

# COMMUTER SERVICES

## Program Update

Serving employers and commuters in Adams, Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry and York counties.

TRANSIT CARPOOLING VANPOOLING WALKING



BIKING TELECOMMUTING STAGGERED SHIFTS

## Fall - Winter 2009

  
**COMMUTER SERVICES**  
OF PENNSYLVANIA

*Serving Adams, Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin,  
Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry & York Counties*



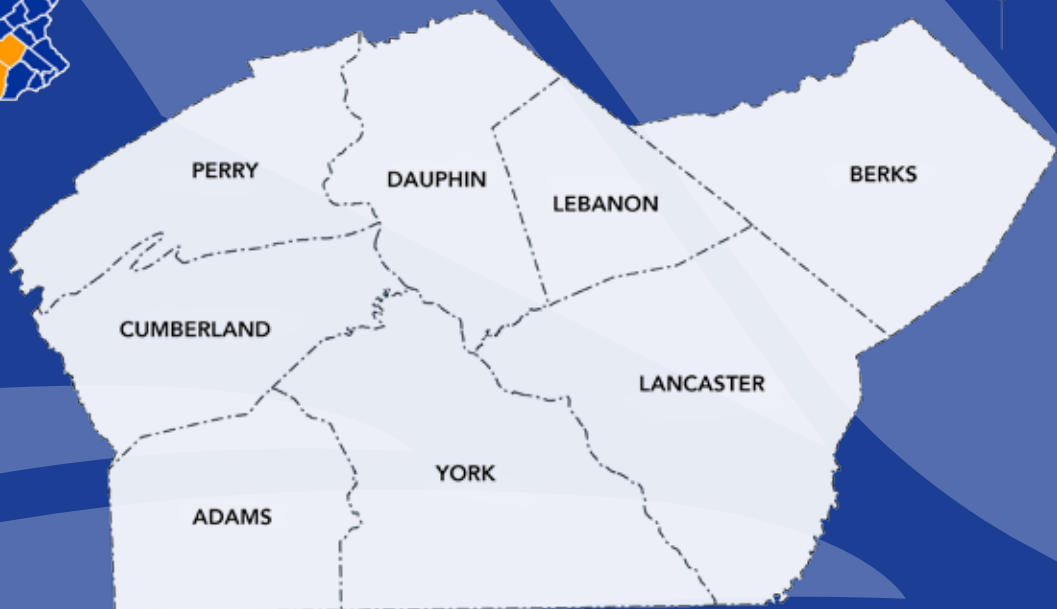
# COMMUTER SERVICES OF PENNSYLVANIA

*Serving Adams, Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin,  
Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry & York Counties*

1.866.579.RIDE

[www.PaCommuterServices.org](http://www.PaCommuterServices.org)

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Commuter Services is a program of the non-profit Susquehanna Regional Transportation Partnership, whose board includes the Harrisburg Regional Chamber; the Gettysburg Adams, Lebanon Valley and York County Chambers of Commerce; the Greater Reading, and Lancaster Chambers of Commerce & Industry; Adams County Transit Authority (ACTA); Berks Area Reading Transportation Authority (BARTA); County of Lebanon Transit Authority (COLT); Red Rose Transit Authority (Lancaster); York County Transportation Authority (rabbittransit); Capital Area Transit (CAT, Cumberland-Dauphin-Harrisburg); the Lancaster, Lebanon, Reading Area and York metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs); Harrisburg MPO (Cumberland, Dauphin and Perry counties) and Adams Rural Planning Organization (RPO). One board seat is also set aside for a corporate executive.

Funding is provided by the Federal Highway Administration and PennDOT in partnership with the participating MPOs and RPO.

# Lancaster Participants Wheel Ahead in 1st Bicycle Commute Competition

This year, Commuter Services launched its first Bike to Work competition for employers and commuters. More than 40 commuters competed, together logging more than 2,500 miles of bicycle commuting over the course of 10 days.

