoming the first team to do so after their win over the Chicago Wolves on Sunday. Led by head coach **Todd Nelson**, the defending back-to-back champions hold a 37-15-5-1 record and sit atop the Atlantic Division with 14 games remaining. Hershey is now aiming to become just the second team in AHL history to secure three consecutive Calder Cup victories.

## LUNCH MONEY

Last week, U.S. Senator **John Fetterman** introduced a bill that directs the USDA to pay

off all student meal debt and purchase food for food banks. Co-sponsored by Senators **Richard Blumenthal** (D-CT) and **Peter Welch** (D-VT), it aims to ease burdens on families and protect kids from “lunch debt” humiliation. With 20 million children unable to afford meals nationwide, the \$176 million annual school debt underscores the need. Fetterman, who serves on the Senate Agriculture Committee, is pushing to ensure healthy meals for every student.

## JAHBS

The PA Department of Labor and Industry released the Commonwealth's unemployment rate for the month of January, which came in at 3.8 percent. When compared to the national unemployment rate, PA ranks slightly below the 4.0 percent. The Department notes the Commonwealth had a record high total nonfarm jobs of 6,190,300 for January. Within those nonfarm jobs, the Department has reported the supersector of education and health services witnessed the highest gain of 5,100.

We at Harrisburg: ONLINE send our condolences to the friends and family of **Karl Singleton**, who passed away on Friday. He was the Chief Equity and Compliance Officer for Harrisburg City. He was also running for an open seat on City Council. He is remembered for his life of public service. Funeral arrangements are forthcoming.



### *Happy Birthday*

- State Representative **Dave Madsen**
- Former State Representative **Gary Haluska**
- **Frank Lynch**, Board President, Susquehanna Township Board of Commissioners
- **Cindy Cashman**
- **David Osikowicz**, President & CEO, Original Fuels Inc
- **Mary Hanna Leavitt**, President Judge, Commonwealth Court
- **Kevin Busher**, Chief Advocacy Officer, Pennsylvania School Boards Association
- **Bob Archibald**, Vice President, GSL Public Strategies Group
- **Kathy McCormac**

### *Committee Meetings*

- (H) Education – 9:30 AM - To consider: HB 354 and 819
- (H) Transportation – 10 AM - Informational meeting on overview of the PA Turnpike Commission and Open Road Tolling
- (H) Human Services – 10 AM – Public hearing on HB 561
- (H) State Government – 10 AM – To consider: HB 408, 411, HR 25, 69, and 86
- (H) Insurance – 10 AM – To consider: HB 404, 535, 618, and 755
- (H) Agriculture and Rural Affairs – 10:30 AM – To consider: HB 587, 608, 764, 861, and re-refer HB 608
- (H) Energy – 11 AM – To consider: HB 362 and 660
- (H) Housing and Community Development – 11 AM - To consider: HB 273, 316, 643,

- 734, 743
- (H) Appropriations – OTF – Agenda to be announced
  - (H) Consumer Protection, Technology and Utilities- OTF – To consider HB 81, 825, HR 85



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