AN ACT

Amending the act of December 3, 1959 (P.L.1688, No.621),
etitled "An act to promote the health, safety and welfare of
the people of the Commonwealth by broadening the market for
housing for persons and families of low and moderate income
and alleviating shortages thereof, and by assisting in the
provision of housing for elderly persons through the creation
of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency as a public
corporation and government instrumentality; providing for the
organization, membership and administration of the agency,
prescribing its general powers and duties and the manner in
which its funds are kept and audited, empowering the agency
to make housing loans to qualified mortgagors upon the
security of insured and uninsured mortgages, defining
qualified mortgagors and providing for priorities among
tenants in certain instances, prescribing interest rates and
other terms of housing loans, permitting the agency to
acquire real or personal property, permitting the agency to
make agreements with financial institutions and Federal
agencies, providing for the purchase by persons of low and
moderate income of housing units, and approving the sale of
housing units, permitting the agency to sell housing loans,
providing for the promulgation of regulations and forms by
the agency, prescribing penalties for furnishing false
information, empowering the agency to borrow money upon its
own credit by the issuance and sale of bonds and notes and by
giving security therefor, permitting the refunding,
re redemption and purchase of such obligations by the agency,
proscribing remedies of holders of such bonds and notes,
exempting bonds and notes of the agency, the income
therefrom, and the income and revenues of the agency from
taxation, except transfer, death and gift taxes; making such bonds and notes legal investments for certain purposes; and indicating how the act shall become effective," in Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement Program, providing for the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Grant Program.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Article VI-D of the act of December 3, 1959 (P.L.1688, No.621), known as the Housing Finance Agency Law, is amended to by adding a section read:

Section 408-D. COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Grant Program.

(a) Purposes.--The agency shall establish a program to ensure that:

(1) Eligible low-income tenants can remain in their dwellings while their wages are either lost or reduced because of the COVID-19 pandemic between March 1, 2020, and December 30, 2020.

(2) Residential rental property owners can continue receiving a monthly rent payment to avoid costly tenant evictions and continue property maintenance and avoid foreclosure of their properties.

(b) Establishment.--The agency shall establish a program that provides funding, in the form of a block grant, to a single applicant, designated by each respective county, that has a prior record of managing a rental assistance fund. Each single applicant shall utilize the grant to aid owners of residential rental properties that have lost rental income because of the COVID-19 emergency.

(c) Caps.--Assistance to residential rental property owners shall be capped at 150% of fair market rent.

(d) Eligibility.--To receive assistance under this section,
the owner of a residential rental property must adhere to the following requirements:

(1) Agree to not evict prior to December 30, 2020, a tenant who occupies a rental property for which the owner seeks reimbursement for lost rental income.

(2) Agree to not increase the rent of the tenant prior to December 30, 2020.

(3) Agree to keep the rental unit of the tenant in good condition and in compliance with applicable municipal property codes.

(e) COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Account.--

(1) The COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Account is established as a restricted account in the Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement Fund. The money in the account is hereby appropriated to the agency on a continuing basis for the purposes specified in this section.

(2) Money in the account shall be expended only for relief due to reduced rental income because of the COVID-19 pandemic between March 1, 2020, and December 30, 2020.

(3) All unrestricted Federal emergency assistance funding provided to this Commonwealth that may be appropriated for such purposes, and all other money appropriated, credited or transferred to the account from any other fund or source by law shall be retained in and become part of the account.

(4) The account shall be used by the agency exclusively for the purpose of issuing grants under this section.

(f) Construction.--Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the Commonwealth from soliciting and
receiving grants, gifts or bequests for the account and
depositing them into the account according to law.

(g) Guidelines.--The agency shall establish rules and
guidelines to carry out the provisions of this section in an
expeditious manner.

Section 2. This act shall take effect immediately.