



Public Hearing: Strengthening Rural Pennsylvania

This hearing is to examine policies that support economic growth and longterm affordability in rural Pennsylvania.

March 27, 2026 | 9:30 a.m.

Hearing Overview

- **Pledge of Allegiance**
- **Welcome**
- **Opening Remarks**
 - Deputy Chair Dallas Kephart
 - State Representative Parke Wentling
- **Testimony from Invited Experts**
- **Member Discussion with Testifiers**
- **Closing Comments & Adjournment**

Testifiers - Panel One/Business Development & Intrastate Competition

- **Rod Wilt**, Penn-Northwest Development Corporation
- **David George**, Joy Cone
- **Scott Ziance**, Vorys

Testifiers - Panel Two/Housing & Repopulation

- **Jake Rickert**, Penn-Northwest Development Corporation
- **Jim Landino**, JCL Development
- **Mark Longietti**, City of Hermitage

Testifiers - Panel Three/Quality of Life, Parks & Recreation

- **Tom Roskos**, Buhl Park
- **Mike Kotyk**, Mercer County Transit Authority
- **Jordan Batt**, Baughman Family Community Center/Buhl Community Rec Center

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Chairman David H. Rowe
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About the Testifiers

Panel One - Business Development & Intrastate Competition



Rod Wilt

Rod E. Wilt is **Executive Director** of the **Penn-Northwest Development Corporation**, the lead economic development organization serving Mercer County. He previously served five terms in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, representing the 17th District, where he focused on economic development and regional investment. Wilt brings decades of experience in banking, real estate, and public policy, and currently works with public and private partners to support business growth, workforce development, and investment in northwestern Pennsylvania.



David George

David George is **President and Chief Executive Officer** of the **Joy Baking Group**, the parent company of **Joy Cone Company**, the largest producer of ice cream cones in the United States. A third-generation leader of the family-founded business, he assumed the role of president in 2008 and became CEO in 2011. Under his leadership, the company has expanded through strategic acquisitions and facility investments, producing more than 2.5 billion ice cream cones annually across multiple facilities in the United States and Mexico.



Scott Ziance

Scott Ziance is a partner in the energy and environmental practice at **Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease LLP**. He advises clients on energy development, environmental compliance, and regulatory matters, with a focus on issues affecting the natural gas, oil, and power sectors. Ziance works with businesses, developers, and policymakers on permitting, environmental policy, and energy infrastructure projects across the region.

About the Testifiers

Panel Two - Housing & Repopulation



Jake Rickert

Jake Rickert is **Associate Executive Director** of the **Penn-Northwest Development Corporation**, where he supports economic development initiatives and workforce strategies across Mercer County. He previously served as the organization's Director of Workforce Development, leading initiatives such as the Homegrown program to connect young professionals with career opportunities in the region. Rickert is a graduate of Pennsylvania State University and a U.S. Army veteran who continues to serve in the National Guard as a Staff Sergeant.



Jim Landino

Jim Landino is the **owner** of **JCL Development**, a real estate development and revitalization firm based in Sharon. Through JCL Development, he has led numerous projects focused on redeveloping historic and underutilized properties in downtown Sharon, helping to advance housing, commercial space, and community-centered development initiatives. Landino is also the founder and CEO of JCL Energy and previously served as CEO of Sunbelt Transformers, bringing decades of experience in business development, manufacturing, and community revitalization.



Mark Longietti

Mark Longietti is the **City Manager** for the **City of Hermitage**, where he oversees municipal operations and community development initiatives. He previously served in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives representing the 7th District, focusing on economic development, education, and regional collaboration. Longietti brings extensive experience in public service and local government, working to support responsible growth and quality of life in the Hermitage community.

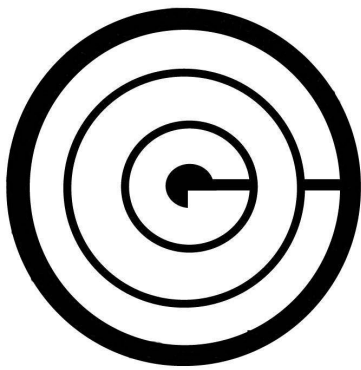
About the Testifiers

Panel Three - Quality of Life, Parks & Recreation



Tom Roskos

Tom Roskos is **Executive Director** of **Buhl Park** in Hermitage, where he oversees operations, programming, and long-term planning for one of the region's largest public parks. In this role, he works with community partners to support recreation, conservation, and tourism initiatives that enhance quality of life across the Shenango Valley. Roskos has extensive experience in nonprofit leadership and community engagement, focusing on expanding access to outdoor amenities and strengthening regional collaboration.



Mike Kotyk

Mike Kotyk is **Executive Director** of the **Mercer County Regional Council of Governments**, which operates public transportation services throughout Mercer County. In this role, he oversees the county's transit system, working with state and local partners to provide reliable transportation access for residents, workers, and seniors. Kotyk has extensive experience in transportation planning, public administration, and regional collaboration focused on improving mobility and connectivity across the county.



Jordan Batt

Jordan Batt is the **Executive Director** of the **Baughman Family Community Center / Buhl Community Recreation Center**, where he oversees recreational programming, youth engagement, and community development initiatives in the Shenango Valley. He works closely with local partners to expand access to sports, wellness, and educational opportunities for residents of all ages. Batt brings experience in nonprofit leadership, community outreach, and program management, with a focus on fostering healthy, inclusive, and active communities.