Roadmap for a Delaware Republic

Project Delaware

November 21, 2026

https://projectdelaware.org

Project Delaware is an open policy roadmap for the State, organized around four pillars in this order: Protect, Power, Educate, and Build. Strong families are the foundation, and State Government Reform runs through every pillar aligned by our Guiding Principles. Every proposal carries a measurable result. Delawareans are invited to read it, discuss it, and help improve it.

Guiding Principles

Strong families are the foundation; every proposal answers "does this strengthen Delaware families?" The family is the first school, the first safety net, and the first economy. In a small state like Delaware, what happens in the household shows up everywhere else - in classrooms, in neighborhoods, and in whether young people can see a future here. A Delaware Renaissance is not something government can declare. It is built by families who can work, raise children, and take care of their own. That is why Families sit under every pillar in this roadmap, and why proposals such as a family impact statement on major bills and rules, work-first benefits reform that removes marriage and work penalties, parental rights in education and health decisions, and support for child care, foster care, and family economic conversations start with the household, not the agency. If a policy weakens families, however well-intended, it costs more than it saves.

Pillar order sets priority: Protect, Power, Educate, Build. The sequence is the plan, not a slogan. First, Delawareans have to be safe in their persons, property, and votes - election integrity, public safety staffing, and the rest of the Protect pillar. Then the state needs abundant, affordable power, because energy is what every paycheck and every shop floor runs on, from preparing small modular reactors at Dover Air Force Base and brownfield sites to a careful approach to very large data centers. Next comes education that actually equips the next generation, including the goal that 90% of high school graduates reach true 12th-grade proficiency. Only on that foundation does lasting private prosperity get built. Strong families are the foundation under all of it, and State Government Reform runs through every pillar. Skipping steps produces fragile results. Taking them in order is how you get to a New Day for Delaware.

Abundance and self-reliance over dependence. A free people should be able to power their homes, find good work, and stand on their own feet. Dependence - on imported power, on a thin private job base, or on a budget that leans too hard on someone else - makes a small state brittle. This roadmap aims at more energy and more opportunity, not more need. That is why it prepares nuclear siting at Dover Air Force Base and brownfields, keeps an all-of-the-above supply, and sets a public goal to grow private jobs outside finance and government by 2% a year, with a self-reliance index so the public can see the share of the state budget that depends on federal funds. Work-first benefits reform belongs here too. Help should not punish a parent for earning more or for getting married. The aim is a Delaware that produces more than it asks others to carry.

Results you can measure: every proposal carries a metric. A good idea that cannot be measured cannot be trusted. Delawareans deserve to see whether a policy is working, in plain numbers, on a regular schedule, with sources you can check. When the numbers say it is working, keep it. When they say it is not, change course. That is why the 90% proficiency goal would be published school by school every year, why private job growth would be tracked on a monthly public dashboard against the 2% goal, and why every state department would face a performance audit with results made public. Zero-based budgeting and open government tools serve the same habit: show the work. This is a public wiki, not a brochure. We would rather be corrected by evidence than

defended by slogans.

Respect for the taxpayer: no new spending without an offset or a measured return. The state's money is the public's money. New spending should come with a trade-off or a result you can count, not a hope and a headline. That discipline is how you keep faith with people who work for their pay. It shows up as zero-based budgeting phased in across agencies, a firm spending limit and rainy-day rules so the budget does not grow faster than Delawareans' ability to pay, and a pension and retiree-benefits sustainability plan. Performance audits ask what the public is actually getting. Where spending is justified - such as staffing for public safety - it should still be scored, funded in the open, and judged by results. Every dollar should show a return.

Local control and choice (parents, teachers, principals, towns) over centralization. The people closest to the work usually know it best. Parents, teachers, principals, and towns should have real choices, not a single plan handed down from the center. In education, that means rewarding proficiency growth rather than forcing district consolidation, letting schools choose high-quality curricula - including classical options - while keeping science-of-reading instruction, and expanding parental choice. The same instinct applies to property and land use. Owners and communities need a clear process, not a taking for private development. Centralization is tidy on paper. Local control is how you keep faith with the people who live with the results.

Open systems: open-source AI and data, transparent government, user control of compute, models, and data. Tools and records that the public cannot inspect are tools the public cannot trust. Delawareans should be able to see how the state spends money, how decisions are made, and how their information is used. In the classroom and the workplace, that means AI literacy built on open-source tools so students and schools control their models and data. In government, it means modernizing with open-source systems while the State keeps ownership of public data, plus a real open checkbook, open data, and firm public-records deadlines. On the power side, it means a moratorium on data centers of 1 gigawatt or more until grid and ratepayer protections are in place, and a preference for smaller, open-source and community-scale facilities. A plan written in the open is harder to capture and easier to improve.

Leadership values: loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, personal courage. These are the values service members are taught, and they travel well in civilian life. Loyalty is to the Constitution, to Delaware, and to the people you serve - not to a faction. Duty is doing the work even when no one is watching. Respect is how you treat people you disagree with. Selfless service and personal courage are what it takes to tell the truth about hard numbers and to put the state's interest ahead of convenience. Mission first, people always. The mission is a safer, more prosperous, more self-reliant Delaware. The people are the reason it is worth doing. Every proposal in this roadmap should be able to stand that test.

Bipartisan where possible. This is an open policy roadmap, not a party document. Delaware is small enough that neighbors still know each other, and most of the work in front of us - reliable power, safer streets, better schools, a budget that adds up - does not belong to one side. Where honest common ground exists, we should take it. Where it does not, we should still argue in the open, with sources and measurable results, and leave the door open for anyone willing to improve the plan. Delawareans of every party are invited to read this wiki, test it, and help make it better. A New Day for Delaware will not be built by one side talking only to itself.

Our Roadmap

This public timeline shows how the roadmap can unfold, from work that can start now to legislation in year one and longer builds in years two to four.

Start Now
First six months
20 items

Year One
Legislation and budget actions
23 items

Years Two to Four
Longer builds and targets
3 items

Start Now

First six months

Audits, appointments, guidance, and community work that need no new law start here. First reports go public in these six months; bills and longer targets follow.

How we'll know. Audit findings made public. First school-by-school report. Jobs dashboard goes live. Family impact statements begin.

Protect

Election Integrity Audit

Executive action and legislation.

A published, independent review of voter rolls, ballot handling, and how results are tallied.

Done when: The audit is complete and the findings are released to the public.

Legislation follows in year one, if the audit finds statutory gaps.

Critical Infrastructure and Cybersecurity

Executive action.

A joint cyber unit protecting election systems, utilities, ports, and other critical systems.

Done when: The joint unit is operating, with documented coverage of the systems it protects.

Sovereignty and Federal Cooperation

Executive action.

A clear public policy on cooperation with federal law enforcement and Dover Air Force Base.

Done when: The policy is adopted and a working coordination schedule is in use.

Depends on Dover Air Force Base and federal partners.

Drug and Fentanyl Interdiction Task Force

Executive action.

A statewide drug and fentanyl task force with a public record of seizures.

Done when: The task force is in place and a statewide seizure record is being kept.

Depends on local departments and federal partners.

Continues into years two to four

Power

Ratepayer-First Public Service Commission

Executive action and legislation.

A Public Service Commission that puts reliability and lowest cost first.

Done when: Commissioners are appointed under that reliability-and-lowest-cost charge.

Impact-statement law in year one; rates later

Educate

The 90% Goal

Executive action.

At least 90% of graduates at true 12th-grade proficiency, with progress published yearly.

Done when: The 90% aim is set and the first school-by-school progress report is published.

Depends on the education bills for later progress.

Continues into years two to four

AI Fluency and Open-Source Compute

Executive action.

High school AI literacy, with open-source tools that schools and students control.

Done when: AI literacy is offered in high school, and the community-college partnership is in place.

Depends on partnership with Delaware Technical Community College.

Continues into years two to four

Community Economic Education

Community.

Community forums and kitchen-table resources on the causes of cost pressures.

Done when: Events are underway and participating families are being counted.

Continues into years two to four

Build

Private Jobs

Executive action.

Private jobs outside finance and government grow by 2% a year, tracked monthly.

Done when: The monthly public jobs dashboard is live and state efforts are aimed at that pace.

Depends on cheaper, reliable power.

Continues into years two to four

Silicon Valley of the East Coast

Executive action.

A tech hub that pairs Delaware corporate law, public-campus talent, and lower-cost power.

Done when: A public tech-hub strategy lining up those strengths is in place.

Depends on cheaper, reliable power coming first.

Continues into years two to four

Regulatory Reform

Executive action and legislation.

Every state regulation is inventoried, with sunset review and one-in, two-out for new rules.

Done when: The inventory is underway and a one-in, two-out rule is in effect.
Sunset review law in year one

Infrastructure

Executive action.
A transportation priority list tied to job sites, growth corridors, and the Port of Wilmington.

Done when: The published priority list is tied to those job sites, corridors, and the port.
Depends on federal funds, which support much of the capital program.
Continues into years two to four

Self-Reliance Index

Executive action.
The share of the state budget that depends on federal funds is tracked and reduced.

Done when: The index is published and set to update each fiscal year.
Continues into years two to four

Families

A Family Impact Statement on Every Major Bill and Rule

Executive action.
Every major bill and rule shows, in advance, how it would affect Delaware families.

Done when: A family impact statement is completed on every major bill and rule.

Foster Care and Adoption

Executive action.
Children in foster care reach safe, permanent homes faster, with faith-based partners.

Done when: Agency policy and faith-based partnerships are aimed at faster permanency.
Continues into years two to four

Multi-Generational Economic Conversations

Community.
Simple, data-backed guides that help parents and grandparents talk through household costs.

Done when: Guides are in use, with sessions and participating families counted in all three counties.
Continues into years two to four

State Government Reform

A Performance Audit of Every State Department, With Results Made Public

Executive action.
A public performance audit of every state department, with savings reported.

Done when: The reviews are launched on a published schedule, and the first results are public.
Continues into years two to four

Open Government

Executive action and legislation.
An online checkbook, open data, and firm deadlines for public-records requests.

Done when: The checkbook and open data are expanded, and public-records response logs are published.
Statutory deadlines in year one

Boards and Commissions Review

Executive action and legislation.

Redundant boards and commissions are consolidated or ended, with appointments by merit.

Done when: Every board is inventoried in public, and merit-based appointment standards are adopted.

Statutory sunsets in year one and later

Government AI Modernization Using Open-Source Systems With State-Owned Data

Executive action.

State AI built on open-source systems, with public data owned and controlled by Delaware.

Done when: Procurement standards and agency guidance require open-source systems and state-owned data.

Continues into years two to four

Year One

Legislation and budget actions

The main legislation and budget actions land here, turning the early audits and guidance into statutes, appropriations, and binding rules.

