

Local

Rockey promises 'jobs renaissance' for county

By Michael Korsh
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Joe Rocky unveiled what he called a "Jobs Renaissance" policy agenda on Thursday, a six-point plan that the Republican nominee for Allegheny County executive said would spur economic growth and employment.

"It is really a framework for us to make Allegheny County a place that attracts employment, as opposed to an economy which is pushing employment away and causing the quality of life in our region to go backwards every single year," Mr. Rocky said.

Mr. Rocky, a former PNC executive who ran unopposed in the GOP primary, has been introducing himself to general election voters with policy plans and a TV advertising campaign painting himself as a "centrist" alternative to the Democratic nominee, the former progressive state representative Sara Innamorato. In July, he rolled out a plan to address growing public safety concerns in the region.

Speaking on Thursday at Mill 19, a research and development hub on the site of the former Jones and Laughlin steel plant, Mr. Rocky

lamented recent data that showed Allegheny County has lost more than 50,000 jobs in the past five years. The job losses have been the largest among any county in Pennsylvania, a figure he called "staggering."

"I will be the champion to go around this country and talk about the advantages of Allegheny County."

— Joe Rocky

He also cited recent federal laws — such as the CHIPS Act, meant to spur domestic semiconductor manufacturing, and the sweeping health care and climate bill known as the Inflation Reduction Act — is saying the region has failed in the past to attract investments landed by other states like Ohio.

"We need to capitalize on that," Mr. Rocky said. "Because if we don't in the next 40 years — and those jobs are taken to Maryland, or taken to Ohio, or Kentucky, where they then go live — there won't be a chance to come back."

The Inflation Reduction Act, which includes billions in loans for technology and manufacturing initiatives, has been a cornerstone of President Joe Biden's economic policy agenda.

"It is the county executive's job — regardless of party — to take advantage of every program that's available to Allegheny County," he said. "I don't think that any of those players I mentioned — all Democrats — will object to bringing jobs to a county that has 66% of its registered population as Democrats."

In addition to maximizing the impact of these federal initiatives in Pennsylvania, Mr. Rocky's plan centers on themes including leveraging the county's natural resources, streamlining government regulations, and promoting the region to job creators through a "100-Company Project."

Mr. Rocky said he would act as the county's "top salesman" to 100 top companies, personally pitching the region as a place for business growth.

"I will be the champion to go around this country and talk about the advantages of Allegheny County," he said.

While some sectors of region's economy have experienced growth — such as a



Lucy Schaly/Post-Gazette

Joe Rocky, the Republican nominee for Allegheny County executive, talks about his economic plan during a news conference on Thursday at Mill 19 in Hazelwood.

21% increase in the labor pool for technology talent — Mr. Rocky said Allegheny County needs an "all-of-the-above" approach to job creation, which would encompass all sectors of the economy and emphasize small- and minority-owned businesses.

He also highlighted the disparity between the proportion of Americans that are first-generation nationally in the U.S. overall, 30%, and those in Allegheny County, just 4%.

"The short answer is: Immigration follows jobs. And if we have a robust economy, immigration will follow," he

said. "What we need to do is welcome those from outside this country, and bring them here to the job opportunities that we're going to create as we move forward with this plan."

Along with his economic policy agenda, the Republican nominee responded to the latest death of an inmate at the Allegheny County Jail. Corrections officers on Wednesday found a 27-year-old inmate in "medical distress," officials said.

Mr. Rocky referenced findings from an audit conducted by the Allegheny County Controller's office last month, which found the

jail is severely understaffed — including in health care workers — and surveys that showed low morale among its employees.

"The very first thing we will do is a full and complete independent assessment of all aspects of the jail," Mr. Rocky said, "to understand what needs fixing, to make sure that we are running a jail that is effective for the community we're in, but also for the people who work there and the individuals who are incarcerated."

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Gateway Center gets trailer-like potty

RESTROOM, FROM A-1

watched workers tinker with the restroom, was eager to give it a go.

"I'm going to try to be the first one in there," he said. "I want to see how the water works. Wash my hands. Might wash my face a little bit."

In announcing the initiative in August, the PDP and other Downtown stakeholders said the plan was to install as many as three of the restrooms throughout the Golden Triangle as part of a six-month experiment, with the goal to make them permanent.

At the time, officials said that each restroom installed would be open and staffed from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily



Lucy Schaly/Post-Gazette

Members of "The Clean Team" place ramps to the Pittsburgh Potty in Downtown on Thursday.

and equipped with running water, heat and air conditioning.

The initiative is being funded through at least \$2 million raised by the Allegheny Conference on Community Development to combat issues like crime, safety, open drug dealing, cleanliness and lewd behavior that have been plaguing Downtown.

Public urination and defecation have been a major concern for some time, with many business owners complaining about people doing their business in alleys or right out in the open.

Last year, a study by Point Park University recommended that public restrooms be placed in high-traffic areas such as Market Square, the Cultural District, transit hubs and Mellon Square.

A move to install public restrooms in Columbus has been flush with controversy, with one property owner suing the city, claiming that locating one of the potties near his business will drive away customers.

Some of those who got their first look at the Pittsburgh Potty Thursday didn't hold back their opinions.

While Mr. Hofstetter was in a hurry to try out what he described as a "the rich peoples' porta-john," he worried about how long it will last.

"It's a good idea, don't get me wrong, if it works," he said. "But how are they going to keep the dope pushers out? You know what I mean."

Mr. Hofstetter said he was

kicked out of the spot where he normally sleeps Wednesday when the Pittsburgh Potty was moved into place. While the restroom will be staffed, "what's the guarantee that somebody ain't going to break into it" after hours? he asked.

