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Senate of Pennsylvania

1 April 2020

Mr. Andy Carter
President & Chief Executive Officer
Hospital & Healthsystem Association of PA
30 North Third St. Suite 600
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1703

Dear Mr. Carter,

We in the Senate Democratic Caucus received several complaints that several healthcare workers in hospital settings do not have enough personal protective equipment (“PPE”) or ventilators to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. These employees are on the front lines of the outbreak that health officials confirm is spreading rapidly across the state. We are extremely concerned for the safety of these employees and their patients.

Our constituents who work in healthcare settings are consistently reporting to our offices that they do not have enough ventilators, masks, gloves, sanitizing equipment and other necessary resources to fight this virus. All workers in hospitals should have PPE, not just doctors and nurses. Some hospitals are not distributing PPE to techs or service workers, saying they do not engage in direct patient care. This is unacceptable. Everyone in a hospital is putting their lives on the line to care for the sickest among us. While we knew a shortage was coming, these employees also should know how the shortage is being addressed and how to report shortages to supply chains.

We all have our part to play to fight this virus. Though the Capitol is closed, the Senate Democrats are working proactively through the pandemic to respond to several issues arising as a result of COVID-19. We are developing a variety of policy reforms, some addressing protections for workers like yours:

- The American Working Family Relief Action Plan for front-line worker protections (Collett)
- Protecting workers during public health emergencies (Santarsiero)
- COVID-19 Food Worker Safety Act (Tartaglione)
- COVID-19 Grocery Store Worker Safety Act (Tartaglione)
- Payment of contract services in schools (Iovino)
- Child care assistance (Schwank)
- Emergency expansion of the Family Medical Leave Act (Farnese)
- Crisis grants for volunteer fire and EMS companies due to COVID-19 (Brewster)
- Eviction protection for all disaster emergencies (Farnese)
- Coronavirus disease and schools: allowing for online instruction (Dinniman)

These legislative initiatives will take some time to advance, but workers need assistance today, not later. Therefore, for your members, immediate action should be taken to provide all healthcare workers with, at minimum, protective masks, gloves and hand sanitizer. To help to determine where personal protective equipment should be deployed, all healthcare workers must know the process for reporting the lack of and requesting access to PPE. These actions are imperative to protect the workforce as they provide essential services to the community, in addition to mitigate the community spread of COVID-19.

Thank you for your efforts during this public health crisis. If you would like to discuss this further, you may find our contact information at <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/>.

Sincerely,




Senator Jay Costa, 43rd District



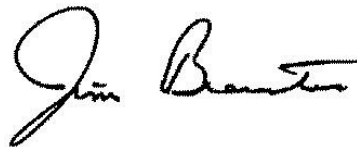
Senator Vincent Hughes, 7th District



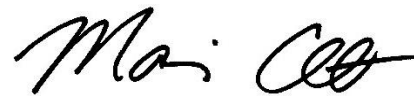
Senator John Blake, 22nd District



Senator Lisa Boscola, 18th District



Senator Jim Brewster, 45th District



Senator Maria Collett, 12th District



Senator Andrew Dinniman, 19th District



Senator Larry Farnese, 1st District



Senator Wayne Fontana, 42nd District



Senator Art Haywood, 4th District



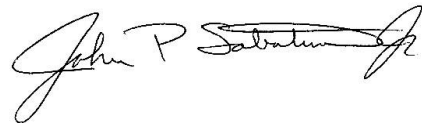
Senator Pam Iovino, 37th District



Senator Tim Kearney, 26th District



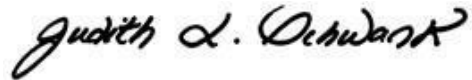
Senator Katie Muth, 44th District



Senator John Sabatina, 5th District



Senator Steve Santarsiero, 10th District



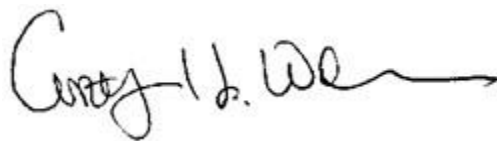
Senator Judy Schwank, 11th District



Senator Sharif Street, 3rd District



Senator Christine Tartaglione, 2nd District



Senator Anthony H. Williams, 8th District



Senator Lindsey Williams, 38th District