How we'll know. First roll-maintenance cycle. No unprotected 1-gigawatt approvals. School spending posted online. Spending limit in law.

Protect

Voter ID and Roll Maintenance

Legislation.

Photo identification at the polls and a voter roll reviewed against official records every year.

Done when: The identification rule is in statute, and the first documented roll-maintenance cycle is complete.

Depends on cross-checks with other states and federal records.

Annual cycles continue afterward

Public Safety Staffing

Executive action and legislation.

Fully funded State Police and correctional officer posts, with better retention and veteran hiring.

Done when: Authorized positions are funded, with retention bonuses and a veteran hiring preference in place.

Continues into years two to four

Repeat Offenders and Victims First

Legislation.

Tougher bail and sentencing for violent repeat offenders, and consistent victim notification.

Done when: The statutory changes are in place, and victim notification is consistent.

Continues into years two to four

Property Rights

Legislation.

Limits on eminent domain for private development, and landowner protections in energy siting.

Done when: A statute limits those takings and spells out landowner protections in siting decisions.

Depends on passing alongside energy siting and permitting rules.

Second Amendment

Executive action and legislation.

Fewer restrictions on lawful gun ownership, adopted in rule or statute.

Done when: A documented reduction in those restrictions is adopted, with the public able to see what changed.

Power

Mandate Repeal

Executive action and legislation.

A public accounting of mandate costs, and repeal of those that raise electricity bills.

Done when: Legislation has changed the statutory mandates the audit found raise bills.

Continues into years two to four

Data Centers

Executive action and legislation.

No 1-gigawatt data center is approved without grid and ratepayer protections.

Done when: A statutory moratorium is in place until those protections exist.

Depends on protections being in place before any fast-track.

Energy Permitting Reform

Executive action and legislation.

Single-window state energy permitting with binding deadlines and shorter, predictable times.

Done when: A single window is organized, and statutory clocks make the timelines binding.

Educate

Fix Incentives, Not District Maps

Executive action and legislation.

Schools and educators are rewarded for proficiency growth, with no forced district consolidation.

Done when: Recognition and support are tied to how much students improve, including those furthest behind.

Continues into years two to four

Curriculum Flexibility

Executive action and legislation.

Teachers, principals, and parents choose high-quality curricula, including classical options and economic literacy.

Done when: The approved list is widened, and science-of-reading adoption already required in law is completed.

Continues into years two to four

Parental Choice

Executive action and legislation.

More charter and school-choice seats, and an opt-in to the Federal Scholarship Tax Credit.

Done when: Choice capacity is expanded, the federal tax credit is in use, and student counts are published.

Depends on the federal tax-credit program.

Continues into years two to four

Screen Discipline

Executive action and legislation.

Phone-free instructional time and limits on passive screen use in the early grades.

Done when: A statewide rule is in law, and early-grade screen limits are published.

Transparency

Legislation.

Curriculum and spending posted online, school by school, and kept current.

Done when: A complete, current, school-level posting of curriculum and spending is online.

Teacher and Principal Pipeline

Executive action and legislation.

Alternate certification routes for veterans and working professionals, and stronger school staffing.

Done when: The alternate certification routes are in place in rule and statute.

Continues into years two to four

Build

Tax Relief

Legislation.

Property tax relief first, then income tax cuts as revenue grows, and small-business gross receipts reform.

Done when: Property tax relief and gross receipts reform are enacted.

Depends on pairing with a spending limit.

Income tax cuts continue into years two to four

Housing Supply

Legislation.

More housing through model zoning and permitting reforms, and state land for starter homes.

Done when: State model reforms are adopted, and state land is available for starter homes.

Depends on cities and counties adopting the reforms.

Continues into years two to four

Right to Work

Legislation.

Union security agreements that require joining a union or paying fees to keep a job are prohibited.

Done when: A statute prohibits union security agreements.

Families

Child Care Supply

Executive action and legislation.

More child care by cutting licensing red tape and opening the door to home-based and faith-based providers.

Done when: Licensing is simplified, and statutory changes let more of those providers open.

Continues into years two to four

Work-First Benefits Reform

Executive action and legislation.

Fewer points at which earning more or marrying leaves a family worse off.

Done when: Phase-outs are smoothed where the state can act, and legal penalties are addressed in statute.

Depends on federal program rules, which may limit state flexibility.

Parental Rights in Education and Health Decisions for Minors

Legislation.

Parental rights in education and in health decisions for minors, stated clearly in one place.

Done when: A statute states those rights in one place in the Delaware Code.

Youth and Technology

Legislation.

Clearer, enforceable protections for how websites and apps treat Delaware minors.

Done when: A statute fills remaining gaps for minors, in terms families and companies can understand.

State Government Reform

Spending Limit and Rainy-Day Discipline

Legislation.

A firm spending limit and rainy-day rules so budgets grow no faster than residents can pay.

Done when: A spending limit applies to the enacted budget, with clear rules for building and using reserves.
Depends on two General Assemblies passing a constitutional limit.
A constitutional limit would need a later session

A Pension and Retiree-Benefits Sustainability Plan

Legislation.

A long-term plan with funding targets for pensions and retiree benefits, and annual public reporting.

Done when: The plan, its funding targets, and its reporting schedule are adopted in law.
Continues into years two to four

Years Two to Four

Longer builds and targets

Longer builds are completed and multi-year targets are judged, including a reactor site and permit, energy independence, and zero-based budgets across agencies.

How we'll know. Reactor site and permit filed. Path toward 90% proficiency. Private jobs at 2% pace. Budget growth versus personal income.

Power

Nuclear Delaware

Executive action and legislation.

Small modular reactors sited at Dover Air Force Base and existing brownfield industrial sites.

Done when: A site is selected and a permit is filed.
Depends on the Department of War and Dover Air Force Base.

All-Of-The-Above Supply

Executive action.

All-of-the-above supply, with Delaware energy independent and a net exporter of electricity.

Done when: In-state generation is up relative to imports, with competitive rates and stronger reliability.
Depends on the regional grid operator and new in-state supply.

State Government Reform

Zero-Based Budgeting Phased in Across Agencies

Executive action.

Every agency justifies its spending from the ground up, not from last year's total.

Done when: Every agency has rebuilt its budget from zero.
Depends on the department audit findings.

Protect

election integrity, public safety, security, sovereignty, property rights

Election Integrity Audit

Executive action and Legislation.
This proposal would order an independent review of Delaware's voter rolls, chain of custody, and tabulation procedures, and would publish the findings. The audit can be started by executive action. If the review shows that state law needs to change, those changes would go to the General Assembly as legislation. The work can also draw on volunteer expertise in counting and tallying.

A published, independent review matters because election procedures should be understandable and able to stand up to inspection. Delawareans should be able to see how rolls are kept, how ballots are handled, and how results are tallied. In practice, the audit would examine those processes in a systematic way, issue a public report, and identify any statutory gaps that need a bill. The measurable result is straightforward: the audit is completed, the findings are released to the public, and any recommended legal changes are taken up in legislation.

Voter ID and Roll Maintenance

Legislation.
This proposal would require photo identification at the polls and regular maintenance of voter rolls through cross-checks with other states, death records, and federal records to validate citizenship. It would take effect through legislation.

Accurate rolls and a consistent identification step at the polling place are basic parts of a trusted election system. Regular cross-checks are meant to keep the list current as people move, die, or otherwise become ineligible, and to confirm that registrants meet the citizenship requirement already in law. In practice, the General Assembly would set the photo identification rule and the schedule and sources for list maintenance. The measurable result is a completed, documented roll-maintenance cycle every year, so the public can see that the list has been reviewed against those records on a regular timetable.

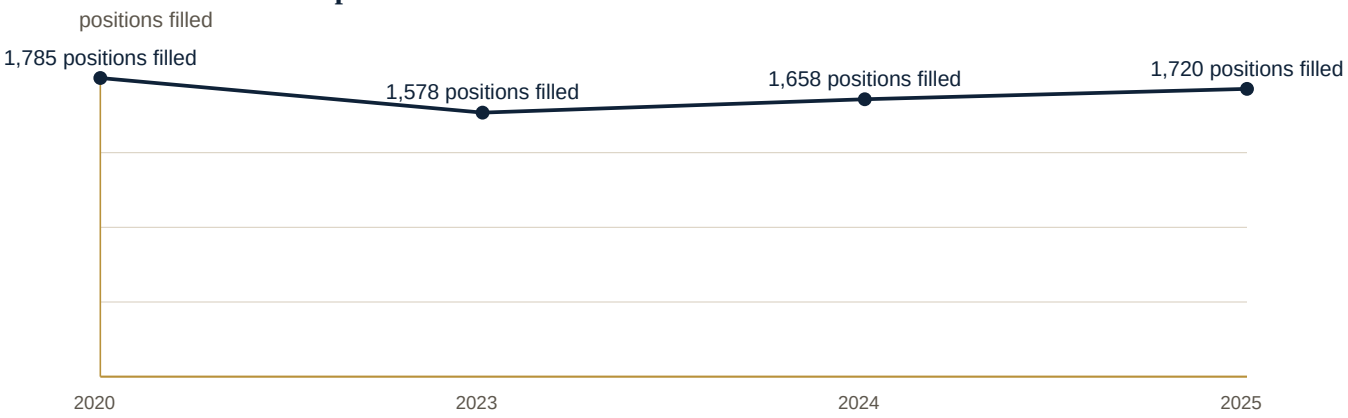
Public Safety Staffing

Executive action and Legislation.
This proposal would fully fund and recruit Delaware State Police troopers and correctional officers, with retention bonuses and a hiring preference for veterans. Funding can be proposed in the state budget through executive action and enacted through legislation as an appropriation.

Staffing levels affect whether prisons and patrols can be run safely. The Department of Correction had 1,720 correctional officer positions filled as of June 30, 2025, and the Governor's recommended budget reports 210 correctional officer vacancies as the fiscal year 2025 actual. The department's correctional officer vacancy rate fell from a high of 19 percent in 2023 to 13 percent in fiscal year 2024. Filled posts declined from 1,785 on June 30, 2020, to 1,578 on June 30, 2023, then rose to 1,658 the following year. The State Police Training Academy

graduated 42 recruits in 2024. In practice, the budget would fund authorized positions, and recruitment would include retention bonuses and a veteran hiring preference. The measurable result is lower vacancy rates for State Police and correctional officers.

Correctional officer positions filled on June 30



2021 and 2022 are not in the write-up and are not plotted. 2024 is from the 2024 annual report cited in the same sentence.
Source: Delaware Department of Correction annual reports

Repeat Offenders and Victims First

Legislation.

This proposal would review bail and sentencing rules for violent repeat offenders and strengthen victim notification rights. It would be done through legislation.

