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House of Representatives  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Harrisburg

**COMMITTEES:**

AGING AND OLDER ADULT  
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April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
508 Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Governor Wolf,

I write to you to raise a substantial concern that has come to my attention. I understand we are in unprecedented times and appreciate the tough decisions before us all.

While we care about every citizen in Pennsylvania, the COVID-19 crisis has disproportionately affected our residents in long term care facilities. According to the PA Department of Health, as of April 22, 2020, deaths in nursing facilities and personal care homes account for 52 percent of the total deaths in the Commonwealth.

On March 18, 2020 the federal government provided an emergency 6.2 percent increase in its Medicaid matching rate for every state. I ask for your consideration to allocate some of these vital funds towards our long term care facilities, who are on the front lines day in and day out; fighting the virus and providing care to one of our most vulnerable populations, our older adults.

The residents in our nursing homes and other long term care facilities are our parents, our grandparents – the individuals who raised us and provided for us. These residents and their families have chosen to live in these facilities, to ensure they are receiving the adequate care, nutrition and socialization they need. Now, those safe havens have turned into a breeding ground for a virus that has proven deadly for older Pennsylvanians. We must do everything in our power to ensure that these facilities are adequately prepared to care for our seniors during these uncertain times.

Nursing facility stakeholder groups have outlined that they are in need of a 3 percent increase in Medicaid rates and an allocation of \$290 million to be used to ensure adequate staffing, personal protective equipment, and supplies for a duration of 120 days. It is my understanding that the Department of Human Services is still waiting for federal guidance to determine how some of this funding may be spent. The intent of the federal funding was to assist states with increased

Medicaid costs from the pandemic; seeing just how hard our nursing facilities and other long term care facilities have been affected by this virus, I humbly reiterate the funding requests made to the Governor and ask for the immediate consideration allocating a portion of the federal funding directly to our long term care providers. This additional funding will help provide the facilities with the necessary tools they need to protect our seniors.

I thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Gary Day, Majority Chairman

House Aging and Older Adult Services



Brett R. Miller, 41<sup>st</sup> Legislative District



Parke Wentling, 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



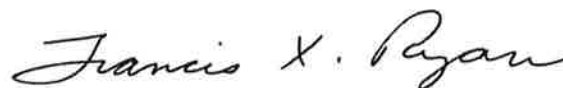
Mark Gillen, 128<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



Eric R. Nelson, 57<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



Mike Jones, 93<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District



Francis X. Ryan, 101<sup>st</sup> Legislative District

CC:

Teresa D. Miller, Secretary  
Department of Human Services

Dr. Rachel Levine, Physician General  
PA Department of Health