

**Bucks County Association of Township Officials  
Resolutions Committee Report, January 17, 2025.**

The Resolution Committee met virtually to review resolutions from three member Townships.

All proposed resolutions were supported by the Committee.

Resolutions will be considered and voted on at the BCATO meeting as a group without the need for further discussion. Prior to the vote, any member may request that one or more resolutions **NOT** be considered in the group and debated and considered on its own merit.

Respectfully Submitted. David Nyman and Chester Pogonowski

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**RESOLUTIONS**

**2025-01:** Resolved that PSATS support legislation to amend the Senior Citizens Property Tax and Rent Rebate Assistance Program to permit municipalities to voluntarily provide rebate assistance similar that provided by school districts.

**DOYLESTOWN**

**SUPPORT**

Justification: This program is critical to assisting senior residents of townships to ensure that they are able to remain in their homes amid skyrocketing housing costs. Current legislation provides assistance of a maximum of \$1000 from the Commonwealth for residents with incomes up to \$45,000. School districts are permitted to offer an additional rebate up to 50% (\$500). It would be reasonable for townships with the financial ability to voluntarily offer a similar additional rebate of up to 50% (\$500).

**2025-02:** Resolved that PSATS support legislation to amend the Pennsylvania Human Rights Act to prohibit discrimination on sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.

**DOYLESTOWN**

**SUPPORT**

Justification: The Act currently prohibits discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations based on an individual's race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, educational status, handicap or disability. The Act is silent on protecting people from discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity or expression which provides an opportunity for LGBTQ+ community to face discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations.

Resolutions Committee Comment: This resolution has been previously proposed and rejected on 3 separate occasions by the PSATS Resolutions Committee. This version provides more context in the Justification by specifically stating categories covered by Act.

**2025-03:** Resolved that PSATS oppose any legislation that would overrule local zoning ordinances that would require municipalities to implement a one size approach to increase the number of affordable houses.

**EAST ROCKHILL, UPPER MAKEFIELD**

**SUPPORT**

**2025-04:** Resolved that PSATS support legislation and policy that focuses on the reduction of blight, rehabilitation of existing housing, managing construction costs related to stormwater and UCC regulations.

**EAST ROCKHILL, UPPER MAKEFIELD**

**SUPPORT**

**2025-05:** Resolved that PSATS support legislation opportunities to provide grant funding to municipalities to conduct housing studies and to plan for the long-term housing needs of the municipality.

**EAST ROCKHILL, UPPER MAKEFIELD**

**SUPPORT**

Justification: House Bills 1976 and 2045 of the PA General Assembly Legislative session of 2023-2024 was judged to be unacceptable because the legislation promoted more development while not addressing the affordability of houses. Housing costs are market driven. There is no way to fix the cost of housing from one the sale from one property owner to the next. Housing which is deemed affordable/attainable today cannot be guaranteed into the future. In 2024, one home sold in what was once affordable Levittown PA, at above \$700,000.

Resolutions Committee Comment: Resolutions 03, 04 and 05 were original submitted as a single resolution. The Committee broke the resolution into 3 key points which could stand on its own merit, improving chances of acceptance by the PSATS resolution committee and the voting delegates at the Conference.

**2025-06** Resolved that PSATS supports legislation that would amend the Second Class Township Code to provide statutory authority to levy a General Purpose Millage rate up to 30 mills consistent with that enable for First Class Townships and Boroughs within the Commonwealth.

**LOWER MAKEFIELD**

**SUPPORT**

Justification: Across Pennsylvania, municipalities without home rule charters cannot increase a variety of taxes beyond limits set by the Commonwealth in the 1960's. Second Class Townships are subject to a base statutory cap of 14 mills for general purposes which is more restrictive than First Class Townships and Boroughs. Over the last 30 years, counties have not completed a countywide reassessment. This in combination with the current cap becomes more restrictive as the purchasing power of the 14 mills is diminished year after year with the costs of services naturally increasing. This puts additional strain on Townships that must provide for police and public service costs which continue to rise. Increasing the cap to 30 mils provides more flexibility for Townships to fund needed expenses.

