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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
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MEMORANDUM

To: All House Members

From: Representative Austin Davis

Date: December 8, 2020

Subject: Readjusting the School Health Services Reimbursement Rate

Our schools will be relying on nurses now more than ever since schools have returned to full or partial in-person instruction. Yet, many schools cannot afford to have a nurse in every building. Moreover, it has been nearly 30 years since Pennsylvania's per-student reimbursement rate for school health services was updated. Inflation from that time has grown 89.3 percent, which has caused the state's average reimbursement share to drop from 44 percent of costs in 1991 to about 18 percent of costs today. It is time for Pennsylvania to start paying its fair share for mandated health services and screenings.

To end the eroding state support for school health services and enable our schools to properly invest in nurses during this pandemic, I am introducing legislation to realign and annually adjust the reimbursement rates for school health services. My legislation will give schools the flexibility to apply these funds toward the health services where they are most needed as well as utilize the number of students in poverty as an equity component to lessen the nurse to student ratio disparities. Additionally, my bill will increase the transparency of this program by requiring the Department of Health to publicly post the distributions.

Please join me in co-sponsoring legislation to allow our schools to invest in school health services that will help keep our children safe during these unprecedented times.