"It's not a bad idea but I think it's going to go down the drain," he said.

The public lavatory will be located just steps from the T station. In a statement, Adam Brandolph, spokesperson for Pittsburgh Regional Transit, said, "Public restrooms are necessities for everyone, including transit users. They should be easy to find, easy to use, safe and comfortable."

As she stood outside the station Thursday, Mona Strong of Knoxville thought the blue and white painted restroom was a good idea. She said it is not uncommon for people to use the station's elevator to do their business.

"It's always urine soaked," she said, adding the public porta potty represented a "good start" in addressing such issues.

Maria Subotich, a Monroeville resident who was interviewing for a job in Downtown, liked the idea as well. She said she would use the restroom if nature called. "I mean, personally, if I had to, yeah," she said.

But Summer Brown, a Downtown resident and restaurant worker, isn't sold on the experiment.

She said customers have to use a code to get into her restaurant's bathroom because homeless people "like

to get high and do drugs in public restrooms."

But at the same time, the public facility in Gateway Center "is convenient for homeless people, for people who really do need to use the restroom," she said.

"I just think there are pros and cons to it to be honest. How is the maintenance going to be? When does it get cleaned? Is there sanitary things in there. You have to think about all of that," she said.

Ms. Brown added such restrooms could be beneficial in curbing public urination and defecation in alleys and other spots in Downtown.

"I'm kind of curious how that's going to work out, who's going to use that. It's almost like a social experiment, you know," she said.

She doesn't anticipate using it, though.

"If I have to use a restroom really, really bad, I would rather hold it," she said.

Sanders Brown, who works at Wood Street Commons in Downtown, sees a need for public potties given the number of people who stop inside the building asking to use the restroom.

And while the outdoor facility might help out homeless people who have no place to go, Mr. Brown said the better solution would be to find them a place to live.

"You think they would spend the money there," he said.

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McCormick plans to announce 2nd Senate run by end of month, source says

By Benjamin Kail
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

WASHINGTON — David McCormick, the former hedge fund CEO who lost a Republican Senate primary last year to Mehmet Oz, plans to announce a second run by the end of this month, according to a source familiar with his plans.

Mr. McCormick, an Iraq War veteran and former George W. Bush administration official, has been eyeing a campaign for U.S. Sen. Bob Casey's seat for several months, speaking at GOP events, promoting a book and launching a PAC that raised more than \$1 million this spring. He is poised to announce his campaign by the last week of September, according to the source, speaking on condition of anonymity. Mr. McCormick's plans previously were reported by Reuters.

With control of the Senate potentially hinging on Pennsylvania, the race is considered one of the most competitive in the U.S. The Cook Political Report lists the seat among the eight most competitive in the nation, with Mr. Casey a slight favorite.

Republicans have sought to paint Mr. Casey, vying for a fourth term, as a professional politician, while Democrats have attacked Mr. McCormick's business ties to China and raised questions about his residency even before he enters the race.

Pennsylvania Republicans have urged Mr. McCormick to run for the Senate again, though acknowledged he might have concerns about running on a ticket led by former President Donald Trump, who attacked him and endorsed Mr. Oz. Mr. McCormick, who spent \$14 million of his own money in his previous bid, lost by fewer than 1,000 votes; Mr. Oz later lost to Democrat John Fetterman.

Almost 100 Republicans recently signed a letter to Mr. McCormick, describ-



McCormick

ing him as the best conservative contender to face Mr. Casey. Led by Sam DeMarco, the Allegheny County GOP chair, the Republicans said Mr. McCormick could help put "a stop to Joe Biden's liberal agenda." The group touted the former executive's track record of creating jobs in the Pittsburgh region and working in the federal government.

"Pennsylvania and America need a Republican majority in the U.S. Senate ... to deliver strong, conservative results to the American people," they wrote. "As you say frequently, this is the first time in 76 years that the commonwealth has two Democrats serving in the U.S. Senate. Put simply, that is not who we are."

Strategists in both parties recently told the Post-Gazette that Mr. McCormick had plenty of time to enter the Senate race because his name recognition and wealth gave him breathing room.

Mr. Casey raised \$4 million between April and June, marking the top fundraising quarter of his tenure, which began in 2007.

Between May 2 and June 5, a Pennsylvania political group launched by Mr. McCormick raised \$1 million, the bulk from a single donation by billionaire Jeffrey Yass, the state's wealthiest resident and a longtime GOP megadonor.

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Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023

PENNSYLVANIA LOTTERY

For prize amounts and more information, go to:
post-gazette.com/lottery

Thursday's Cash 5
12-18-19-31-33

Thursday's Cash 4 Life
09-17-39-48-59 CB: 3

Thursday's Match 6
11-26-27-41-43-44

Thursday's Treasure Hunt
03-07-08-23-26

Thursday's Pick 5
8-8-4-9-4 (day);
6-9-8-7-6 (night)

Thursday's Pick 4
8-8-4-4 (day); 3-8-4-8 (night)

Thursday's Pick 3
4-3-3 (day); 0-8-2 (night)

Thursday's Pick 2
4-3 (day); 3-4 (night)

Wild ball
1 (day); 0 (night)

Tonight's **CASH 5** is worth an estimated \$250,000.
Tonight's **TREASURE HUNT** is worth an estimated \$30,000.
Tonight's **MEGA MILLIONS** is worth an estimated \$162 million.
Tonight's **MATCH 6** is worth an estimated \$1.2 million.
Tomorrow's **POWERBALL** is worth an estimated \$596 million.