Delaware recorded 1,755 violent offenses per 100,000 residents in 2025 under the Statistical Analysis Center's broad violent-offense category, a rate that has stayed in a narrow range since 1,734 in 2021. That same year, 77.4 percent of violent offenses were cleared by the end of the calendar year. Of people released from Delaware prisons in 2021, 63.0 percent were rearrested within three years, the broadest of the state's recidivism measures. The Department of Correction issued 10,434 victim notification letters in fiscal year 2025. The review would look at how bail and sentencing apply to people who commit violent offenses more than once, and it would set clearer rights for victims to be notified. The measurable results are the violent crime rate and consistent victim notification.

Critical Infrastructure and Cybersecurity

Executive action.

This proposal would create a joint cyber unit of the Delaware National Guard and the Department of Technology and Information to protect election systems, utilities, ports, and other critical systems. It can be established by executive action.

Delaware's essential services increasingly depend on networks that have to keep running through accidents, outages, and attempted intrusions. A single standing unit, drawing on the National Guard's cyber capacity and the state's technology agency, would give those systems a dedicated team rather than leaving protection split across agencies. In practice, the unit would be stood up inside state government, with a clear list of systems to cover and a regular schedule of assessments, monitoring, and response drills. The measurable result is an operational joint unit with documented coverage of the systems it is assigned to protect.

Sovereignty and Federal Cooperation

Executive action.

This proposal would set a clear policy on how Delaware cooperates with federal law enforcement and how the state coordinates with Dover Air Force Base and other federal partners. It can be issued by executive action.

Delaware hosts federal facilities and works with federal agencies on investigations, emergencies, and military operations. A written policy would make those roles predictable for state agencies, local departments, and federal counterparts, so cooperation does not depend on informal practice alone. In practice, the executive would publish the policy, name the state points of contact, and establish a regular coordination process with Dover Air Force Base and federal law-enforcement partners. The measurable result is an adopted, public policy and a working coordination schedule that state and federal partners can follow.

Property Rights

Legislation.

This proposal would limit the use of eminent domain for private development and add landowner protections in energy and land-use siting. It would take effect through legislation.

Property ownership is more secure when land can be taken for a public project under known rules, but not transferred to a private developer as a development tool. Energy and land-use siting decisions also affect farms, homes, and small holdings, so owners need a clear process and a meaningful chance to be heard. In practice, the General Assembly would narrow when eminent domain may be used for private development and would set protections that apply when energy or other land-use projects are sited. The measurable result is a statute that limits those takings and spells out the landowner protections that apply in siting decisions.

Drug and Fentanyl Interdiction Task Force

Executive action.

This proposal would create a drug and fentanyl interdiction task force that brings together the State Police, local departments, and federal partners. It can be established by executive action.

Drug overdose deaths in Delaware have fallen from a recent peak, but they remain a serious public-health and public-safety problem. CDC provisional counts show 327 overdose deaths in the 12 months ending December 2025, down from a peak of 544 deaths in 2022. Synthetic opioids other than methadone, the category that includes fentanyl, were involved in 234 of the 2025 deaths. In 2025, the State Police Troop 2 Drug Task Force and Governor's Task Force units seized over 13.63 kilograms of fentanyl and heroin. The new task force would coordinate investigations and seizures across agencies so that work is not limited to a single troop or unit. The measurable results are overdose deaths and a documented, statewide record of seizures.

Second Amendment

Executive action and Legislation.

This proposal would relax Delaware's gun ownership restrictions through a combination of executive action and legislation.

Lawful firearm ownership is already regulated by a mix of statutes and agency rules, so any easing of those restrictions has to be reflected in both places to take effect. The aim is to make lawful ownership less restricted,

while leaving the details of which rules change to the executive and the General Assembly rather than prescribing a single new statute here. In practice, the executive would review existing agency rules and permitting practices and could revise those that go beyond what statute requires. The General Assembly would consider changes to the statutes that govern ownership and carry. The measurable result is a documented reduction in those restrictions, adopted in rule or statute, so the public can see what changed and when it took effect.

How we'll measure it. violent crime rate, police and corrections vacancy rates, audit completion and public findings, a clean roll-maintenance cycle every year.

Power

energy abundance, cheap reliable power

Nuclear Delaware

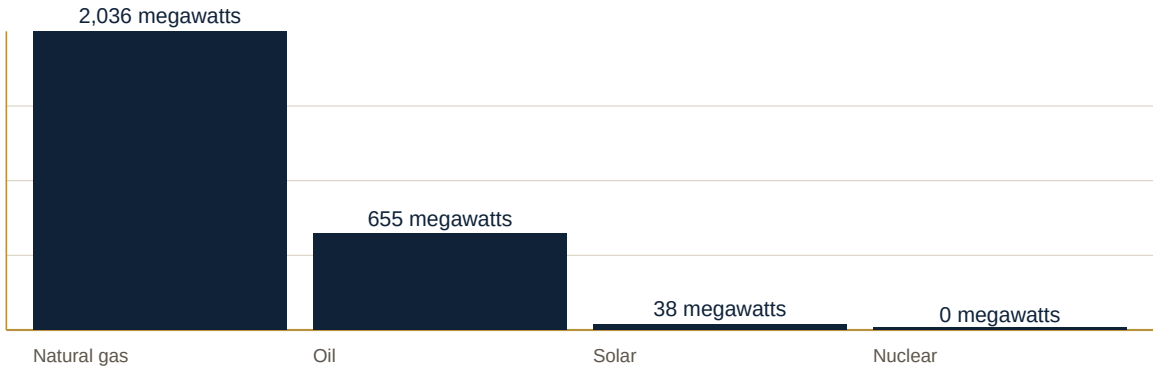
Executive action and Legislation.

Delaware has produced no nuclear electricity in any year from 1990 through 2025. As of December 31, 2025, the state had 2,728 megawatts of generating capacity on the regional grid: 2,036 megawatts of natural gas, 655 megawatts of oil, 38 megawatts of solar, and no nuclear plants. Seventeen Delaware projects are in the interconnection queue (11 with agreements totaling 419 megawatts, and 6 under study totaling 241 megawatts), and none of them are nuclear.

This proposal would prepare siting and permitting for small modular reactors at Dover Air Force Base, in partnership with the Department of War, and at existing brownfield industrial sites. The state's Nuclear Energy Feasibility Task Force, in its July 27, 2026 final report, describes these reactors as units of up to 300 megawatts. It finds that no Delaware statute prohibits nuclear plants, but that the rules for building them do not yet exist. Preparation and partnership can begin through executive action; legislation would clear any statutory barriers and put those missing rules in place. The measurable result is a selected site and a permit filed, adding firm, around-the-clock power for homes and businesses.

Delaware generating capacity on the regional grid by fuel, Dec. 31, 2025

megawatts



The write-up states a total of 2,728 megawatts, which is not plotted as a fifth bar so the fuel shares are comparable. Nuclear is plotted at zero because the write-up states there are no nuclear plants.

Source: PJM 2025 Delaware state-specific report

Ratepayer-First Public Service Commission

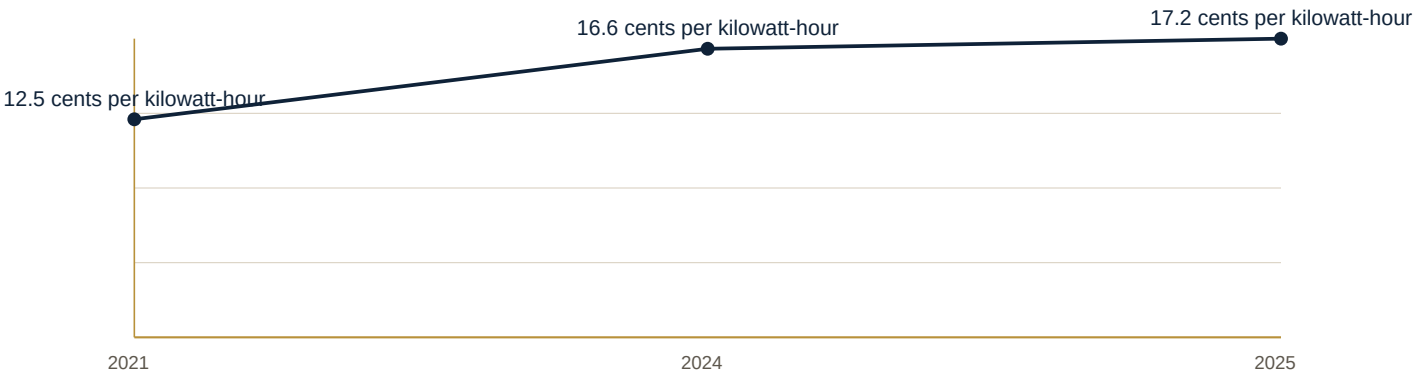
Executive action and Legislation.

Delaware's average residential electricity price was 17.15 cents per kilowatt-hour in 2025, up from 16.57 cents in 2024. That works out to about $158 a month for a typical household using 920 kilowatt-hours, the 36th-lowest average bill among the 50 states. Preliminary figures for January through August 2026 put the residential price at 17.98 cents, compared with 16.79 cents in the same months of 2025. The annual average was 12.52 cents in 2021 and has risen each year since.

This proposal would have the Public Service Commission put reliability and lowest cost first, including cost-per-kilowatt-hour impact statements on mandates. Appointments can be made through executive action; legislation would set the impact-statement requirement. In August 2026, the state signed four consumer-protection bills, including one that creates a separate rate class so large energy users such as data centers pay the full cost of the infrastructure upgrades they require. The measurable result is a more competitive average residential rate compared with regional peers, with reliable service for homes and businesses.

Delaware average residential electricity price

cents per kilowatt-hour



Annual averages only. The write-up also gives January-August 2026 preliminary figures, which are not plotted here because they are a different period. 2021 is from the EIA State Electricity Profile cited in the same write-up; 2024 and 2025 are from the EIA Annual.

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration

Mandate Repeal

Executive action and Legislation.

Delaware law requires 40 percent of retail electricity sales to come from eligible renewable resources by 2035, including 10 percent from solar. The Energy Solutions Act of 2024 also authorizes a solicitation for up to 1,200 megawatts of offshore wind. In filings with the Public Service Commission for the June 2024-May 2025 compliance year, the state's investor-owned electric utility reported collecting $77 million through its Renewable Compliance Charge, about $11 per megawatt-hour of non-exempt sales, and paying a $14.4 million alternative compliance payment that held the total requirement at 23.25 percent instead of the scheduled 25 percent.

This proposal would audit the cost and reliability of the renewable portfolio standard, offshore wind commitments, and climate-plan mandates, and repeal those that raise bills. The audit can be ordered through executive action; changing statutory mandates requires legislation. The measurable result is a public accounting of what each mandate contributes to the bill, and an average residential rate that is competitive with regional peers, so homes and businesses have abundant, reliable power they can afford.

