

DN

The Patriot-News

GAME DAY SNACKS

COME SUPER BOWL SUNDAY, FOOTBALL FANS WILL GATHER FOR HEARTY SNACKS DURING THE BIG GAME. WINGS HAVE BECOME A GO-TO FOR BEING EASY TO SHARE AND EASY TO PREP AHEAD. **D1**

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SPOTLIGHT PA

Shapiro’s budget pitch likely to tackle housing, energy costs

Lawmakers listen as Gov. Josh Shapiro delivers his budget proposal last year. His address today before a joint session of the General Assembly kicks off talks on how to fund state government ahead of the June 30 budget deadline. Shapiro’s first three budget deals all missed that deadline. Photos by Dan Gleiter, PennLive, 2025

In this election year — in which both parties will be trying to flip a legislative chamber — lawmakers could face pressure to reach a deal earlier than in the past.

Kate Huangpu and Stephen Caruso
Spotlight PA

In 2024, Gov. Josh Shapiro announced he was developing a housing action plan. A spokesperson said he will reveal the results today to address housing affordability after months of canvassing advocates, developers and local officials.

approach those issues ahead of the June 30 budget deadline. Shapiro’s first three budget deals all missed that deadline — the recent impasse lasted more than four months, with both sides boasting of wins in the end.

The speech also gives the governor a chance to highlight issues and themes beyond the state’s bottom line, similar to the president’s annual State of the Union address.

In this election year — in which both parties will be trying to flip a legislative chamber — lawmakers could face pressure to finish a deal earlier than in the past. Here’s what to watch for.

FINANCIAL PRESSURES

Pennsylvania faces several expensive propositions in this year’s budget that, combined, put incredible pressure on the state’s already strained finances.

Public transit agencies say they are in crisis. Poor public schools won a court case that found they were unconstitutionally underfunded. Counties say they need a boost to deliver long-neglected mental health services. And President Donald Trump’s cuts to federal health care and food aid mean the state must either pay more or risk low-income families losing access to both in coming years.

Additionally, the state’s aging population is driving up the human services budget, according to the Independent Fiscal Office.

Last fiscal year, Pennsylvania brought in \$46.4 billion in revenue from sales, personal and corporate income taxes, as well as other levies. Lawmakers approved a \$50.1 billion budget to fund education, health care, and public safety programs, among others.

The difference between revenue and spending was covered by the state’s cash

SEE BUDGET, A4

HEALTH CARE

Have you waited long for MRI results?

Blame the demands from an aging population outpacing capacity for some health systems, as well as a shortage of radiologists nationwide.

Ivey DeJesus idejesus@pennlive.com

At least one hospital system with a network of medical complexes in central Pennsylvania is feeling the brunt of an ongoing shortage of radiologists nationwide.

UPMC, the largest hospital system in Pennsylvania, said it was pursuing every opportunity to meet what it called a “growing demand” for radiology and imaging services.

“This includes prioritizing emergent and urgent studies to ensure patients get the critical care they need in a timely manner,” a UPMC spokesperson said.

Some UPMC patients have had to wait 30 days or more to get diagnostic results, according to social media posts on Nextdoor.

Dan T posted: “I had an MRI on December 8th and didn’t get my results until more than 4 weeks later. I think they only did that after I called and complained twice since they told me results would take 2-3 weeks. UPMC radiology is apparently a mess right now.”

Kathy S. of Jonestown this week posted: “I waited 8 weeks for results from a CT scan. I received the bill before I received the results. It’s unacceptable.”

UPMC told PennLive that over the past two weeks, the hospital system had “onboarded” additional radiologists to “strengthen our staffing” in central Pennsylvania, and “partnered with external radiology providers to decrease the wait

SEE HEALTH CARE, A6

GROUNDHOG DAY

Stuck with winter?

Punxsutawney Phil’s forecast of six more weeks of winter was greeted by cheers and boos from the tens of thousands who braved the single-digit temperatures at Gobler’s Knob. But just how accurate is the prognosticator? **A2**

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