



## **Congressman Dan Meuser Provides Updates on DHS Facilities Following Meetings Between Local and Federal Officials**

In light of recent developments regarding facilities expected to be utilized by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in Berks and Schuylkill counties, I want to provide an update on the actions my office has taken to engage with federal officials and elevate the concerns of our local communities. We felt it was critical to arrange meetings between DHS and local stakeholders before moving forward.

Upon learning of the purchase of these facilities, my office has been actively engaged with DHS, while also holding multiple meetings with county commissioners, local elected officials, school district representatives, and community leaders to discuss their concerns. Since my first correspondence with DHS over two months ago, we have secured commitments that both prevent disruption to and improve townships across the Ninth.

As a result of these meetings my office facilitated, DHS offered the following commitments in a meeting on March 12th. Below, I detail these commitments to ensure our district understands the promises and areas that continue to require engagement.

### ***Revenue and Economic Impact***

DHS made a commitment to offset local revenue impacts which will match, if not exceed, expected revenue losses. These funds would be distributed by Schuylkill County to Tremont Township, and the Pine Grove Area School District, as well as by Berks County to Upper Bern Township, and the Hamburg Area School District.

DHS will draft a Memorandum of Understanding to provide one-time payments for necessary infrastructure upgrades, including communications systems, utilities, and roadway improvements where needed. DHS stated that the majority of jobs associated with these facilities will be filled by local workers.

### ***Preventing Impacts on Emergency Services***

Local officials raised concerns about potential impacts on emergency services. In response, DHS committed to developing dedicated emergency response capabilities, either through private EMS contracts or in-house capacity, to reduce reliance on local EMS and law enforcement. As there will be increased demand for local 911 and EMS services, DHS agreed to review funding for these services and committed to address this.

DHS confirmed final site plans address communication and radio coverage gaps, ensuring compatibility with county systems and use of bi-directional amplification where needed.

### ***Prioritizing Public Safety***

Officials from DHS confirmed that federal law enforcement personnel are responsible for security at the facilities, ensuring the safety of detainees, staff, and the surrounding community. DHS committed to coordinating with local law enforcement to ensure effective communication and response. DHS stated that these facilities will house single adults only, with no children or family units detained at these locations.

### ***Improving & Protecting Public Infrastructure***

With respect to infrastructure, DHS committed to prepare the required water treatment and safe drinking water plans in response to state and local input. DHS confirmed they are prepared to meet all anticipated utility demands.

including wastewater, potable water, electricity, trash, and recycling. This ensures all systems are designed and operated to prevent disruption to local communities and live up to environmental standards.

DHS committed to developing and sharing a detailed transportation plan, including preferred routes that avoid local roads, anticipated daily traffic levels once facilities are operational, and consideration of potential road wear from traffic as part of the planning process.

### ***Civic Engagement & Accountability***

To ensure ongoing transparency and local input, DHS will establish a Community Relations Board, which will include county officials and other local representatives. The plan is for this board to meet regularly to provide opportunities for facility site visits and serve as a forum to raise and address community concerns. Local authorities will retain their standard life-safety and health inspections in accordance with existing requirements.

### ***My Expectations & Priorities Going Forward***

While I appreciate the level of engagement we have had to date, I along with Schuylkill and Berks County officials have made it clear that these commitments must be formalized. My expectation is that these assurances will be put into a written agreement and we will continue working closely with DHS and our local elected officials throughout the process.

This effort is ongoing, and my office will remain fully engaged as we facilitate additional meetings and discussions. My priorities remain clear: these facilities must operate safely and community concerns regarding local tax and economic impact, emergency services, public safety, infrastructure, and civic engagement must be addressed.

### ***Congressman Dan Meuser***

***Main District Office: 121 Progress Avenue Suite 110, Pottsville, PA 17901***

***Email: [MeuserOffice@mail.house.gov](mailto:MeuserOffice@mail.house.gov)***

---

NOTICE: This message, and any attached file, is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed, and may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If the individual reading this message is not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this message is strictly prohibited. Nothing in this e-mail message should be construed as a legal opinion. If you have received this message in error, please notify me immediately by replying to this e-mail and delete all copies of the original message. Thank you.

IRS CIRCULAR 230 DISCLOSURE: Pursuant to Treasury Regulations, any tax advice contained in this communication (including any attachments) is not intended or written to be used, and cannot be used or relied upon by you or any other person, for the purpose of (i) avoiding penalties under the Internal Revenue Code, or (ii) promoting, marketing or recommending to another party any tax advice addressed herein.