Data Centers

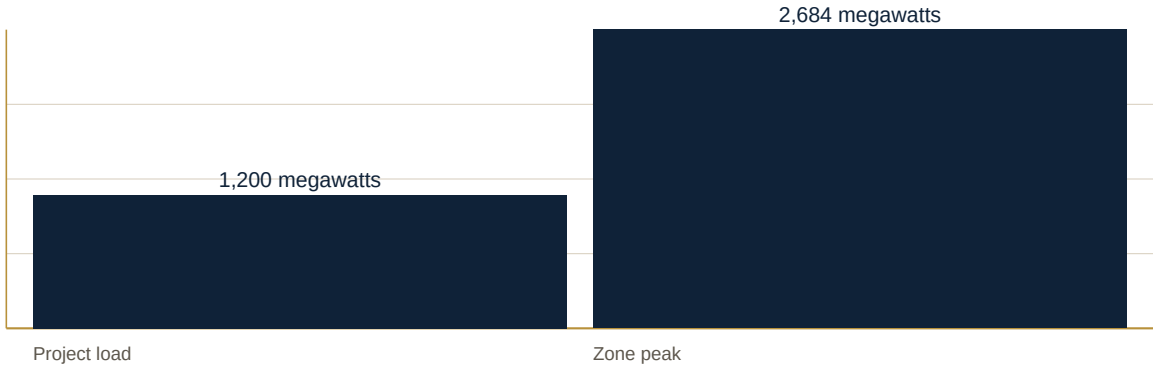
Executive action and Legislation.

A proposed Delaware data-center campus, Project Washington, projected 1.2 gigawatts of energy use, ramping up over 8 to 10 years. That is about 45 percent of the 2,684-megawatt summer 2026 peak forecast for the Delmarva transmission zone, a zone that also serves load outside Delaware. The state ruled the project prohibited under the Coastal Zone Act in February 2026, a decision later affirmed. Separately, the City of Dover adopted an 18-month pause on new applications for data centers of 30 megawatts or more.

This proposal would place a state moratorium on data centers of 1 gigawatt or more until grid and ratepayer protections are in place, and would fast-track smaller, open-source and community-scale data centers. Permitting guidance can start through executive action; a statutory moratorium requires legislation. The 1-gigawatt threshold is a load large enough to rival a substantial share of the region's peak demand. The measurable result is that no 1-gigawatt project is approved without those protections, so growth in computing does not put reliable service for homes and businesses at risk.

Proposed Project Washington load versus the Delmarva zone 2026 peak

megawatts



1.2 GW is plotted as 1,200 MW so both bars share a unit. This is a project projection, not an approved or current load. The write-up notes that the zone also serves load outside Delaware. The zone peak is from the PJM 2025 Delaware report cited in the same write-up.

Source: DNREC status-decision application and PJM 2025 Delaware report

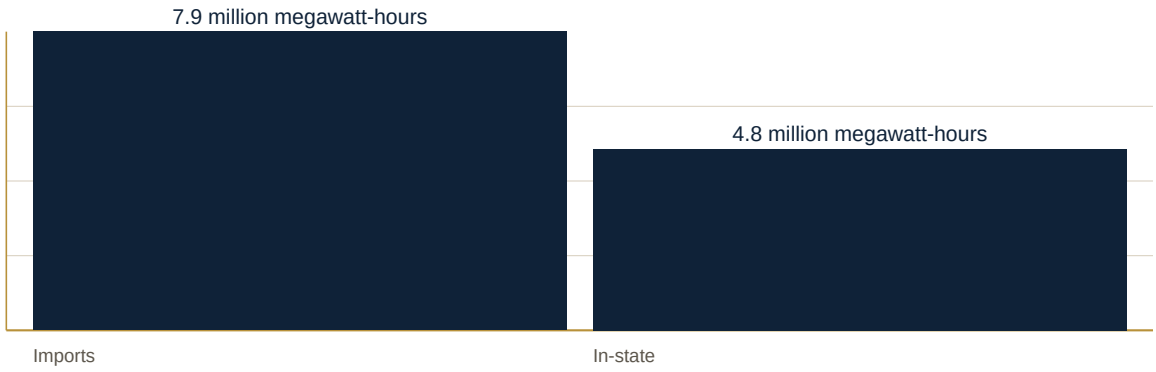
All-Of-The-Above Supply

Executive action.

Natural gas produced 86.1 percent of Delaware's in-state electricity in 2025, yet the state still imported more power than it generated. Net interstate imports were 7.9 million megawatt-hours in 2024, compared with 4.8 million megawatt-hours of in-state generation. The regional grid operator's 2025 transmission plan includes $38.91 million in reliability projects located in Delaware. In the regional capacity market, which pays for power plants to be available when needed, the clearing price rose from $28.92 per megawatt-day for the 2024/25 delivery year to $325.00 for 2028/29 across the region, including Delaware's southern zone. Those capacity prices are regional, not Delaware-specific.

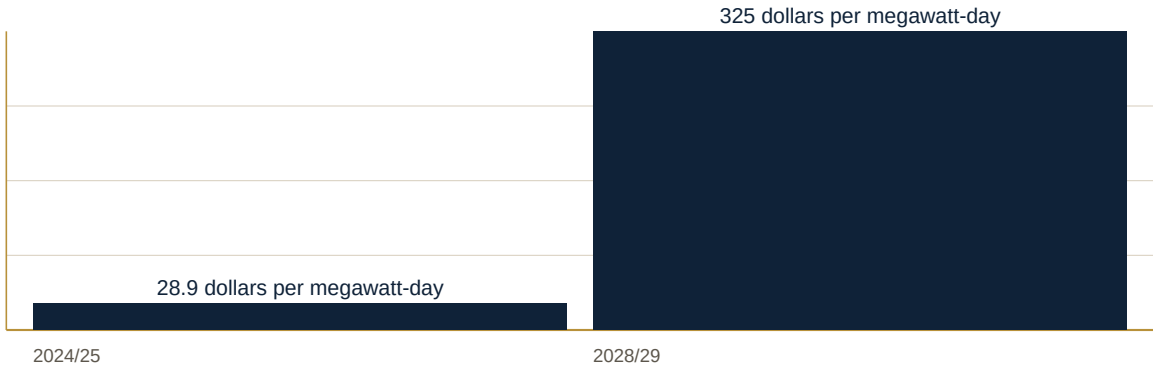
This proposal would pursue all-of-the-above supply - natural gas reliability, transmission, grid storage, and regional advocacy for Delaware ratepayers - with the goal of making Delaware energy independent and a net exporter of electricity. It can proceed through executive action. Success would show up in higher in-state generation relative to imports, in reliability indices, and in rates that remain competitive for homes and businesses.

Delaware electricity, 2024: net interstate imports vs. in-state generation
million megawatt-hours



Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, State Electricity Profile

PJM regional capacity clearing price, 2024/25 vs. 2028/29
dollars per megawatt-day



Regional clearing price, including Delaware's southern zone. This is not a Delaware-only price.
Source: PJM 2028/2029 Base Residual Auction report

Energy Permitting Reform

Executive action and Legislation.

The state already operates a fast-track permitting program, created by Executive Order 18, that aims to finish complex state reviews within 120 business days with a single point of contact. In June 2026, four community solar projects totaling more than 16 megawatts were accepted into that program. The state has said permitting for projects of this kind can exceed 48 months because of local and state requirements. By comparison, a Coastal Zone status decision on a large proposed data-center project was issued 64 days after the application was deemed complete.

This proposal would create single-window state permitting with deadlines for energy projects. Executive action can organize the window and build on the existing accelerator; legislation would set statutory clocks so the timelines are binding. The measurable result is shorter, predictable permit times, so new supply can come online in time to serve homes and businesses.

How we'll measure it. average residential rate versus regional peers, reliability indices, a small modular reactor site selected and permit filed, no 1-gigawatt approvals without protections.

Educate

90% true 12th-grade proficiency; classical education plus AI fluency and economic literacy

The 90% Goal

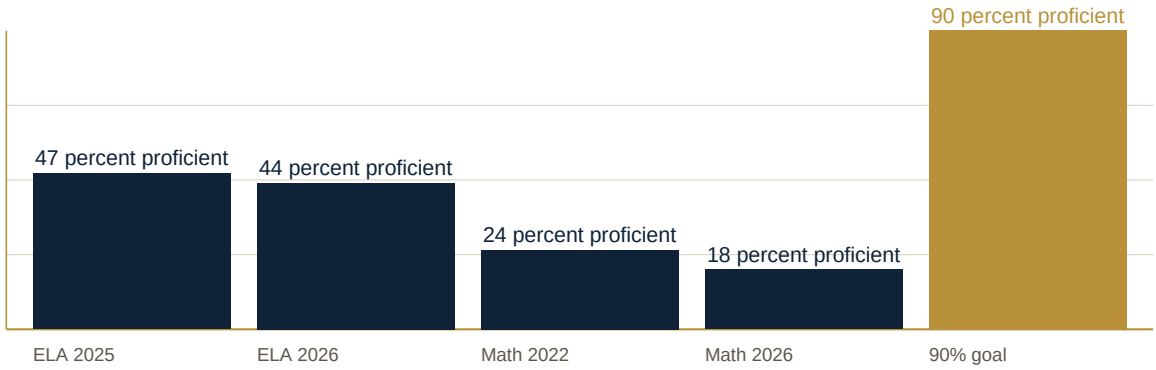
Executive action.

The 90% Goal would set a clear statewide aim: at least 90% of high school graduates reach true 12th-grade proficiency in reading, writing, and math, with school-by-school progress published every year. Delaware does not now administer a statewide 12th-grade test, so the most recent high school measure is the 11th-grade SAT School Day exam. In spring 2026, 44% of 11th graders were proficient in reading and writing, down from 47% the year before, and 18% were proficient in math, the third straight year at that level and down from 24% in 2022. National comparisons point in the same direction. On the 2024 NAEP, 23% of Delaware eighth graders were proficient in reading, compared with 29% of eighth graders in public schools nationwide, and 19% were proficient in math, compared with 27% nationally.

The proposal would be carried out through executive action. The state would publish annual school-level results and a path for closing the gap between graduating and reaching 12th-grade proficiency, toward 90% by 2036. The measurable result is a rising share of graduates who meet that standard in reading, writing, and math, reported every year so families and schools can see what is changing.

