



Founded 1912

PENNSYLVANIA DISTRICT ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION

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The Honorable Josh Shapiro
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
508 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

February 11, 2026

Dear Governor Shapiro:

The Pennsylvania District Attorneys Association (PDAA) appreciates your leadership in matters of public safety, and we share your belief that Pennsylvanians deserve to be safe no matter where they live in the Commonwealth. PDAA has identified several critical public-policy concerns.

Law enforcement officials in our counties continue to encounter more and more individuals with mental health problems. District attorneys work with behavioral health specialists to seek solutions to the mental health crisis in their communities. Diversionary court programs need more funding for mental health and substance-use disorder treatment.

Community safety depends on strong prosecutorial offices, yet many counties are struggling to fill vacancies. Recruitment and retention are top priorities.

These pressing issues are part of a longer list of challenges facing our Commonwealth. Our laws need to match the realities we face. Prosecutors need the right tools to promote public safety and prevent violence, protect and support victims of all ages, keep illegal drugs off the streets and away from our kids, and keep Pennsylvania families safe.

To address these threats to our communities, we respectfully propose that you and our state lawmakers work with us to find solutions.

PROMOTE PUBLIC SAFETY AND PREVENT VIOLENCE

Gun Safety – Empower local prosecutors with a state-level ban on deadly machine-gun conversion devices that allows county-level prosecution to get them off our streets.

Skill Game Regulations – Clarify guidance for law enforcement about skill game machines. Levy a tax on skill game machines and enact



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regulations that ensure consumer protection, require security measures, and prevent underage gambling.

- Outlaw "Swatting"* – The intentional act of making a false 911 call to provoke a police response, or "swatting," puts people's lives at risk and wastes valuable public safety resources. Enact a state law to define swatting as a felony crime.

PROTECT AND SUPPORT VICTIMS

- Child abuse and exploitation* – Ensure every child affected by abuse or exploitation has access to trauma-informed care, safety, and a path toward justice with expanded support for Child Advocacy Centers (CACs).
- Elder abuse* – Update the Pennsylvania Older Adults Protective Services Act (OAPSA) to address new threats to older Pennsylvanians, including advances in technology and sophisticated financial scams.
- Victim services* – Fill the gap left by cuts to the Crime Victims Fund, a primary source of federal funding for programs serving victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, trafficking, and drunk driving.

UPDATE DRUG LAWS

- Illegal hemp products* – The proliferation of intoxicating hemp products in smoke shops and convenience stores underscores the need for clear THC limits and consistent regulation. Any product with marijuana-like effects should be subject to public-safety standards, including accredited lab testing and accurate, transparent THC labeling.
- Cannabis policy* – Create a cannabis regulation board similar to the Liquor Control Board to regulate the sale and distribution of products containing THC in the Commonwealth.
- Protect minors* - Set the minimum age for purchasing hemp products at 21 years old to keep substances like THC edibles and other products out of the hands of children.

We look forward to working together with you and state legislators on these critical needs related to our work in the coming year.

Sincerely,

Fran Chardo
PDAA President

Kelly Callihan
PDAA Executive Director

CC: Members of the PA General Assembly