

**CRAWFORD, MERCER, PARTS OF
ERIE AND WARREN COUNTIES**

- ☐ SENATE BOX 203050
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-3050
(717) 787-1322 • FAX (717) 772-0577
TTY (800) 364-1581
- ☐ 100 HADLEY ROAD, SUITE 9
GREENVILLE, PA 16125
(724) 588-8911 • FAX (724) 588-5464
TOLL FREE (800) 457-2040
- ☐ 16678 MCMATH AVENUE
MEADVILLE, PA 16335
(814) 337-8132 • FAX (814) 337-5055
- ☐ 99 ERIE STREET, SUITE 1
EDINBORO, PA 16412
(814) 734-2783 • FAX (814) 734-2789

MICHELE BROOKS
STATE SENATOR, 50TH DISTRICT



Senate of Pennsylvania

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April 2, 2020

The Honorable Tom Wolf
Governor of Pennsylvania
225 Main Capitol
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Secretary Rachel Levine, MD
Pennsylvania Department of Health
625 Forster Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Wolf and Secretary Levine:

Last week, the Legislature acted swiftly to pass several measures, enacted into law, to assist the Commonwealth in continuing to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. This legislation included much-needed funding for our health care system and medical workers serving in the front lines.

As part of this package, Act 10 provided up to \$50 million of additional funding for COVID-19 response efforts within our health care system. Specifically, this funding was earmarked for the purchase of urgently needed medical equipment and supplies for hospitals, nursing home facilities, and emergency medical services to fulfill rapidly escalating patient and staffing needs. As concerned lawmakers who represent large segments of rural Pennsylvania, we earnestly request that you give special and positive consideration to the needs of rural Pennsylvania, including our smaller independent hospitals and critical access hospitals. These facilities often operate with incredibly lean budgets, limited staff, and a fraction of the resources fueling major urban centers and vast integrated health care systems in metropolitan areas. Anticipating an expected surge in COVID-19 cases and critically ill patients in need of ventilators and intensive care, our smaller hospitals are likely to be overwhelmed, and we are committed to helping them proactively prepare. We strongly believe that our constituents deserve full access to state-of-the-art services for their basic health care needs, regardless of their location in Pennsylvania or their point of entry into our health care system.

As you assess the growing needs of this Commonwealth and consider the parameters by which you will strategically allocate these limited grant monies, we have joined together to maintain that strong consideration must be given to smaller rural settings and health care facilities, who are in desperate need of funding, staffing and equipment.

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We look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with you to ensure that every part of this Commonwealth has the ability to access the services, staffing, and supplies needed to combat COVID-19, and we thank you, in advance, for your attention to the pressing needs of rural Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,



Michele Brooks
Senator, 50th District



Judy Ward
Senator, 30th District



Camera Bartolotta
Senator, 46th District



Kim Ward
Senator, 39th District



Bob Mensch
Senator, 24th District



Elder Vogel
Senator, 47th District