



MAIN CAPITOL BUILDING  
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120

April 23, 2020

Dr. Rachel L. Levine, MD  
Secretary of Health  
PA Department of Health  
625 Forster St., 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Secretary Levine:

Please accept this letter as a formal request for the Department of Health to allow hospitals and health systems in the Allegheny County area to reopen in a manner that both allows for the treatment of COVID-19 patients, but also does not continue the unnecessary restrictions for the pre-planned, medically necessary surgeries that are currently being prevented.

As you are aware, Allegheny County is unique in the Commonwealth with respect to the numerous hospitals located in the county and surrounding areas. The number of hospital beds are sufficient to respond to coronavirus and to treat those who are COVID-19 positive.

Additionally, Allegheny County is home to numerous other health care facilities that are currently not being utilized in the COVID-19 response. These outpatient, ambulatory facilities are prepared to take on cases for surgical procedures that are currently on hold simply because they have been designated as non-essential. These procedures, even though they can be pre-planned, are still urgent for the patients who have been waiting to reschedule their procedures.

I appreciate the deliberate process you have been using to start to open the Commonwealth to business. I want to highlight this very necessary piece of the economy that is unique and important to open. Hospital, and health care practitioners, are perfectly situated to provide these services in a safe and effective manner. Opening the ambulatory surgical facilities or select hospitals would not

stress the system and would provide needed relief to the health care providers who are facing furlough due to a reduction in their work.

I appreciate your prompt consideration of these matters and urge you not to further delay the closure of the hospitals and health care systems until May 8, 2020. I look forward to working with you on the financial viability of all hospitals and health care systems of the commonwealth.

Very truly yours,



Mike Turzai  
Speaker of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives  
Member, 28<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



Representative Robert Brooks  
54<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



Representative Natalie Mihalek  
40<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



Representative Jason Ortitay  
46<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



Representative Lori Mizgorski  
30<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



Representative Valerie Gaydos  
44<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



Representative Mike Puskaric  
39<sup>th</sup> Legislative District