Michael Zehr of Mennonite Financial FCU bicycled the most total miles during the competition, and Landis Homes, Lancaster, had the most participating bicycling commuters of any employer. Honorees included:

- Joseph Lynch, an employee of Gettysburg College in Adams County
- Jonathan Doty, an employee of Chapel Pointe at Carlisle, Cumberland County
- David Hamburg, an employee of On Q Legrand, Middletown, Dauphin County
- Jim Miller, Josh Gettle, Jennifer O’Neill and Susan Bailey of Bayer Healthcare in Myerstown, Lebanon County
- Glenn Hedrick, an employee of Engel Machinery, Inc. in York, York County
- Marilyn Langeman and Trace Oberholtzer, representing Landis Homes, Lititz, Lancaster County
- Roger Good, Marlin Hess, Doug Styer and Kevin Kreider of Tyson Foods, Inc., New Holland, Lancaster County



Marilyn Langeman (on left) and Trace Oberholtzer accept a plaque recognizing Landis Homes for their participation from Employer Outreach Manager Cheryln Comp



Left to right: Roger Good, Marlin Hess, Doug Styer and Kevin Kreider of Tyson Foods



Michael Zehr of Mennonite Financial FCU receives a prize for most miles bicycled to work from Outreach Coordinator Kay Leicht

## Federal Commuter Bill has Similarities to Regional Commuter Services Effort

A bill in the U.S. House of Representatives designed to reduce commuter traffic uses elements of the successful Commuter Services of Pennsylvania model. HR 3517, the “Commuter LESS Act,” is based on the premise that employers have a major influence on use of alternatives, such as transit or carpooling.

“Employer outreach has been the priority focus of the Commuter Services program since day one,” says Richard Farr, chairman of the Commuter Services board. “We know that employers have an enormous influence over their workers’ commutes, and it is far more efficient to work mainly through employers, as opposed to trying to reach commuters individually.”

HR 3517 would require regional metropolitan planning organizations to develop strategies for employer outreach to promote commuting options and would mandate involvement by the business community.

“Our non-profit board includes representatives of the region’s planning organizations and chambers of commerce, who represent a broad range of private sector employers. We also have a seat designated for an individual corporate representative, currently Dennis Stichter of Supreme Mid Atlantic in Lebanon,” reports Farr.

HR 3517 would allocate \$300 million through the federal Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) program to establish and expand commuter benefit programs. Commuter Services uses CMAQ funding, which enables it to provide all of its assistance to employers and commuters for free.



# FLU SEASON TOOLS

## Telework Aid, Emergency Ride Home

You may not think Commuter Services has anything to do with flu, but the program has two important tools in its arsenal to help with concerns about a pandemic – telecommute planning and reimbursements for rides home in case of a family emergency.

### Emergency Ride Home

Especially with concerns about H1N1 (swine flu), schools are expected to send home more children this year. Commuters who share a ride or use transit and worry they may have to pick up a sick child at school should sign up for reimbursements under the Emergency Ride Home Program.

To qualify, regional commuters must use an option other than driving alone (such as carpools, vanpools, transit, biking or walking) at least twice a week. Reimbursement is based on the receipted fare or the equivalent of the IRS rate for mileage reimbursement rate.

Commuters can sign up for the program on [PaCommuterServices.org](http://PaCommuterServices.org), where there is more information on the Emergency Ride Home rules.

### Telecommuting

Having a telework policy and plan is a good way for regional employers to have contingencies for a flu epidemic or other work disruptions, such as weather emergencies.

Commuter Services provides free assistance to support employers with sample policies, checklists and implementation plans to help them tailor a plan to their unique needs.

In addition to the environmental and traffic reduction benefits, telework has been shown to increase worker productivity, reduce turnover and absenteeism, decrease commuting costs and to generate savings for employers, such as by reducing rent, utility or parking expenses.

*Employers should call 1-866-579-RIDE for assistance.*

At the end of summer, the Commuter Services database reached nearly 12,500 commuters. For commuters in the database seeking rideshare matches, the match rate is nearly 60%, and many commuters receive multiple matches for carpooling.



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