



*(Harrisburg, November 23, 2015)* Pennsylvania counties, today, authorized counsel to explore options to end the current six month state budget impasse and to prevent future threats to key human services programs provided at the county level.

County commissioners from across the state adopted a motion by County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania's (CCAP) Board Chair Jeff Haste of Dauphin County to have legal counsel research potential litigation against the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, specifically, requiring the release of commonwealth and federal funds for essential services.

Counties also authorized CCAP counsel to investigate the legal ramifications to counties and county officials of ceasing to remit funds, collected at the county level on the state's behalf, during an impasse and allowing those funds to be used for essential local services.

According to Haste, "This budget stalemate has lasted long enough. Counties have, to the best of their abilities, kept critical services available for children, seniors and many of the most vulnerable in our communities. The Governor and Legislature do not fully understand the scope and nature of the harm their inaction causes, and do not seem to share our view of the crisis in services, which affects the everyday lives of our residents."

CCAP President Craig Lehman of Lancaster County stated, "Counties have tapped reserves, been forced to borrow, delayed hirings, limited some services, and reduced or stopped paying vendors in order to continue providing for the well-being of our residents. It is unconscionable that the commonwealth's continued impasse is negatively affecting those in critical need."

Bob Thomas of Franklin County, CCAP's first vice president, said, "Without a guarantee for the commonwealth's funding due to counties, county taxpayers may be forced to assume those costs; an intolerable situation. Pennsylvania counties continue to be committed to the mission of providing critical services to our residents."