

November 24, 2020

Nearly 80 associations representing a wide range of constituencies – including advocates for children, nonprofits, the United Way, child care and academic facilities, the hospitality industry, small business and the medical community – sent the following letter to Gov. Tom Wolf urging him to sign into law H.B. 1737, legislation which includes temporary safe harbor protections against unwarranted COVID-19 related lawsuits for employers and organizations complying with public health guidelines.

A Copy of the Letter is Below:

To the Honorable Governor Tom Wolf:

On behalf of our organizations representing a broad range of industries and employers throughout Pennsylvania, we urge you to sign H.B. 1737 or allow it to become law. This bill provides the business, nonprofit, education, child serving provider and healthcare communities with temporary safe harbor from unwarranted lawsuits, while not precluding appropriate action against bad actors or those acting irresponsibly.

Healthcare professionals and facilities continue heroic efforts to treat COVID-19 patients and have been supported by manufacturers producing critical medical and personal protective equipment, at times reorienting entire operations. Other businesses, nonprofits, local governments, private child service providers and their employees have worked tirelessly during the pandemic to sustain communities; while other Pennsylvanians who had a successful company mere months ago have drained savings and are at risk of shuttering.

All share the prospect of an uncertain future and likely significant additional compliance costs to protect the health and safety of their employees, customers and the public. All also face the threat of unfair, opportunistic pandemic-related litigation and some Pennsylvania employers have already been targeted with unwarranted lawsuits.

For the foreseeable future, employers will be subject to strict workplace health and safety requirements and those who adopt these precautions should proceed with confidence knowing they will not be targeted with frivolous, and potentially devastating, litigation. On the other hand, those who act with gross negligence or disregard safety precautions should not be protected and we support robust enforcement against bad actors or irresponsible employers.

We appreciate your work and support up to this point and urge you to continue these efforts by providing temporary, targeted legal safe harbor for those operating in good faith and complying with relevant requirements. These protections will help employers survive, allow medical providers to direct their focus and resources to public health and are critical to facilitating an economic recovery.

Thank you.

American Academy of Pediatrics, Pennsylvania Chapter

American College of Medicine, Pennsylvania Chapter

American Institute of Architects, Pennsylvania

Associated Builders and Contractors of Pennsylvania

Associated Pennsylvania Constructors

Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania

Brewers of Pennsylvania

Broadband Cable Association of Pennsylvania

County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania

CrossState Credit Union Association

Energy Association of Pennsylvania

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids PA

First Up

General Contractors Association of Pennsylvania

Healthcare Council of Western Pennsylvania

Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania

Insurance Agents & Brokers

Insurance Federation of Pennsylvania

Keystone Contractors Association

LeadingAge PA

Life Sciences Pennsylvania

Manufacturer & Business Association

Mission: Readiness PA

National Federation of Independent Business

Pennsylvania Academy of Family Physicians

Pennsylvania Aggregates & Concrete Association

Pennsylvania Amusement Parks and Attractions

Pennsylvania Association for the Education of Young Children

Pennsylvania Association of Bed & Breakfast Inns

Pennsylvania Association of Community Bankers

Pennsylvania Association of Community Health Centers

Pennsylvania Association of Mutual Insurance Companies

Pennsylvania Association of Nonprofit Organizations

Pennsylvania Association of Realtors

Pennsylvania Bankers Association

Pennsylvania Builders Association

Pennsylvania Bus Association

Pennsylvania Campground Owners Association

Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry

Pennsylvania Child Care Association

Pennsylvania Children & Youth Administrators

Pennsylvania Chiropractic Association

Pennsylvania Coalition for Civil Justice Reform

Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges

Pennsylvania Council of Children, Youth & Family Services

Pennsylvania Council of General Contractors

Pennsylvania Dental Association

Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance

Pennsylvania Farm Bureau

Pennsylvania Food Merchants Association

Pennsylvania Head Start Association

Pennsylvania Health Care Association

Pennsylvania Homecare Association

Pennsylvania Institute of Certified Public Accountants

Pennsylvania Licensed Beverage and Tavern Association

Pennsylvania Manufactured Housing Association

Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association

Pennsylvania Medical Society

Pennsylvania Municipal League

Pennsylvania Orthopaedic Society

Pennsylvania Partnership for Juvenile Services

Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children

Pennsylvania Pharmacists Association

Pennsylvania Recreation Vehicle & Camping Association

Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association

Pennsylvania Retailers Association

Pennsylvania School Board Association

Pennsylvania Ski Areas Association

Pennsylvania State Alliance of YMCAs

Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs

Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors

Pennsylvania State Snowmobile Association

Pennsylvania Winery Association

Public Citizens for Children and Youth

Rehabilitation & Community Providers Association

Start Strong PA

Trying Together

United Way of Pennsylvania