

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Invites Local Residents to Partner with Municipalities to Adopt a Road or Area to Help Reduce Litter and Associated Cleanup Costs

(July 30, 2021) While littering and illegal dumping are often discussed as social or environmental problems, rarely do we think about their economic impact. Over five years, 2014 through 2018, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) spent over \$65 million removing litter from within highway rights-of-way.

The costs of dealing with litter and illegal dumping are quite large for communities as well, but are often obscured because they are dispersed across various governmental departments, community-based organizations and volunteer groups. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful documented in their 2019 study, *The Cost of Littering and Illegal Dumping in Pennsylvania*, that just nine cities in Pennsylvania spend \$68 million annually on cleanup, education, enforcement and prevention efforts to address litter and illegal dumping throughout their respective communities. Eighty percent of that went towards cleaning up.

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has a program that helps mitigate municipal cleanup costs. Their road and area adoption program equips local residents with the tools and resources they need to be stewards of their neighborhoods. With the support of local municipalities, the Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful adoption program is available statewide for municipal roads, parks, neighborhood blocks, greenways, waterways and trails. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful provides a sign recognizing the volunteers' efforts and seeks the support of the local entity, usually the municipality, to provide the sign post, install the sign and provide trash disposal options as needed.

Once an adoption is approved, the volunteer individual or group receives gloves, bags and safety vests to get them started. Additional supplies are available each spring and fall through Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's Pick Up Pennsylvania cleanup initiative.

"Litter cleanups divert municipal personnel from other, more essential tasks. Litter affects neighborhoods environmentally, socially and economically. Supporting volunteers who want to help by adopting roads or areas benefits the health and safety of the whole community," said Shannon Reiter, President of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful. We are grateful for the municipalities who continue to support our program and for the tenacious volunteers who continue to strive for a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania."

While not littering in the first place is the best scenario, cleanups are critical, and in a sense serve as a preventative function through engaging the community around the littering issue and

simply because people are less likely to litter in an area that is kept free of trash. Trash attracts trash.

For more information about adopting a municipal road, park, trail or waterway, visit keppabeautiful.org and choose [Keep It](#), then Adoption Program or contact Stephanie Larson at slarson@keppabeautiful.org or 877.772.3673 x104. For information about adopting a state maintained road, visit the PA Department of Transportation at www.penndot.gov and search Adopt-a-Highway.

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About Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's vision is a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Since 1990, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has worked with hundreds of thousands of volunteers across the state to pick up nearly 148 million pounds of trash from Pennsylvania's roadways, waterways, greenways, vacant lots, forestlands and other community spaces. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's core programming focuses on litter and illegal dump prevention, cleanup, community greening, and proper waste handling and sustainable practices. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful works with many partnering organizations on the state and grassroots level to accomplish our goal of a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is the state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, Inc., the nation's largest volunteer-based community action and education organization. To learn more about Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, visit www.keppabeautiful.org.