

House of Representatives

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

August 1st, 2019

The Honorable Governor Tom Wolf
225 Main Capital Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor,

Today, is a chilling and sad day for many Pennsylvanians. The elimination of the General Assistance (GA) Program by Act 12 delivers a cruel blow to the more than 11,000 people that have been provided life-saving benefits under the program. We have been searching through a wide variety of possibilities to provide basic resources for this population to mitigate the damage that the program's elimination will have on their day-to-day lives; however, due to the danger that is immediately posed to the health and welfare of GA beneficiaries, we are asking that you utilize your power to declare a disaster emergency to coordinate the response of state agencies and bring additional resources to help this population.

We strongly believe that had you been given an opportunity to veto House Bill 33 without the additional budgetary implications that were loaded into the bill late in the process, you would have stood with GA recipients. But threatened with the loss of millions of dollars for our hospitals, we can understand why you couldn't exercise your veto power. However, there are other resources at your disposal to help lessen the harm and pain. A disaster declaration will help to bring the myriad departments and programs that exist to help these individuals into one planning room and implement a plan that will ensure the health, safety, and well-being of our most vulnerable.

The value of the GA program was the flexibility it offered to people that were desperately in need of basic resources. Housing, healthcare co-payments, transportation access, utility bills, toiletries, and other basic life necessities could be attained through the cash assistance. But it also makes putting the puzzle back together for how to help the individuals even more difficult. Each of these services is provided by a different agency or level of government. The opportunity provided by an emergency declaration is an organized response for data collection, data sharing, program coordination, and resource direction that does not currently exist in the daily operation of state government. Data sharing alone

has been a major hurdle for reaching out and coordinating a response, literally preventing counties from identifying residents that need assistance.

Much more will need to be done to assist former GA recipients in getting the assistance they need to keep their lives in order. We have heard story after story about how the GA program has lifted people out of poverty and turned their lives around. It has kept people in homes, provided life-saving healthcare, or transportation to get people access to care. We need to find a way to continue to help these people and an emergency declaration will help coordinate efforts to provide a timely and effective response. The opioid emergency declaration has proven your success in this approach and can be replicated here. We must uphold our obligation as public servants and work tirelessly to help and protect Pennsylvanians. We cannot walk away from these people, they need us.

We believe that your consideration of this request will continue a process of helping a vulnerable population that was started when the Supreme Court rightly reinstated the GA program. Please work with us to keep the movement afloat and prevent us from leaving these individuals behind.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Fiedler
184th Legislative District



Jason Dawkins
179th Legislative District



Melissa Shusterman
157th Legislative District



Morgan Cephas
192nd Legislative District



Dan Frankel
23rd Legislative District



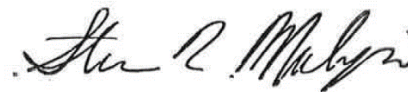
Danielle Friel Otten
155th Legislative District



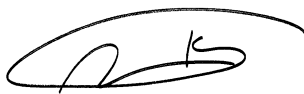
Dan Deasy
27th Legislative District



Perry Warren
31st Legislative District



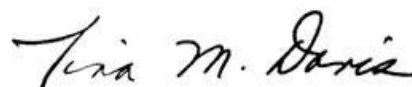
Steve Malagari
53rd Legislative District



Malcolm Kenyatta



Michael Sturla



Tina Davis

181st Legislative District



Sara Innamorato
21st Legislative District

96th Legislative District



Summer Lee
34th Legislative District

141st Legislative District



Kyle Mullins
112th legislative District



Liz Hanbidge
61st Legislative District



Greg Vitali
166th Legislative District



Mary Jo Daley
148th Legislative District



Wendy Ullman
143rd legislative District



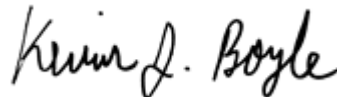
Margo Davidson
164th Legislative District



Christopher Rabb
200th Legislative District



Dan Williams
74th Legislative District



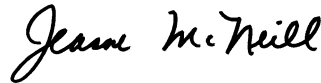
Kevin Boyle
172nd Legislative District



Ben Sanchez
153rd Legislative District



Maureen Madden
115th Legislative District



Jeanne McNeill
133rd Legislative District



Steve McCarter
154th Legislative District



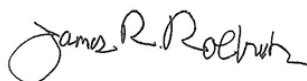
Stephen Kinsey
201st legislative District



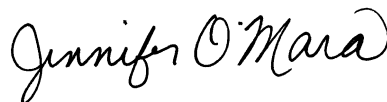
Christina Sappey
158th Legislative District



Dan Miller
42nd Legislative District



James Roebuck



Jennifer O'Mara



William Kortz

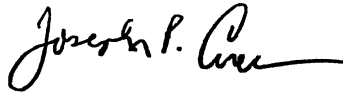
188th Legislative District

165th Legislative District

38th Legislative District



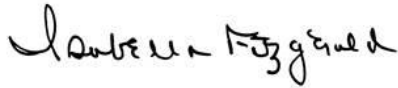
Mary Isaacson
175th Legislative District



Joseph Ciresi
146th Legislative District



Ryan Bizzarro
3rd Legislative District



Isabella Fitzgerald
203rd Legislative District



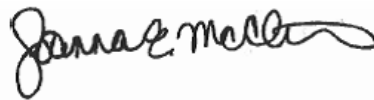
Brian Sims
182nd Legislative District



Adam Ravenstahl
20th Legislative District



Mike Zabel
163rd Legislative District



Joanna McClinton
191st Legislative District



Donna Bullock
195th Legislative District



Ed Gainey
24th Legislative District



Carolyn Comitta
156th Legislative District



Jordan Harris
186th Legislative District



Maria Donatucci
185th Legislative District



David Delloso
162nd Legislative District




Tim Briggs
149th Legislative District



Austin Davis



Movita Johnson-Harrell

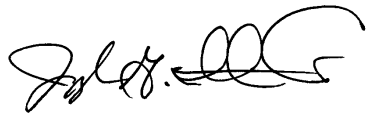


Danilo Burgos

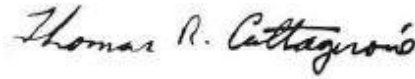
35th Legislative District

190th Legislative District

197th Legislative District



Joe Webster
150th Legislative District



Thomas Caltagirone
127th Legislative District



Brandon Markosek
25th Legislative District



Joseph Hohenstein
177th Legislative District