

DEP Quarterly

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PA Chamber of Business and Industry
417 Walnut Street, Harrisburg PA
Wednesday, September 9, 2026
9:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

AGENDA

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| 9:45 a.m. | Speakers and sponsors may log on early (if on Zoom) |
| 10:00 a.m. | Program Broadcast is Live (if on Zoom) |
| 10:00 a.m. | Welcoming Remarks and Introductions – Alex Halper |
| 10:03 a.m. | Introductory Remarks as Chair of PA Chamber’s Environmental Policy Committee – Andy Bockis |
| 10:05 a.m. | Introduction of John Ryder by David Rockman from Eckert Seamans |
| 10:05 a.m. | Permitting and the SPEED Program – John Ryder, Deputy Secretary of Field Operations, PA Department of Environmental Protection |
| 10:35 a.m. | Introduction of Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill by Alex Halper |
| 10:35 a.m. | Legislative Update – Senator Kristin Phillips-Hill |
| 11:00 a.m. | Introduction of Jill Whitcomb by Alex Halper |
| 11:00 a.m. | PFAS and Biosolids – Jill Whitcomb, Deputy Secretary of Office of Water Programs, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection |
| 12:00 p.m. | Adjourn |

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS



Alex Halper, Senior Vice President, Government Affairs, PA Chamber of Business and Industry

Alex Halper serves as Senior Vice President of Government Affairs for the PA Chamber and oversees public policy development, advocacy and outreach, as well as the organization's political efforts.

Halper serves on the Pennsylvania Minimum Wage Advisory Board, Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children Board of Directors, Pennsylvania Workers' Compensation Advisory Council, the Governing Board of the Pennsylvania Compensation Rating Bureau, the Pennsylvania Association for Chamber Professionals Board and the Pennsylvania Association for Government Relations Board and was appointed to Gov. Josh Shapiro's Transition Advisory Committee. He regularly speaks to local chambers of commerce, trade associations and employers across the Commonwealth about key legislative issues impacting business and Pennsylvania's overall political landscape.

Alex Halper joined the PA Chamber's Government Affairs team in 2011. He previously served as a legislative assistant in Washington, D.C. to former U.S. Sen. Arlen Specter where he worked on numerous areas of public policy, including transportation and infrastructure, homeland security and appropriations.

Originally from Allentown, Halper graduated from the George Washington University in 2006 with a bachelor's degree in Political Science. He lives in Lower Paxton Township with his wife, two children, and their dog, Kelce.



Sen. Kristin Phillips-Hill

Kristin Phillips-Hill was elected to serve York County citizens in the Pennsylvania Senate in 2018 and re-elected in 2022. She serves as Senate Majority Caucus Chair, where she leads legislative discussions to advance priorities for southern York County.

A fiscal hawk, Kristin advocates for transparency and accountability in government spending, earning recognition for exceeding expectations in expense reporting.

She has championed initiatives to reform health care processes, improve high-speed internet access, enhance protections for victims of human trafficking, and improve the state's business climate with landmark permitting reform.

Kristin serves on key Senate committees, including the Communications & Technology (Vice Chair), Appropriations, Banking and Insurance, Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure, and State Government, and is a member of the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority to oversee high-speed internet expansion.

She holds a bachelor's degree in political science and a master's in public policy from Rutgers University. Kristin lives in York Township with her husband, Rick. They have three grown children: Victoria, Gavin, and Spencer.



Jill Whitcomb, Deputy Secretary of Office of Water Programs, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Jill Whitcomb serves as the Deputy Secretary of Environmental Protection's Office of Water Programs. Previously, Jill served as the Director of the Bureau of Watershed Restoration and Nonpoint Source Management. In this role, she provided the vision and leadership for Pennsylvania's statewide nonpoint source management program, conservation district operations and support, agriculture conservation and compliance assurance, and Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay watershed restoration efforts.

Prior to serving as Bureau Director, she was the Director of the Chesapeake Bay Office and has served in management and staff positions in the Bureau of Waterways Engineering and Wetlands and the Bureau of Clean Water. Before joining DEP, Jill worked for the Lancaster County Conservation District.

Jill holds a Master of Environmental Pollution Control from Penn State University and a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Lebanon Valley College. She resides in Lancaster County with her family.



John Ryder, Field Operations, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

John Ryder serves as the Deputy Secretary for Field Operations for the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. John has been with the Department since 2000. Previously John served as the Director of the Department's Bureau of District Oil and Gas Operations. The Bureau oversaw all permitting, inspection, compliance, and enforcement associated with the Oil and Gas industry across Pennsylvania. He has also served as an Environmental Group Manager and Water Quality Specialist Supervisor with the Eastern District Oil and Gas Office where he managed a diverse team of environmental professionals challenged with regulating unconventional oil and gas

related exploration activities. Prior to that, John was an Aquatic Biologist for the Department's North Central Field Office where he participated in a wide variety of regulatory, permitting, and vector program work.

John received his B.S. degree in Fisheries Biology from Mansfield University and has also done graduate work at Penn State University. He lives in rural Pennsylvania and enjoys spending time outdoors and traveling with his family.

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