11th-grade SAT proficiency versus the 90% goal

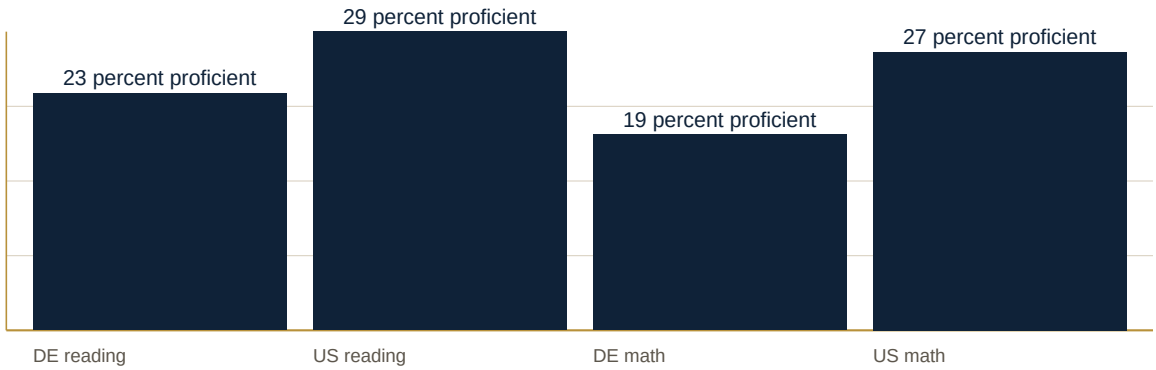
percent proficient



90% is the proposal target. Delaware has no statewide 12th-grade test, so the 11th-grade SAT School Day exam is the current measure.

Source: Delaware Open Data, Student Assessment Performance

2024 NAEP 8th-grade proficiency, Delaware vs. nationwide public schools
percent proficient



Delaware and nationwide public-school eighth graders. Math figures are from the companion 2024 NAEP state report cited in the same sentence.
Source: 2024 NAEP

Fix Incentives, Not District Maps

Executive action and Legislation.

This proposal would reward schools and educators for proficiency growth, and it would not force district consolidation. The question is whether students are improving enough each year, not whether district lines are redrawn. In 2025-26, Delaware students in grades 4-8 reached, on average, 59.2% of their individual English language arts growth targets in the state accountability system, down from 61.2% the year before, and 57.5% of their math growth targets, about the same as 57.4% in 2024-25 and close to 58.0% in 2022-23. Students in the lowest-performing quartile reached 66.9% of their English language arts growth targets. The Department of Education's strategic plan targets raising the grades 3-8 accountability composite score from 264 to 300 by June 2028.

The work would be done through executive action and legislation. In practice, recognition and support would be tied to how much students improve, including those who start furthest behind, while local district boundaries would remain in place. The measurable result is a higher share of students meeting their yearly growth targets, and progress on the state's published accountability goals, without a forced redrawing of the district map.

Curriculum Flexibility

Executive action and Legislation.

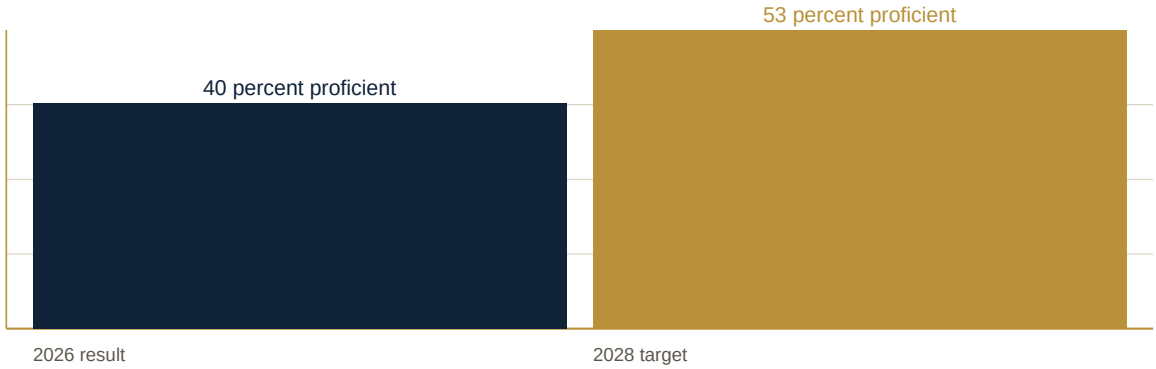
Teachers, principals, and parents would choose from a state-approved list of high-quality curricula, including classical options and economic and monetary literacy - the history of money, incentives, price signals, and the causes of affordability pressures - with science-of-reading instruction used statewide. A 2022 law already requires every district and charter school serving kindergarten through third grade to adopt a science-of-reading curriculum from a state list before the 2027-28 school year. The Department of Education publishes a recommended list of those materials. Where support has been intensive, early results are encouraging: among nine schools with state literacy coaches and comparable results, eight raised grade 3 English language arts proficiency from 2025 to 2026, by an average of 5.4 percentage points, compared with a one-point statewide increase. Statewide, grade 3 English language arts proficiency was 40% in 2026, against a 2028 state target of 53%.

The proposal would use executive action and legislation to widen the approved list so schools can also choose

classical programs and economic literacy, while completing the science-of-reading adoption already required in law. The measurable results are the number of approved curriculum options schools actually adopt, and continued gains in early reading, especially grade 3 English language arts, toward the state's 53% target.

Grade 3 English language arts proficiency versus the 2028 state target

percent proficient



53% is the state's 2028 target, not a Project Delaware proposal number. Year-to-year gains of 5.4 and 1 percentage points are a different unit and are not plotted here.

Source: Delaware Department of Education, August 2026 news release

Parental Choice

Executive action and Legislation.

Parental choice would put parents, teachers, and principals first, expand charter capacity and school choice, and opt Delaware into the Federal Scholarship Tax Credit. In 2024-25, Delaware charter schools enrolled 19,032 students, or 13.3% of public school students, up from 16,903 students and a 12.05% share in 2020-21. The state had 24 charter schools that year, 22 authorized by the Department of Education and two by the Red Clay Consolidated School District. A statewide waitlist total has not been published; one Wilmington charter reported 458 students on its waiting list in 2024-25.

The proposal would be carried out through executive action or legislation. In practice, the state would add charter seats so more families who want that option can use it, strengthen other choice programs, and opt into the federal tax-credit scholarship. The measurable result is higher charter and choice capacity, a shorter wait for seats, and a published accounting of how many students those options serve.

AI Fluency and Open-Source Compute

Executive action.

This proposal would make AI literacy part of a high school education, emphasize open-source tools so students and schools control their models and data, and partner with Delaware Technical Community College. It would be carried out through executive action. Delaware has already taken early steps. In September 2025, the state announced it would be the first to join a national AI certification program, with early programming planned for schools and workforce training. The Department of Education's strategic plan sets a June 2028 target for at least 75% of districts and charter schools to use AI tools while meeting state rules on governance, data security, and privacy, and it calls for a statewide AI Assurance Lab to set standards and evaluate tools used in schools. A 2026 bill to create an AI and extended reality pilot in schools passed the House but did not become law.

In practice, high schools would teach AI literacy, schools would be able to choose open-source tools they control,

and Delaware Technical Community College would help with training and pathways after graduation. The measurable result is the share of districts and charters using AI tools under the state's governance rules, heading toward the 2028 target, along with clearly offered high school AI literacy.

Screen Discipline

Executive action and Legislation.

Screen discipline would make instructional time phone-free and limit passive screen use in the early grades. A law enacted in March 2026 already requires every district and charter school to adopt a student cell phone policy that limits use during instructional time and to post that policy online. In a Department of Education survey cited in that law, 61% of teachers and staff said phones were very disruptive in class, and another 19% said they were moderately disruptive. A voluntary state pilot reached 20 schools and 14,406 students in grades 6-12, mostly with lockable pouches. In follow-up surveys, more than 80% of teachers and staff supported the pouches, while about 70% of students did not recommend keeping them.

The proposal would add executive action (guidance) and legislation for a statewide rule that goes further: phone-free instructional time, plus limits on passive screen use in early grades, which current law does not address. The measurable result is consistent adoption of a statewide standard for phones during class, and published early-grade screen limits, so instructional time is protected across schools.

Transparency

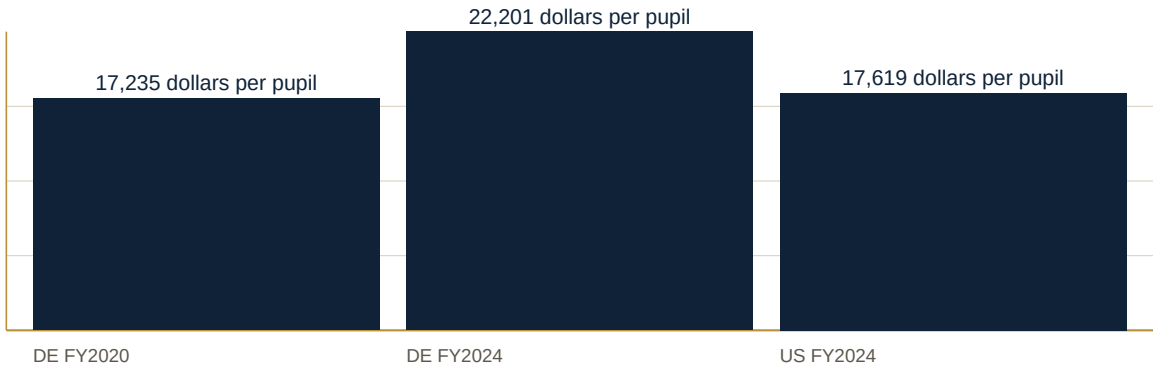
Legislation.

Transparency would require curriculum and spending to be posted online, school by school, through legislation. Families cannot now find that information in one place, and official finance reporting lags: as of January 2026, the Department of Education's latest Financial Educational Statistics report still covered 2022-23. What is already known at the state level shows Delaware spends more than most states. In fiscal 2024, public school systems spent $22,201 per pupil on current operations, compared with a national average of $17,619, the ninth-highest among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. State sources provided $13,522 per pupil, the eighth-highest. Current spending per pupil rose from $17,235 in fiscal 2020 to $22,201 in fiscal 2024, in dollars not adjusted for inflation.

In practice, each school would publish what it teaches and what it spends, in a format the public can use, so curriculum and spending can be compared with student results. The measurable result is a complete, current, school-level posting of curriculum and spending, updated on a regular cycle rather than years after the money is spent.

Current spending per pupil, Delaware vs. U.S. average

dollars per pupil



Not inflation-adjusted. A separate state-source funding figure of $13,522 is not plotted here because it is not a total current-spending amount.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Survey of School System Finances

Teacher and Principal Pipeline

Executive action and Legislation.

This proposal would create alternate certification routes for veterans and working professionals, through executive action and legislation. Staffing remains uneven. At the end of the 2024 hiring season, Delaware still had 259 unfilled instructional and non-instructional positions, about 2.5% of a 10,178-person workforce, though that was 52% lower than the prior season. Of those, 189 were instructional and 70 were non-instructional. High school math was the hardest area to staff, ranked among the top five hardest by 74% of districts. The Department of Education aims to raise three-year retention of early-career teachers from 72% to 75% by June 2028. Classroom teacher staffing stood at 10,262 full-time equivalents in 2026, after falling to 9,770 in 2025.

