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House of Representatives

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg

February 25, 2021

REPRESENTATIVE CURT SONNEY
4th Legislative District

COMMITTEES

MAJORITY CHAIRMAN,
EDUCATION

PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE

WEB:
REPSONNEY.COM

The Honorable Tom Wolf, Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Office of the Governor
508 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

The Honorable Secretary Alison Beam
Pennsylvania Department of Health
625 Forster Street, 8th Floor West
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

RE: COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

Dear Governor Wolf and Secretary Beam,

As Chair of the House Education Committee, and as members thereof, we write to request that you consider providing teachers in this great Commonwealth with access to the COVID-19 vaccine immediately upon exiting the 1A aspect of the plan. While the CDC acknowledges "there has been little evidence that schools have contributed meaningfully to increased community transmission" and data suggests children are not as severely impacted as adults, we understand that the professional education associations feel it is imperative to vaccinate their staff. If this is what is needed to get children back into the classroom to continue their education, we feel compelled to support their ask.

Additionally, we are concerned that the current pace of the rollout may delay the reopening of schools that are not currently providing in-person instruction, until the end of the academic year. Administrations on both the state and national level have called to safely reopen schools for in-person instruction. The CDC wrote keeping schools closed "could adversely affect students' academic progress, mental health, and access to essential services." Therefore, we look forward to working with your administration to safely reopen schools as soon as possible. The difficulties of remote learning, food distribution, mental health, and truancy are just a few of the issues that will set a significant number of our children back for years to come.

COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

February 25, 2021

Page 2

We ask that you work with the newly created COVID-19 Vaccine Joint Task Force to work on a specific plan to distribute vaccines to those in educational settings. We understand that when the polio vaccine was widely distributed within the education settings themselves by nurses in a structured way, that the result was very efficient and completed within a few days.

It is our hope that through these requests more schools that can reopen safely, joining many that thankfully and selflessly already have, for the sake of the children we are constitutionally bound to teach. Every county and school district is different, so “reopening” should happen at each individual school’s ability.

We appreciate any further dialogue that you may desire as we work together toward this endeavor.

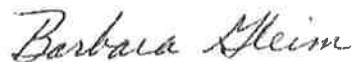
Respectfully,



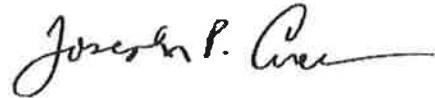
Majority Chairman Curt Sonney,
House Education Committee



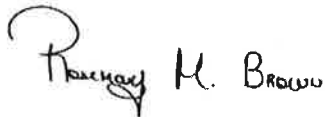
Minority Chairman Mark Longiotti,
House Education Committee



Representative Barbara Gleim
199th Legislative District



Representative Joe Ciresi
146th Legislative District



Representative Rosemary Brown
189th Legislative District



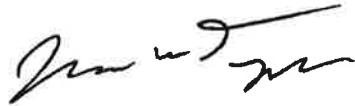
Representative Valerie Gaydos
44th Legislative District



Representative Joshua Kail
15th Legislative District



Representative Andrew Lewis
105th Legislative District



Representative Jesse Topper
78th Legislative District



Representative Michael Zabel
163rd Legislative District



Representative Patty Kim
131st Legislative District



Representative Tim Twardzik
123rd Legislative District



Representative Maureen Madden
115th Legislative District



Representative Carol Hill-Evans
95th Legislative District



Representative Craig Staats
145th Legislative District



Representative Napoleon Nelson
154th Legislative District