

# PSATC 2022 Legislative Priorities

## **Mandate Relief**

*Unfunded mandates increase the local tax burden.*

## **Municipal Public Safety Pensions**

Public safety employees deserve pensions that reflect the services they perform. Likewise, taxpayers deserve predictable and sustainable pension costs. The current public safety pension statutes are antiquated resulting in an inequitable and unaffordable burden on taxpayers. PSATC seeks an equitable solution to ever-growing pension costs.

## **Binding Arbitration**

For more than 50 years, binding arbitration has been the process to address public safety contract disputes in Pennsylvania. Over time, the process has weighed heavily in favor of the unions. PSATC is not advocating for the elimination of Act 111. Rather, it supports leveling the playing field with commonsense changes.

## **Public Notices**

Making public information accessible should be efficient and affordable for those seeking the information, as well as for those providing it. PSATC supports a central depository for public notices in the form of a publically accessible, searchable website. A “one-stop” approach will increase access to public information while saving tax dollars.

## **Prevailing Wage**

The more than 55 year old prevailing wage threshold of \$25,000 for public projects needs to be raised to reflect today’s costs. PSATC supports increasing the threshold and adding an annual inflation mechanism that will allow the threshold to keep pace with future costs.

## **Public Safety**

*Public safety is a basic local government function that can only be achieved with adequate tools.*

## **Local Use of Radar**

Speeding is a paramount issue for local elected officials as it is the number one complaint from constituents. Radar is a reliable, accurate and efficient public safety tool, unlike the antiquated VASCAR system local police currently use. PSATC strongly supports the authorization for local police to use radar.

## **Preservation of Local Authority**

Preemption of local decision making in favor of state level decisions is becoming more and more common. State level decisions are not always best, especially when they preempt local government’s basic duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of residents. PSATC strongly believes local problem solving is best and supports the preservation of local authority.

## **Water, Sewer and Storm Water Infrastructure Funding**

Upgrading basic water and sewer infrastructure is costly, but it is also a matter of public safety. Meeting state and federal requirements for nutrient reduction and storm water management are also costly with the added element of mandated compliance. To fund aging infrastructure repairs and meet mandates, PSATC advocates for new funding options and local flexibility.

## **Consumer Fireworks**

The legalization of consumer fireworks in 2017 has resulted in a threat to public safety for both first responders and the general public. Municipal officials receive the bulk of resident feedback and complaints; however, municipalities have no authority to adopt regulations that are stricter than the state law in order to protect the public from the dangers of these aerial explosives. Furthermore, the law is an unfunded mandate on local government (requiring public safety resources) with no real teeth for proper enforcement. Short of repeal, this law must be amended with stricter enforcement penalties and more local control.

*The PA State Association of Township Commissioners (PSATC) is a non-partisan association representing the Commonwealth’s first class townships. Over 1.5 million citizens live in first class townships throughout the Commonwealth. Please contact Amy Sturges, Deputy Executive Director - Advocacy at [asturges@pml.org](mailto:asturges@pml.org) with any questions.*