



Lieutenant Governor **Austin A. Davis**

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Lt. Gov. Austin Davis Touts Plan to Address Housing Costs at “Putting More Money Back in Your Pockets” Tour Stop in Carbon County

Shapiro-Davis Administration’s Housing Action Plan will build and preserve more homes, protect renters, strengthen coordination and modernize local planning and permitting

PALMERTON, PA – Lt. Gov. Austin Davis heard from local officials, advocates and residents today in Carbon County at a roundtable discussion focused on rising housing costs, which the Shapiro-Davis Administration is addressing through Pennsylvania’s first-ever comprehensive Housing Action Plan.

Today’s event was the latest stop on LG Davis’ “Putting More Money Back in Your Pockets” tour, which has visited [Montgomery](#), [Luzerne](#) and [Fayette](#) counties to highlight the Shapiro-Davis Administration’s ongoing efforts to cut taxes, lower costs and grow the economy.

“As someone who had to put in offers on eight different properties until we finally were able to purchase a new home, I’ve seen firsthand how out of whack the housing market is in Pennsylvania – with limited supply and few affordable options for young families,” said **LG Davis**. “We need to build more homes, plain and simple, and we need to protect vulnerable people, like our seniors and low-income families, who need more affordable housing. Our Administration has a plan to increase the supply of homes, which will help bring down costs.”

Across the Commonwealth, workers are struggling to find affordable homes near new job opportunities, seniors and other Pennsylvanians on fixed incomes are seeing

unaffordable rent hikes and more than one million households are spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing.

Several roundtable participants discussed how rising housing costs are hurting older Pennsylvanians and why more affordable housing units are needed in the region.

“Older adults want to stay in the community — near their families, friends, doctors and churches,” said **Susan Zeigler, administrator of the Carbon County Area Agency on Aging**. “But when they can no longer manage their current residence, there are very few affordable downsizing options available to them. Carbon County Area Agency on Aging is doing everything we can to support our older adults in the current housing landscape. With appropriate housing infrastructure, our mission to help keep older adults safe in their own home would be more attainable.”

“The housing needs of both seniors and young people are not being met with affordable options,” said **Linda Christman of Save Carbon County**. “Appropriate and affordable housing options for seniors can allow seniors to move out of their single-family homes and escape high property taxes and high maintenance costs. Those same single-family homes that are no longer viable for seniors can be starter homes for young families.”

Another issue facing Pennsylvania is that more than 50 percent of the Commonwealth’s housing stock is over 50 years old, making it increasingly expensive to maintain. In addition, local officials, particularly in rural communities, lack the resources and expertise to update local zoning and regulations that were first developed decades ago.

“In Panther Valley, our four boroughs share many of the same housing challenges, and the issue isn’t just building new units,” said **John Dowling, chair of Panther Valley Blueprint Communities**. “It’s making sure each community has the infrastructure, zoning flexibility, and investment needed to support growth. Without that, it becomes harder for working families to find affordable options close to home.”

“Across the country, home ownership is still most families’ goal – but rising home prices and big debts like school loans mean more people are looking for rental solutions until they can save for a home,” said **Tom Campbell of Community Development of the Poconos**. “In less urban areas like Carbon County where apartments and townhomes aren’t so common, that presents a problem. Updating mindsets about housing types and developing infrastructure like sewer systems are necessary to meet market demands and make sure there is adequate housing for people of all ages.”

In February, Governor Shapiro unveiled the Administration’s [Housing Action Plan](#) to address critical needs across the Commonwealth, by building and preserving more homes, protecting renters, supporting manufactured homeowners, strengthening housing coordination and modernizing local planning and permitting.

The Shapiro-Davis 2026-27 proposed budget takes the first steps to implement this plan, including the following:

- **Critical Infrastructure Investment Fund to Build More Homes:** One of the best ways to lower the cost of housing is to build more homes. The Governor's budget proposal creates a new \$1 billion initiative supported through the issuance of general obligation bonds, with proceeds deposited into the Capital Facilities Fund. This initiative would provide flexible funding for major infrastructure projects across the Commonwealth, including building and preserving more housing, bringing new energy generation onto the grid, and upgrading school and municipal facilities.
- **Protecting Renters and Promoting Housing Stability:** Establishes a statewide cap on rental application fees tied to the actual cost of screening and prohibits fees before a property is viewed; affirms a tenant's right to terminate a lease due to domestic violence without financial penalty; seals eviction records for individuals who were not actually evicted; and advances fair-chance housing reforms to regulate when and how criminal history may be considered in rental decisions; and invests \$1 million in an Investments in Health pilot, leveraging federal funding to total \$2.5 million to connect Pennsylvanians experiencing homelessness or housing instability with housing-related supports.
- **Supporting Manufactured Homeowners:** Limits annual lot rent increases in manufactured home communities and requires advance notice of increases, protecting residents — many of whom own their homes but rent the land beneath them — from sudden and unaffordable cost spikes.
- **Addressing Tangled Titles and Preserving Generational Wealth:** Authorizes transfer-on-death deeds for primary residences, providing a streamlined way for homeowners to pass property to heirs, avoid costly probate, access home repair programs, and reduce blight in communities across the Commonwealth.
- **Strengthening Housing Coordination and Accountability:** Creates a Deputy Secretary for Housing at the Department of Community and Economic Development to coordinate housing policy and oversee implementation of the Housing Action Plan.
- **Modernizing Local Planning and Permitting:** Updates the Municipalities Planning Code to reduce regulatory barriers to residential development, improve permitting processes, and incentivize county and regional planning that reflects the diverse housing needs of Pennsylvania's communities.



Lt. Gov. Austin Davis speaks at today's roundtable; additional photos/video are available at PACast.com.

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