**2025-06** Resolved, that PSATS seek legislation to amend the Sterling Act (Act 45 of 19) to require that up to one percent (1%) of Earned Income by non-residents to the city of Philadelphia and collected under the requirements of the Philadelphia Wage Tax be remitted to the municipality in which the Taxpayer resides.

**WARRINGTON**

**SUPPORT**

Justification: municipalities rely on revenue generated by the Earned Income tax to provide essential services to their residents and taxpayers, including emergency services that protect the health, safety and welfare of the community. The Sterling Act of 1932 was enacted and imposed a wage tax on both residents of the city and on non-

residents that work in the city of Philadelphia. This was enacted at a time when the communities surrounding Philadelphia consisted mainly of farmland with few local government services. Residents who do not work in the City of Philadelphia bear a higher tax burden to support local services because of inequities caused by the provisions of the Sterling Act. These inequities created by the Sterling Act deprive local municipalities a significant amount of revenue that could be used to provide essential local government services including police, fire and emergency medical services.

Resolutions Committee Comment: There is currently a standing PSATS resolution which addresses this topic.

**2025-07** Resolved, that PSATS seek legislation permitting all municipalities, irrespective of whether they have previously enacted a Mercantile Tax, to adopt a Mercantile Tax.

**WARRINGTON**

**SUPPORT**

Justification: It has been a considerable number of years since the law was enacted which precluded municipalities from adopting a Mercantile Tax, if they didn't previously have such a tax. When that occurred, many municipalities, including those surrounding major urban areas within the Commonwealth, were not locations that generated the development of significant commercial and retail development. In the last twenty (20) years, many municipalities have experienced a major influx of new retail and commercial developments which has had a significant impact on municipalities. That impact includes utilization of Township Roads, as well as the accelerated demand for emergency services, including emergency rescue, but more importantly, police services. In order to maintain roads and provide emergency services, including police services, the only option is to impose upon retail and commercial businesses the obligation to pay more for those services which cannot be achieved with Real Estate Tax Increases because of millage limitations, and which would be a further cost to residents. The residential taxpayers have borne a disproportionate cost of many emergencies and police services occasioned by the influx of commercial and retail businesses. A Mercantile Tax would not impact residential properties.

Resolutions Committee Comment: There is currently a standing PSATS resolution which addresses this topic.

**2025-08** Resolved, that PSATS oppose any statewide zoning mandates.

**WARRINGTON**

**SUPPORT**

Justification: Statewide zoning mandates overlook critical factors such as infrastructure capacity, emergency service availability and the need for open space and farmland preservation, as well as the unique characteristics of each municipality that cannot be factored into zoning decisions when a uniform solution is imposed. Also, uniform zoning cannot consider the variety of municipalities within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, irrespective of population, as it relates to the environmentally sensitive areas, watersheds, and the like.

Resolutions Committee Comment: There is currently a standing PSATS resolution which addresses this topic.

**2025-09:** Resolved, that PSATS seek legislation to allow local municipalities to use Radar for speed enforcement.

**WARRINGTON**

**SUPPORT**

Justification: Pennsylvania remains the only state that prohibits local police from using radar to enforce speed limits, while state troopers are allowed to use radar for this purpose. Radar detectors are legal in passenger vehicles but prohibited in commercial vehicles. Many residents are surprised to learn that local police cannot use radar to catch speeding drivers. Instead, police departments must rely on methods such as painting white lines on roads and using a stopwatch and mathematical formulas to calculate vehicle speeds. These methods are not reliable in poor weather or darkness, are time-consuming to set up, and put officers at risk of being struck by vehicles. The law, which requires devices to be recalibrated every 60 days at significant expense, needs to be updated.

Resolutions Committee Comment: There is currently a standing PSATS resolution which addresses this topic.