In practice, qualified veterans and mid-career professionals would have a clear path to certification, especially in hard-to-staff subjects such as high school math. The measurable results are fewer unfilled positions, stronger staffing in shortage areas, and progress toward the state's early-career retention target.

Community Economic Education

Community.

Community economic education would convene multi-generational forums and provide kitchen-table resources that start from cost pressures in housing, education, and health care, then walk through the causes with data. This is a community effort, not a new school mandate. Sessions would be open to parents, students, retirees, and working adults, and the materials would be designed for use at home as well as in a public meeting. Education costs are one of the topics those conversations would take up: in fiscal 2024, Delaware public school systems spent $22,201 per pupil on current operations, compared with a national average of $17,619. The forums would help participants read figures like these, and related data on housing and health care, rather than asserting a single explanation in advance.

The aim is practical economic and monetary literacy: how prices are formed, how incentives work, and how to check public data on costs families actually face. That work would complement the economic and monetary literacy options in the curriculum proposal, so the same ideas can be discussed in school and in the community, with sources people can verify. The measurable results are the number of community economic-literacy events

held and the number of families who take part, which are also among the Educate section's published metrics.

How we'll measure it. proficiency by grade, the graduation-to-proficiency gap closing on a published path toward 90% by 2036, number of curriculum options adopted, community economic-literacy events and participating families.

Build

infrastructure, tech hub, private jobs, tax and regulatory reform

Private Jobs

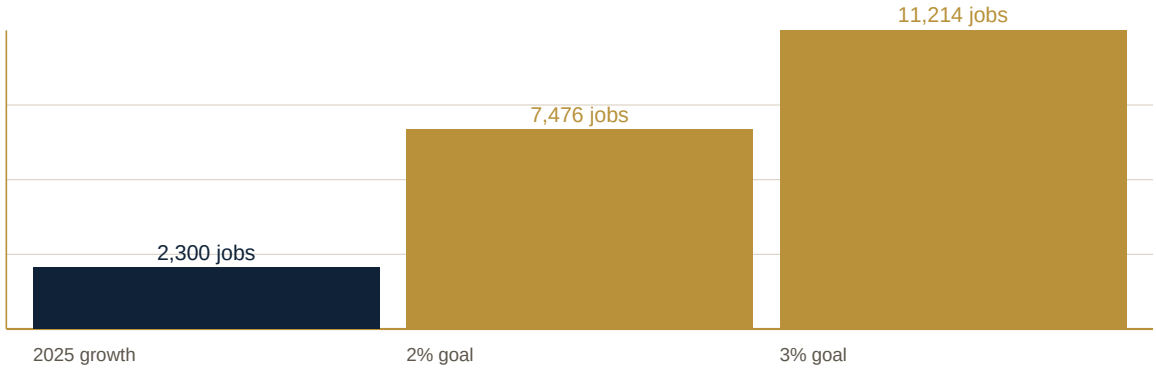
Executive action.

Delaware's goal is to grow private jobs outside finance and government by 2% a year, and to publish the results on a monthly public dashboard. In 2025, the state had 373,800 such jobs, an increase of 2,300, or about 0.6%, from 2024. The preliminary, seasonally adjusted count in October 2026 was 376,500, up 4,300 from October 2025. These are the jobs most households rely on for wages, so a public target makes it clear whether opportunity is spreading beyond finance and government.

The 2% goal equals 7,476 jobs a year on the 2025 base, with a stretch goal of 3%, or 11,214 jobs. The work can be done by executive action: state economic-development, permitting, and workforce efforts would be aimed at that pace, and the dashboard would use the same official payroll series each month. The measurable result is the change in this job count, year over year and over 12 months, compared with the 2% goal and the 3% stretch.

Private job growth versus the 2% and 3% goals, 2025

jobs



Year-over-year change in the 2025 annual average (373,800 private jobs outside finance and government). 2% and 3% are the proposal goals stated in the write-up, not a forecast. A separate October 2026 preliminary count is not plotted here.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics

Silicon Valley of the East Coast

Executive action.

This proposal would build a tech-hub strategy that pairs Delaware's corporate law with talent from Del Tech, the University of Delaware, and Delaware State University, and with open-source artificial intelligence and lower-cost power. In 2025, computer systems design and related services employed 5,804 private-sector workers in Delaware, up 170 jobs, or about 3%, from 2024 and up 1,154 jobs since 2014. Average annual pay in that industry

was $126,091, compared with $75,821 across all private industries. The broader professional, scientific, and technical services sector employed 29,503 people, about 7.2% of the state's private-sector jobs.

A clearer tech-hub strategy would use executive action to line up those existing strengths-legal structure, the three public campuses, open-source tools, and power costs-so more of that work can be done in Delaware. The measurable results are employment and pay in computer systems design and in professional, scientific, and technical services, tracked in official wage and employment data.

Tax Relief

Legislation.

This proposal would cut taxes in stages: property tax relief first, with the long-term goal of abolishing property taxes; personal income tax cuts phased in as revenue grows; and gross receipts tax reform for small business. Those changes would take legislation, which can pass by a simple majority. On the 2027 State Tax Competitiveness Index, Delaware ranks 22nd of 50 states, with an overall score of 5.30. It ranks 3rd on property taxes, with an effective rate of 0.54% on owner-occupied housing, and 37th on individual income taxes. The state's graduated income tax has a top rate of 6.6% starting at $60,000, and Wilmington adds a separate 1.25% income tax.

Those ranks already put Delaware ahead of Pennsylvania (30th), Maryland (44th), and New Jersey (48th) overall, while Delaware ranks 50th on corporate taxes and 2nd on sales taxes. The proposal would start with property taxes, then phase personal income tax cuts with revenue growth, and reform the gross receipts tax for small business. The measurable results are the state's overall and component ranks, the effective property tax rate, and the personal income tax rate schedule.

Regulatory Reform

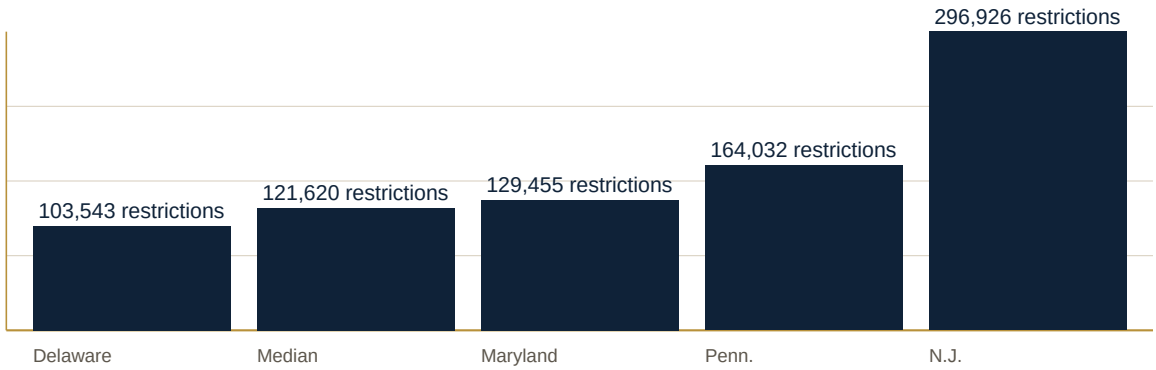
Executive action and Legislation.

This proposal would inventory every state regulation, put existing rules on a sunset review, and require two rules to be removed for each new one added, so Delaware remains a straightforward place to invest. In 2023, the Delaware Administrative Code contained 103,543 regulatory restrictions-counts of words such as shall, must, may not, prohibited, and required-across about 6.70 million words in 1,125 documents. Among the 49 jurisdictions in that 2023 count (48 states plus the District of Columbia; Arkansas and West Virginia were not included), Delaware had the 20th-fewest restrictions; the median was 121,620. Maryland had 129,455, Pennsylvania 164,032, and New Jersey 296,926.

The inventory and a one-in-two-out rule can begin by executive action; a statutory sunset review would take legislation. The measurable results are the number of regulatory restrictions and the size of the administrative code, updated as the inventory and reviews are completed.

2023 regulatory restrictions, Delaware vs. neighbors

restrictions



2023 count covers 49 jurisdictions; Arkansas and West Virginia were not included. Median is the median of those 49 jurisdictions.

Source: QuantGov State RegData 5.0

Infrastructure

Executive action.

This proposal would set a Delaware Department of Transportation priority list tied to job sites, the Route 1 and Sussex County growth corridors, and the Port of Wilmington. The current FY2027-FY2032 Capital Transportation Program schedules about $3.70 billion from state, federal, and other sources over six fiscal years. Planned spending in fiscal year 2027 is about $788.8 million: $271.7 million state, $474.5 million federal, and $42.5 million other. Federal funds make up about 52.8% of the six-year program, and the statewide Bridge Program accounts for about $484.3 million.

By executive action, project selection in that program would be lined up with places where jobs are growing or planned, including the Route 1 and Sussex corridors and the Port of Wilmington. The measurable results are the size and mix of the capital program and whether priority projects in those corridors and at the port move forward on the published schedule.

Housing Supply

Legislation.

This proposal would expand housing supply through model zoning and permitting reforms and by making state land available for starter homes. It would take legislation and local action, because much of zoning and permitting is decided in cities and counties. In 2025, Delaware authorized 6,468 new housing units in privately owned buildings, down from 7,141 in 2024. Single-family homes accounted for 5,422 of those units, about 84%. Home prices rose about 4.0% from the second quarter of 2025 to the second quarter of 2026, and about 81.6% over the ten years starting in the second quarter of 2016.

Model local rules and a state-land pathway for starter homes are meant to make it easier to add homes where people work and already live. The measurable results are the number of housing units authorized each year, the mix of single-family and other units, and the change in home prices.

