

FRANK BURNS, MEMBER
72ND LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

DISTRICT OFFICES:
535 FAIRFIELD AVE.
JOHNSTOWN, PA 15906
(814) 536-8400
FAX: (814) 533-2368
123 WEST HIGH ST.
EBENSBURG, PA 15931
(814) 472-8021
FAX: (814) 472-1965



House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

HARRISBURG OFFICE:
332 MAIN CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 202072
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120-2072
(717) 772-8056
FAX: (717) 772-9965

COMMITTEES

PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE, CHAIRMAN
NORTHWEST DELEGATION

September 8, 2026

Adam Kautzner, PharmD
President, Express Scripts and Evernorth Care Management
c/o Express Scripts, Inc.
1 Express Way
St. Louis, MO 63121

Re: Immediate Restoration of Medicaid Patient Access to Martella's Pharmacies

Dear Dr. Kautzner:

We are writing regarding the continued loss of pharmacy access for thousands of patients in western Pennsylvania who previously relied upon Martella's Pharmacies for prescription medications and related pharmacy services.

More than 13,000 patients lost access to Martella's when its network participation ended. For elderly, disabled and economically disadvantaged patients living in rural communities, the loss of a local pharmacy can become a significant barrier to receiving medications and maintaining continuity of care.

Penn Laurel Pharmacy in Central City has already closed. That closure demonstrates the very real consequences that prolonged network disruption can have in communities where pharmacy options are already limited.

The Pennsylvania General Assembly and Governor Shapiro acted to address this problem.

On July 12, 2026, Governor Shapiro signed Section 1610-T of the Fiscal Code, requiring an MCO or PBM to contract with an eligible qualified pharmacy that accepts the applicable reimbursement rates and quality standards. On August 24, the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services issued Operations Memorandum MCS-08-2026-011 directing MCOs and PBMs to immediately implement the law and permit qualifying pharmacies to join their networks.

Those actions were intended to protect pharmacy access throughout Pennsylvania, particularly in rural and underserved communities where independent pharmacies often provide services that cannot easily be replaced.

Express Scripts provided Jackie Martella with an official notice terminating Martella's participation in its pharmacy network, effective August 15, 2025. The one-year period following that termination expired on August 15, 2026. Accordingly, Jackie and Martella's Pharmacies should now be permitted to submit applications to rejoin the Express Scripts network, and those applications should be reviewed promptly under the requirements of Section 1610-T.

Express Scripts has also now begun the process of recruiting Martella's pharmacies back into its network. Martella's Ligonier Pharmacy was contacted by Express Scripts on August 18, and Martella's submitted the requested application on August 25. Express Scripts also contacted Martella's Boswell location on August 26.

This is a positive development. However, the Ligonier application remains under review without a defined timeframe for completion.

That continued uncertainty directly affects patients. Every additional week of delay matters to a senior citizen who depends upon prescription delivery, a person with a disability who cannot easily travel to another pharmacy, a Medicaid beneficiary without reliable transportation, or a rural family whose nearest alternative pharmacy may be many miles away. For these Pennsylvanians, pharmacy access is health care access.

Based upon the information presented to us, Martella's appears to satisfy the eligibility requirements established by Section 1610-T. Martella's accepts Medical Assistance reimbursement, is prepared to comply with applicable reimbursement rates and quality standards, and was not terminated for one of the statutory violations identified in Section 1610-T(b).

Accordingly, we are requesting that Express Scripts immediately provide the following:

1. A specific date on which review of Martella's pending applications will be completed.
2. A firm timetable for contracting, credentialing and network activation.

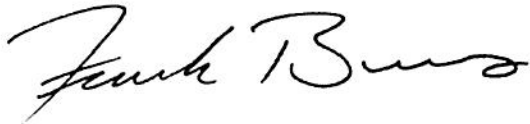
The General Assembly acted to address this patient-access problem. Governor Shapiro signed the legislation. DHS has now issued clear implementation guidance. The remaining obligation is to ensure that those protections reach the patients they were enacted to serve.

This should not become a prolonged administrative process while Medicaid beneficiaries, seniors, people with disabilities and rural residents continue to experience reduced access to medications and pharmacy services. The people affected by this issue are not simply names on a network list. They are patients who rely upon their community pharmacies as an essential part of their health care.

We therefore ask Express Scripts to move expeditiously to complete its review and respond to our questions above regarding a specific date by which review will be complete and a timetable for network activation.

We look forward to your prompt response and resolution of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Burns". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Frank" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Burns".

Frank Burns
State Representative
72nd Legislative District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew D. Bradford". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Matthew" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Bradford".

Matthew D. Bradford
Majority Leader
Pennsylvania House of Representatives

Cc: The Honorable Val Arkoosh, Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
Stephanie Smith Cooney, PharmD, Senior Director, Independent Pharmacy Affairs
ESI PBM Provider Operations