

House State Government Committee

06/10/2026, 10:00 a.m., Room B-31, Main Capitol

By Dominic Kenny, Pennsylvania Legislative Services

The committee met to consider several bills.

HR 500, Prime Sponsor: Rep. Thomas Mehaffie (R-Dauphin) – (PN 3154) Resolution designating the year of 2026 as the “80th Anniversary Year of the State YMCA of Pennsylvania Youth and Government Program” in Pennsylvania. The bill was reported as committed, with Rep. Wendy Fink (R-York) voting in the negative.

Rep. Mehaffie discussed the history of the YMCA Youth and Government club in Pennsylvania. He praised the Hershey delegation, noting they have over 300 members. He noted that many past members have gone on to be legislators and judges.

Rep. Scott Barger (R-Blair) voiced his support for the bill, highlighting the importance of extracurricular activities for young people.

Rep. Fink praised the resolution but said she would not be voting for it because it does not honor veterans.

HB 2037, Prime Sponsor: Rep. Ben Waxman (D-Philadelphia) – (PN 2607) Amends Title 65 (Public Officers), in ethics standards and financial disclosure, further providing for definitions, for restricted activities, for statement of financial interests and for penalties. Defines “digital asset.” Prohibits public officials and their families from creating or promoting a digital asset in which they have a financial interest. Gives public officials and their families 90 days to divest from the digital asset if they created or promoted a digital asset at the time of the effective date. Requires individuals to divulge the amount of any financial interest in a digital asset exceeding \$1,000. Asserts that any person who violates provisions will pay a civil penalty of up to \$50,000. Effective in 60 days. The bill was reported as amended, along a party-line vote, with Republicans voting in the negative.

A03485, by Waxman, restricts a public official and their immediate family from using trusts to hold or shield digital assets in a way that preserves control, benefit or influence, except through properly structured trusts with no knowledge or control of the investments; and provides definitions. The amendment was adopted, with Reps. Barger, Fink and Jamie Walsh (R-Luzerne) voting in the negative.

Rep. Waxman said the bill modernizes Pennsylvania’s ethics laws to reflect the new digital age by closing loopholes that allow public officials to profit from crypto projects while in office. He said cryptocurrency allows for payments to elected officials with little oversight or regulation.

Minority Chair Brad Roae (R-Crawford) noted that under the proposed bill, an elected official would have to divulge \$1,000 or more of digital currency but not “a million dollars’ worth of stocks or gold.” He said he felt the penalties for violations were too “harsh.”

Rep. Joseph Webster (D-Montgomery) said Pennsylvania was “short” on campaign finance and ethics regulations. He said the bill was essential to ensuring elected officials are not influenced by possible bribes.

Rep. Russ Diamond (R-Lebanon) inquired about who was considered to be the immediate family of a public official before being informed by Rep. Waxman that only spouses and children were considered immediate family members after the amendment. Rep. Diamond asked if an elected official in Pennsylvania had been bribed with digital currency. Rep. Waxman said there have been “many instances” at the federal level but nothing specific in Pennsylvania. “I think it's a real threat, and I wouldn't have introduced the bill if I didn't think so,” Rep. Waxman said. Rep. Diamond said he felt the bill was “overly broad” regarding what government officials it applied to.

Rep. Fink said she would not support the bill due to there being no instances of cryptocurrency being used to bribe an official in Pennsylvania. She said the bill was only introduced because of “perceived notions” regarding the Trump family, referring to it as “Trump Derangement Syndrome.”

Rep. Jeremy Shaffer (R-Allegheny) said the bill would apply to too many public officials, including school board members and township supervisors. He said the bill may also cause unneeded controversy over harmless investments. He said he would be interested in discussing a bill that would disallow certain investments regarding “meme coins” by state legislators.

Rep. Barger said he supports preventing public officials from benefiting from financial corruption. He asked why the bill only applied to digital currencies. Rep. Waxman said the opaque nature of cryptocurrency transactions makes them harder to track and more necessary to legislate. He also noted that cryptocurrency is a new form of finance that has yet to receive much regulation. Rep. Barger expressed concern that the “constitutional rights” of public officials to trade in cryptocurrency may be threatened by the bill.

Rep. Webster said the reason there have been no recorded cases of corruption relating to cryptocurrency in Pennsylvania is because the commonwealth does not have laws that prevent it. He said the General Assembly has basic ethical values and standards that it must live up to.

Chair Roae reiterated concerns that the bill would apply to too many public officials, including those at the local level. He argued the legislation was too complicated and once again criticized it for not including stocks or bonds.

HR 499, Prime Sponsor: Rep. Carol Hill-Evans (D-York) – (PN 3309) A Resolution recognizing June 19, 2026, as "Juneteenth Independence Day" in Pennsylvania in commemoration of June 19, 1865, the date on which slavery was abolished finally in all regions of the United States. The resolution was reported as committed, with Reps. Barger, Diamond, Fink and Walsh voting in the negative.

Rep. Diamond criticized the resolution by pointing out that Juneteenth was already a federal and state holiday. He also noted that the resolution claimed that President Abraham Lincoln freed all slaves in the Emancipation Proclamation but highlighted the fact that it only freed slaves in rebelling states. He stressed the importance of accurate historical facts.

HR 508, Prime Sponsor: Rep. Carol Hill-Evans (D-York) – (PN 3329) Resolution designating the week of June 7 through 13, 2026, as “Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week” in Pennsylvania. The resolution was reported as committed, with Reps. Barger, Fink and Walsh voting in the negative.