Self-Reliance Index

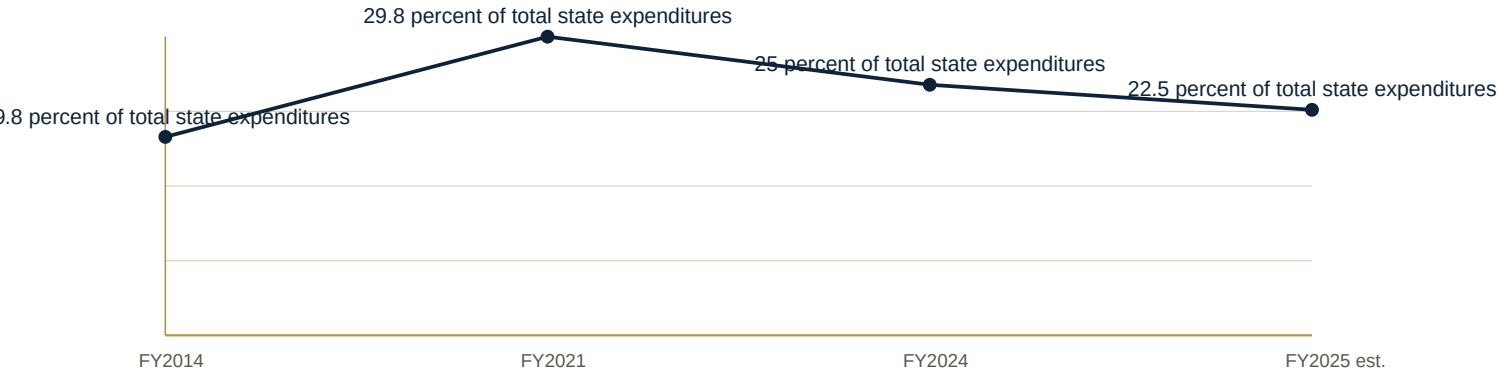
Executive action.

This proposal would create a self-reliance index that tracks, and then reduces, the share of the state budget that depends on federal funds. In fiscal year 2024, federal funds were about 25.0% of Delaware's total state expenditures, or $4.03 billion of $16.09 billion. The estimated share for fiscal 2025 is about 22.5% ($3.93 billion of $17.48 billion). That share peaked at about 29.8% in fiscal 2021 and was about 19.8% in fiscal 2014.

The index can be published by executive action, using a consistent definition-federal funds as a share of total state spending, including capital-and updated each fiscal year. The measurable result is that published share, so the public can see whether dependence on federal funds is falling over time. The proposal does not set a numeric target; the aim is a lower share than today, tracked in the open.

Federal funds as a share of Delaware total state expenditures

percent of total state expenditures



Fiscal 2025 is labeled estimated in the write-up. Earlier years are from the NASBO reports cited in the same write-up.
Source: NASBO State Expenditure Report

Right to Work

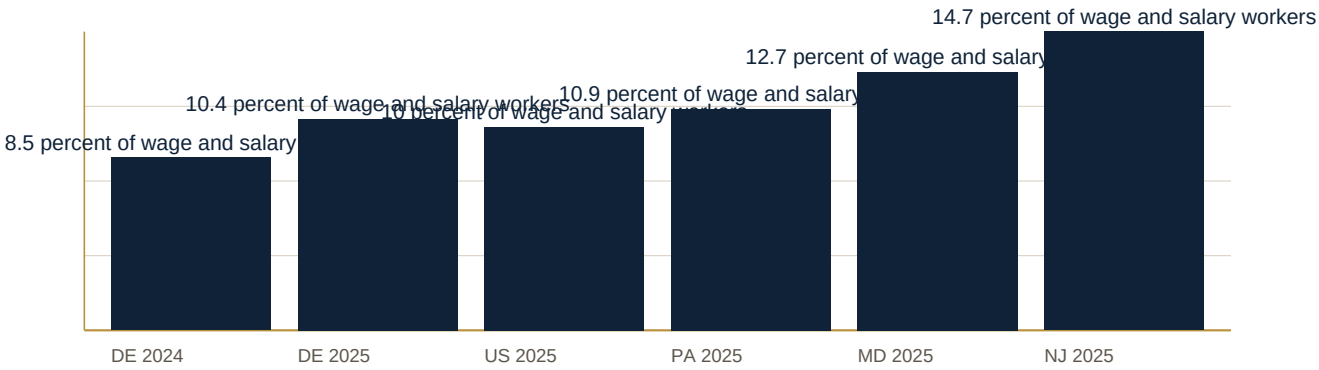
Legislation.

This proposal would prohibit union security agreements, which are contract terms that require employees to join a union or pay union fees as a condition of keeping a job. That change would take legislation. In 2025, 10.4% of Delaware's employed wage and salary workers were union members, up from 8.5% in 2024. That was about 47,000 members among 451,000 employed wage and salary workers. Including nonmembers covered by a union contract, 11.5% were represented by unions. Delaware's membership rate compares with 10.0% nationally, 10.9% in Pennsylvania, 12.7% in Maryland, and 14.7% in New Jersey.

The measurable results are the state's union membership rate, the number of members, and the broader coverage rate, published each year in official household survey data. The proposal would change the rules for union security agreements; it does not set a target membership rate.

Union membership rate, Delaware vs. the nation and neighbors

percent of wage and salary workers



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

How we'll measure it. private non-finance, non-government jobs, new business formations, permit times, effective tax burden versus neighboring states.

Families

the foundation under every pillar

A Family Impact Statement on Every Major Bill and Rule

Executive action.

This proposal would attach a family impact statement to every major bill and rule, so that decision-makers and the public can see how a change is likely to affect Delaware households before it takes effect. Delaware already requires some impact analysis. Under Title 29, Chapter 19 of the Delaware Code, bills that authorize new spending must carry a three-year fiscal projection reviewed by the Controller General, and bills that reduce state revenue need a one-year projection. Under 29 Del. C. § 10404A, an agency proposing a regulation that is likely to add costs or burdens for individuals or small businesses must publish a regulatory impact statement. Neither process asks directly how a measure would affect family stability, household budgets, or parents' ability to work and care for their children.

Because this is an executive action, the requirement can be set through an executive order and agency rules. It would cover every major rule proposed by executive branch agencies and every major bill those agencies analyze or comment on. In practice, the statement would be a short, standard form completed alongside the existing fiscal and regulatory analysis, using data agencies already collect, so it adds clarity without new spending. The measurable result is a completed statement on every major bill and rule, giving residents a consistent way to see whether proposals move the family measures tracked here: child care slots, foster permanency time, benefit-cliff reductions, and participation in family resources.

Child Care Supply

Executive action and Legislation.

This proposal would expand the supply of child care by cutting licensing red tape and opening the door wider to home-based and faith-based providers. Child care licensing is governed by Chapter 30A of Title 14 of the Delaware Code and by regulations of the Office of Child Care Licensing. As of November 2026, the state's open

data listing of licensed providers showed 1,238 licensed programs with a combined capacity of 70,230 children. Centers accounted for 64,858 of those slots. The 611 family and large family child care homes made up about half of all licensed programs but only 5,372 slots, less than a tenth of capacity. Under the family child care regulations, a Level I home may care for a maximum of 5 or 6 children depending on their ages, a Level II home up to 9, and a large family home up to 12.

In practice, the Office of Child Care Licensing could use executive action to review each licensing requirement, simplify applications and inspections, and shorten approval times while keeping health and safety standards in place. Legislation would make any statutory changes needed so more home-based and faith-based providers can open and serve families. Because the work centers on removing barriers rather than creating a new program, it can proceed without new spending. The measurable result is growth in licensed child care slots, reported from the state's own provider data.

Work-First Benefits Reform

Executive action and Legislation.

This proposal would reform assistance programs around work by removing marriage and work penalties that can leave a family worse off when a parent earns more or when two parents marry. These penalties arise when benefits phase out quickly as income rises or when combined household income crosses an eligibility line. A 2019 analysis by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services found that for families receiving federal child care subsidies with incomes between 100 and 149 percent of poverty, a $5,000 raise carried a median effective marginal tax rate of 73 percent, leaving a net gain of only $1,350. In Delaware, under limits in effect from October 1, 2026, families can apply for Purchase of Care child care assistance with income up to 225 percent of the federal poverty level, can keep it at their yearly redetermination up to 325 percent, and lose it whenever income exceeds 85 percent of state median income.

In practice, state agencies would map how programs such as TANF, SNAP, Medicaid, and child care assistance interact for typical Delaware households, then use executive action to smooth phase-outs and align rules where the state already has flexibility. Legislation would address penalties written into state law, with any changes paired with an offset or a measured return. The measurable result is benefit-cliff reductions: fewer and smaller points at which earning more or marrying leaves a Delaware family worse off.

Foster Care and Adoption

Executive action.

This proposal would help children in foster care reach safe, permanent homes faster and would strengthen the state's partnership with faith-based providers in recruiting and supporting foster and adoptive families. Delaware's 2025 Annual Progress and Services Report to the federal government shows 561 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2023, up from 501 a year earlier, and 866 children who spent at least one day in care during state fiscal year 2023. The same report found that 25.95 percent of children who entered care between April 2021 and March 2022 reached permanency within 12 months, compared with national performance of 35.2 percent, and that 43 percent of adoptions in fiscal 2023 happened within 24 months of a child's entry into care. In 2025, 75 Delaware children found permanent families through adoption.

Because this is an executive action, the Department of Services for Children, Youthand Their Families can carry it out through agency policy, contracts, and the state budget. That means tracking each case against permanency

timelines, removing administrative delays, and expanding partnerships with faith-based providers to recruit, train, and support families. The measurable result is shorter foster permanency time, reported publicly each year against the federal 12-month permanency measure.

Parental Rights in Education and Health Decisions for Minors

Legislation.

This proposal would set out in state law the rights of parents in the education and health decisions of their minor children. Delaware law already recognizes the role of families in general terms. 14 Del. C. § 157 states that "there is no adequate substitute for the involvement of a concerned and committed family in the education of a child." That section encourages communication between parents and schools and calls for a statewide Parents' Declaration of Responsibilities, but it is framed as shared expectations rather than a list of parental rights. In health care, 13 Del. C. § 707 governs consent to the health care of minors, and § 710 of the same chapter allows a minor 12 years of age or older to consent, except to abortion, to certain care related to pregnancy or contagious disease.

Because this proposal requires legislation, the General Assembly would pass a bill that states parental rights in education and in health decisions for minors in one clear place in the Delaware Code. Families, schools, and health care providers would then share a common understanding of what the law expects, which can reduce conflict and help parents stay involved in decisions about their children. The measurable result is participation in family resources, meaning how many parents use the information and processes the law establishes, reported by the state each year.

Youth and Technology

Legislation.

This proposal would strengthen protections for minors online through state legislation. Families need clear, enforceable rules about how websites, apps, and online services treat young users, and some protections already exist. The federal Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule defines a child as an individual under the age of 13 and generally requires covered operators to obtain verifiable parental consent before collecting, using, or disclosing a child's personal information. Delaware's Online and Personal Privacy Protection law bars sites and apps directed to children from marketing or advertising certain products to them. The Delaware Personal Data Privacy Act bars companies from selling a teen's personal data or using it for targeted advertising without consent when they know, or willfully disregard, that the user is 13 to 17 years old.

Because this proposal requires legislation, the General Assembly would review these existing protections, identify gaps that remain for Delaware minors, and pass a bill that addresses them in clear terms that families and companies can understand. The work builds on federal and state law already on the books rather than starting over, and it keeps parents informed about the choices available to them. The measurable result is participation in family resources, including the number of parents and young people who use the guidance and tools the law provides.

