Dear Members,

As we approach the end of the first quarter of 2025, the board would like to update you on the initiatives we've been working on for the Pennsylvania Online Messenger Association and its members.

Since our last update at the annual conference in October, board members have held quarterly meetings with key figures at PennDOT to address the challenges we face as Online Messengers.

Most recently, Joseph Grasso had the opportunity to meet with Governor Shapiro to discuss industry concerns, potential areas for collaboration, and the positive relationship we've developed with Secretary Carroll. Governor Shapiro took the time to listen, understand our business, and even proposed a recommendation—connecting us with a member of his direct team to explore further opportunities for collaboration.

In addition to meeting with Governor Shapiro, your board met face-to-face with key PennDOT personnel, including Secretary Carroll. This discussion covered several topics, such as handicap placards, the replacement of defaced plates, the IRP online system, General Plate reissuance, and contract-related issues. Secretary Carroll was highly receptive, instructing his team to address our concerns within 30, 60, and 90 days. Also in attendance were key legislators from both the House and Senate Transportation Committees.

While we will provide further details in the future, out of respect for Secretary Carroll and his team, we want to give them the necessary time to act. That said, we can confidently state that this was the most productive meeting our association has ever had with a sitting Secretary and their team.

Beyond our engagement with PennDOT officials, we have continued advocating for our industry at the legislative level. We have met with both Democratic and Republican members of the House and Senate Transportation Committees, who recognize the Pennsylvania Online Messenger Association's value to our communities and the state. We are actively working with legislators on potential legislation that could impact our businesses.

Since our annual convention, your board has met with the Governor, held meetings with Secretary Carroll and his team, and engaged with legislators on behalf of our members. None of this would be possible without your support and the advocacy efforts of Bob Taylor.

In October, we emphasized the momentum our association had gained with both PennDOT and the legislature—and that momentum remains strong. Secretary Carroll left us with an encouraging message at the conclusion of our meeting: ***He sees us, he knows us, and most importantly, he values us.*** He acknowledged that without this partnership, Pennsylvania would not function as smoothly as it does today and expressed his desire to continue working together. This statement comes from the same Department, under the previous administration, that was reluctant to collaborate with us. If that isn't proof of our growing influence, we don't know what is.

As we continue building on this progress throughout the rest of the year, your support is more important than ever. If you are experiencing issues with PennDOT, have questions, or want the board to bring an idea forward, please reach out to one of your board members. Additionally, if you have the opportunity, visit your local State Representative or Senator to educate them about our association. Most importantly, ensure your dues are paid and consider contributing to the advocacy fund—these contributions are critical to sustaining the progress we've made over the past year and a half.

Wishing you a happy and healthy spring. Please keep an eye on your email for further updates as we anticipate exciting developments in the months ahead.

Best regards,

Pennsylvania Online Messenger Association