Pennsylvania Releases State Climate Action Plan, Joins U.S. Climate Alliance

Pennsylvania joined the U.S. Climate Alliance, a bipartisan group of two dozen states committed to goals outlined in the 2015 U.N. Paris Climate Agreement. Gov. Tom Wolf announced the move at an event in Harrisburg on April 5 while releasing the state's latest Climate Action Plan, which includes ways to cut carbon emissions 80 percent by 2050.

According to Gov. Wolf's announcement, the plan describes over 100 actions, 15 of which DEP and partners analyzed quantitatively for potential greenhouse gas emissions reduction. The analysis showed that just those 15 actions, such as increasing renewable energy, incentivizing energy efficient buildings, and increasing the use of electric vehicles, would reduce emissions 21 percent by 2025. Any combination of the 85 additional actions would likely achieve even more emissions reductions.

PA Legislators Introduce Bipartisan Bill to Transition to 100% Renewable Energy

A bipartisan group of legislators joined together Tuesday, May 7 to re-introduce legislation that would require by the year 2050 that the Commonwealth get 100% of its energy from renewable sources.

Rep. Chris Rabb (D-Philadelphia) introduced House Bill 1425 while Senator Tom Killion (R-Delaware) introduced Senate Bill 630. Killion is the first Republican Senator to introduce this type of legislation in the country.

Advocacy Spotlight on Preservation

Preserving Agricultural Lands: HB 574 Expands Farmland
Preservation Funding to Land Trusts

Legislation introduced by Rep. Keith Greiner (R-Lancaster) in February, would amend Act 43 to make funds available to land trusts to preserve farmland. **HB 574** would allocate $2.5 million annually from the state’s farmland preservation funding to assist land trusts in acquiring easements on farms.

The bill would also increase the amount land trusts can seek for reimbursement of transaction costs through the existing Land Trust Reimbursement Program from $5,000 per project to $10,000.

**HOW WILL HB 574 HELP FARMLAND PRESERVATION IN PENNSYLVANIA?**

Today, **more than 1,000 Pennsylvania families are waiting to preserve their farms** through the state program. Some have been on a waiting list for a decade. HB 574 would expand the options for these families and others who want to preserve their farms.

Land trusts operate in counties that do not have county preservation programs. HB 574 would give farm families in those counties an option to preserve their farms that they do not currently have by working with a local land trust.

Land trusts can provide an alternative to county preservation programs for constituencies that might not want to work with a government entity such as Amish and Mennonite families.

There are several state grant programs that provide funding to land trusts to protect natural lands but there is no state funding available to assist land trusts in the preservation of farmland. With the long and growing list of farms waiting to be preserved around the Commonwealth, this legislation would provide an effective and efficient way to reduce some of the backlog and assist farm families in protecting their land.

HB 574 requires a private land trust to provide matching dollars in order to be eligible to receive state funding. These matching funds, raised from private sources, will increase the total amount of funding available for farmland preservation in the Commonwealth.

State funding would also help land trusts access federal funding through the Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) program thus increasing the overall amount available to preserve farms in the state.

For every dollar invested by the Commonwealth for this program, the private sector (landowners, individuals, businesses and foundations) will provide one additional dollar, thereby, providing a **100% return on the investment** made by the state.

**WHAT IS A LAND TRUST?**

Land trusts are private, not-for-profit organizations that protect and conserve natural and working lands by acquiring ownership of the land or by placing a conservation easement on the property. Land trusts partner with private landowners, state and federal agencies and municipal governments to protect forests, farms, parks, urban gardens and other green spaces that supply clean water and fresh food, protect wildlife, provide recreational opportunities, support the economy and enhance our quality of life. To locate land trusts within your district, please visit the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association website at [https://conservationtools.org/organizations/land_trusts](https://conservationtools.org/organizations/land_trusts).

**HOW YOU CAN HELP**

To join 10,000 Friends in support of this important legislation and to help move the bill forward, please send letters of support to Chairman Causer and Chairman Pashinski and reach out to committee members, especially if you live in their district. See below for sample letter and info sheet for key points.

The bill has bipartisan support and is currently in the House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee awaiting consideration. Advocacy efforts are led by Lancaster Farmland Trust supported by the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association and endorsed by several land trusts across the state.

Sample Letter of Support HB574

**Upcoming Events & Opportunities**
Join conference attendees representing downtowns, central business districts, neighborhoods, and core community revitalization programs from across Pennsylvania, as Pennsylvania Downtown Center explores how communities can transform into thriving, economically vibrant hubs by embracing innovation and entrepreneurship.

Explore transformational initiatives and ideas, network with revitalization professionals from across the state, and experience Erie's own success stories.

Click here to learn more and register by May 24, 2019

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**Home Matters Day**  
**June 4th | 9:30am - 3:00pm | Harrisburg Capitol Rotunda**

The Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania is hosting Home Matters Day to educate and advocate for increasing state resources for affordable housing by expanding PHARE and creating a state housing tax credit.

To get the latest info on the two pieces of legislation and a run through of the schedule for the day, The Housing Alliance is offering a free Home Matters Day Policy Webinar on Wednesday May 22nd at 12:00PM.

Register here for Home Matters Day

Register here for the informative webinar

Click here for more information on PHARE & the State Housing Credit

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**AIA Pennsylvania Architects Action Day 2019**  
**June 11th | 8am - 3pm | Harrisburg Capitol Complex**

Join AIA Pennsylvania and your colleagues across the state for Architects Action Day! Meet with
Learn More and Register Here

PHFA Housing Policy Fellowship Created
Funding research & leadership development in housing

With the goal of funding critical research and promoting leadership development, the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency announced the creation of a new Housing Policy Fellowship.

The fellowship will fund a maximum of 12 months of research and study on a pressing housing or community development topic. With a monthly stipend of $1,000, the maximum funding available will be $12,000. The financial support can be for a variety of activities supporting the approved research, including interviews with experts, securing resources and study materials, travel for attending relevant conferences and more.

Click here for the application and more information

In Our Next Issue

June is National Great Outdoors Month
We celebrate Pennsylvania’s unique outdoor places and open spaces

Resilient Communities

Save the Date for the 2019 Commonwealth Awards

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As a recognized authority on responsible land use, 10,000 Friends partners with and provides technical assistance to government officials, non-profit organizations and the private sector on policy and development solutions that protect the natural and built environments, strengthen local economies, provide access to economic opportunity for all, and improve community health and quality of life in our state’s diverse cities, towns, older suburbs, and rural communities. Through a diverse coalition focused on a positive agenda, we advocate proactive solutions and options for local, regional and state leaders.

We update our website regularly with articles and links, so please stop by often: http://10000friends.org.