Multi-Generational Economic Conversations

Community.

This proposal would create simple, data-backed guides that help parents and grandparents talk through household economics together, from budgeting and saving to the costs of housing, education, and health care. Community work can start now, outside government, through civic and nonprofit work, and it requires no new state spending. These conversations matter because Delaware households span generations and face real cost pressures. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 22.8 percent of Delawareans were 65 or older in 2025, while 19.8 percent were under 18. The bureau's 2020-2024 estimates put Delaware's median household income at $84,954, the median value of an owner-occupied home at $352,000, and the median gross rent at $1,401 a month.

In practice, volunteers, civic groups, congregations, and neighborhood associations could host kitchen-table sessions and share short guides that pair everyday questions with official public data, so families can see how prices, wages, and choices fit together. Grandparents can bring experience from earlier economic cycles, and parents and young adults can bring current information about work, school, and housing. Materials would be free, written in plain language, and easy to update as new data is released. The measurable result is participation in family resources: the number of sessions held, guides shared, and families taking part in all three counties.

How we'll measure it. child care slots, foster permanency time, benefit-cliff reductions, participation in family resources.

State Government Reform

Cross-cutting reform of how the state is run, including fiscal responsibility.

A Performance Audit of Every State Department, With Results Made Public

Executive action.

This proposal would conduct a performance audit of every state department and make the results public. A performance audit asks whether a program achieves its goals efficiently, not just whether the books balance. Delaware law already provides a foundation. 29 Del. C. § 2901 defines an audit to include a performance audit, and § 2906 directs the Auditor of Accounts to audit the financial transactions of all state agencies, to the extent possible at least once every two years. The office has used this authority for targeted reviews, such as its performance audit of the Diamond State Port Corporation covering July 2021 through June 2025. This proposal would extend that kind of review, systematically, to every department.

Because this is an executive action, it can be launched through an executive order directing every executive branch department to take part in a performance review on a published schedule, with costs set within the state budget and offset by the savings the reviews identify. Each review would compare a department's spending with the results it delivers for Delaware families and taxpayers, recommend specific improvements, and be posted online in full so residents can follow up. The measurable result is savings identified and realized, reported department by department as each audit is completed and published.

Zero-Based Budgeting Phased in Across Agencies

Executive action.

This proposal would phase in zero-based budgeting across state agencies, so that each program justifies its spending from the ground up rather than starting from last year's total. Delaware law already contemplates this approach. 29 Del. C. § 6334 says the budget plan prepared by the Office of Management and Budget "shall be in the format of a zero-based budget," with alternative service levels and performance indicators for each budget unit, but the same section waives that requirement for agencies in the strategic planning and budgeting process. In practice, budgets build on the prior year: the Fiscal Year 2028 budget guidelines set each agency's request target from its Fiscal Year 2027 base budget, plus approved increases and a 1 percent growth percentage. Over the same period, the General Fund Budget Act grew from $4.77 billion in fiscal 2022 to $7.00 billion in fiscal 2027.

Because this is an executive action, the Office of Management and Budget can phase in zero-based reviews through its annual budget instructions, starting with a few agencies each year until every agency has rebuilt its budget from zero. Each review would ask what a program delivers for Delaware families and whether it is still needed at its current size. The measurable result is savings identified and realized, and budget growth that stays in line with personal income growth.

Spending Limit and Rainy-Day Discipline

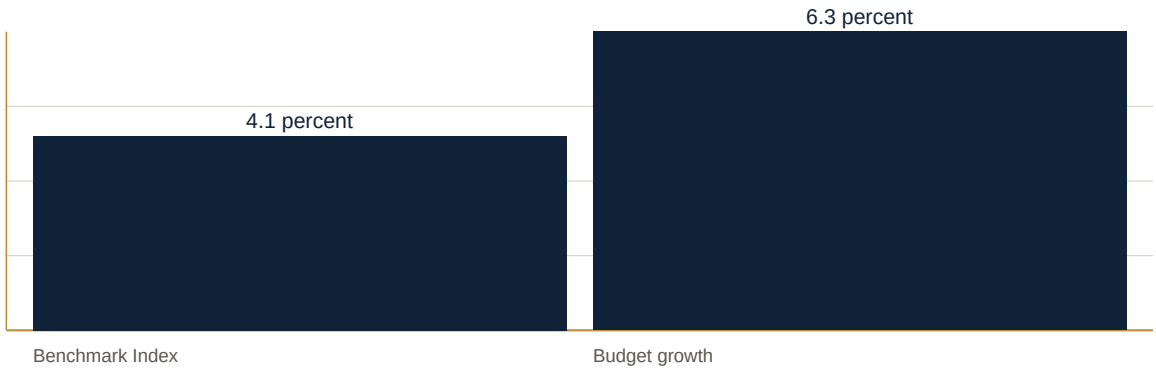
Legislation and Constitutional amendment.

This proposal would set a firm spending limit and strengthen rainy-day discipline so that state budgets grow no faster than Delawareans' ability to pay. The Delaware Constitution already limits General Fund appropriations to 98 percent of estimated revenue and caps the Budget Reserve Account at 5 percent of estimated revenue. State law adds a Budget Stabilization Fund and a Benchmark Index based on personal income growth, population growth, and inflation, but the benchmark applies to the budget bill the Governor submits, not to the budget the General Assembly enacts. For fiscal 2027, the Benchmark Index was 4.1 percent, while the General Fund Budget Act rose from $6.581 billion to $6.997 billion, an increase of about 6.3 percent. At the end of fiscal 2026, the state held $366.5 million in the Budget Reserve Account and $469.3 million in the Budget Stabilization Fund.

Through legislation, the General Assembly could apply a spending limit to the enacted budget and set clear rules for building and using reserves. A hard limit could be placed in the Delaware Constitution as a constitutional amendment, which requires approval by two-thirds of both houses in two consecutive General Assemblies, with no voter referendum. The measurable result is budget growth at or below personal income growth, with reserves maintained.

Fiscal 2027 General Fund budget growth versus the Benchmark Index

percent



Benchmark Index is the DEFAC figure for fiscal 2027. Budget growth is the General Fund Budget Act increase from fiscal 2026 to 2027, cited to the October 2026 DEFAC materials in the same write-up.

Source: Delaware Economic and Financial Advisory Council

Open Government

Executive action and Legislation.

This proposal would make state government more open through an online checkbook, open data, and firm deadlines for responding to public records requests. Delaware has building blocks in place. The state runs an Open Checkbook site for state spending and an open data portal where agencies publish datasets. Under the Freedom of Information Act, 29 Del. C. § 10003 requires a public body to respond to a request within 15 business days. That response may grant or deny access, or it may state that more time is needed because the request is voluminous, requires legal advice, or involves archived records, along with a good-faith estimate of the additional time. The same section requires each FOIA coordinator to keep a log of every request, including its response deadline and the date of the response.

In practice, executive action can direct agencies to expand and regularly update checkbook and open data publications, follow consistent data standards, and publish summaries of their FOIA logs so residents can see how quickly requests are answered. Legislation would set firm outer deadlines for requests that receive extensions and place open data and checkbook requirements in law, so they continue from one administration to the next. Most of this work builds on systems the state already operates. The measurable result is shorter FOIA response times, published agency by agency.

Boards and Commissions Review

Executive action and Legislation.

This proposal would review Delaware's boards and commissions, consolidate or sunset bodies that are redundant, and make appointments based on merit. The scale is significant. The Office of the Governor makes appointments to approximately 300 boards and commissions that affect nearly all areas of public policy, and the Public Integrity Commission's 2025 annual report counted more than 300 boards and commissions with about 2,200 appointees in 2023. Delaware already has a legislative review process. Under 29 Del. C. Chapter 102, the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee must conduct at least four full or focused reviews each year to determine whether there is a genuine public need for an entity and whether it is meeting that need. At that minimum pace, reviewing hundreds of bodies would take many years.

Through executive action, the executive branch can inventory every board and commission, publish each one's purpose, membership, meeting record, and cost, and adopt merit-based appointment standards with published qualifications for each seat. Legislation would merge or end redundant bodies that were created in statute. The goal is fewer, stronger bodies whose work is easy for residents to follow. The measurable result is savings identified and realized from consolidation and sunsets, reported publicly as each change takes effect.

Government AI Modernization Using Open-Source Systems With State-Owned Data

Executive action.

This proposal would modernize state government with artificial intelligence built on open-source systems, keeping public data owned and controlled by the State. Delaware has begun building governance for this work. Under 29 Del. C. Chapter 90C, Subchapter IV, the Delaware AI Commission, whose members include the State's Chief Information Officer, is charged with recommending statewide processes, principles, and guidelines for agency use of AI, encouraging agencies to use AI to improve service delivery where appropriate, and inventorying generative AI use across executive, legislative, and judicial agencies. Open-source systems let the State inspect how its tools work, avoid being locked into a single vendor, and keep residents' records on infrastructure the State controls.

Because this is an executive action, the Department of Technology and Information and other agencies can carry it out through procurement standards, agency guidance, and the state budget. That means favoring open-source models and software, requiring that data used or produced by AI tools remains state-owned, and starting with practical uses such as answering routine questions, processing applications, and summarizing documents. Projects would be funded within existing technology budgets or paired with a measured return. The measurable result is savings identified and realized from faster, lower-cost public services, with each project's results published.

A Pension and Retiree-Benefits Sustainability Plan

Legislation.

This proposal would adopt, through legislation, a long-term sustainability plan for state pensions and retiree benefits. The pension system is on relatively firm footing: the State Employees' Pension Plan's June 30, 2025 actuarial valuation shows a funded ratio of 87.9 percent on an actuarial basis, with an unfunded liability of $1.687 billion being paid off over a closed schedule. Retiree health care, known as other post-employment benefits, is a larger challenge. The OPEB Fund Trust's fiscal 2025 financial statements report a total liability of $7.70 billion against $1.37 billion in plan assets as of June 30, 2025. That leaves a net liability of $6.33 billion and a funded level of 17.8 percent.

Through legislation, the General Assembly would set a plan with clear funding targets for both pensions and retiree benefits, a schedule for reaching them, and annual public reporting. The goal is to keep promises made to state workers and retirees without crowding out other priorities or shifting costs to future taxpayers. The plan would rely on actuarial work already prepared for the Board of Pension Trustees. Any benefit or contribution changes would be evaluated using the long-term actuarial cost projections that Delaware law already requires for pension bills. The measurable result is savings identified and realized over time and a rising funded level for retiree benefits.

State Government Reform, continued

How we'll measure it. savings identified and realized, budget growth versus personal income growth, FOIA response times.

Contact

Press and media inquiries: press@projectdelaware.org
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