

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
**Legislative Journal**

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2020

SESSION OF 2020 204TH OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

No. 12

**SENATE**

WEDNESDAY, April 15, 2020

The Senate met at 11:41 a.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore (Senator Joseph B. Scarnati III) in the Chair.

**PRAYER**

The following prayer was offered by Hon. MEGAN MARTIN, Secretary of the Senate:

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we come before You today to give You honor, glory, and praise through our words and our actions. We thank You for the opportunity to come and gather together this day. We ask for Your blessings on this Session of the Senate. We ask that You guide and direct our actions today so that they are full of wisdom, productivity, and respect for one another. Thank You for helping us to accomplish our work and our goals this day for the citizens of this great Commonwealth. Amen.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

(The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those assembled.)

**GENERAL COMMUNICATION**

**RECALL OF REGULAR SESSION**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore laid before the Senate the following communication, which was read by the Clerk as follows:

SENATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

April 14, 2020

TO: President and All Members of the Senate  
FROM: Senator JOE SCARNATI  
President Pro Tempore  
RE: Recall to Session  
Wednesday, April 15, 2020, 11:00 a.m.

Consistent with the recess motion made on April 7, 2020, the Senate is recalled for voting session on Wednesday, April 15, 2020, at 11:00 a.m.

**COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE GOVERNOR**

**RECALL COMMUNICATIONS  
REFERRED TO COMMITTEE**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore laid before the Senate the following communications in writing from His Excellency, the Governor of the Commonwealth, which were read as follows and referred to the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations:

**MEMBER OF THE PENNSYLVANIA  
COUNCIL ON AGING**

April 15, 2020

To the Honorable, the Senate  
of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

In accordance with the power and authority vested in me as Governor of the Commonwealth, I do hereby recall my nomination dated April 6, 2020, of Elise Claire Schell, 1500 North Sixth Street, Harrisburg 17102, Dauphin County, Fifteenth Senatorial District, for appointment as a member of the Pennsylvania Council on Aging, to serve until October 8, 2021, and until the successor is appointed and qualified, vice George Gunn, Lansdale, resigned.

I respectfully request the return to me of the official message of nomination on the premises.

TOM WOLF  
Governor

**MEMBER OF THE NAVIGATION COMMISSION  
FOR THE DELAWARE RIVER AND  
ITS NAVIGABLE TRIBUTARIES**

April 15, 2020

To the Honorable, the Senate  
of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

In accordance with the power and authority vested in me as Governor of the Commonwealth, I do hereby recall my nomination dated April 6, 2020, of Rebecca Dombrowsky, 669 Rockwood Drive, Elizabethtown 17022, Lancaster County, Thirty-sixth Senatorial District, for appointment as a member of the Navigation Commission for the Delaware River and its Navigable Tributaries, to serve for a term of four years, and until the successor is appointed and qualified, vice James McDermott, Philadelphia, resigned.

I respectfully request the return to me of the official message of nomination on the premises.

TOM WOLF  
Governor

COMMISSIONER OF PROFESSIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL AFFAIRS

April 15, 2020

To the Honorable, the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

In accordance with the power and authority vested in me as Governor of the Commonwealth, I do hereby recall my nomination dated April 6, 2020, of Thomas J. Yablonski, Jr., 1408 Rose Lane, Mechanicsburg 17055, Cumberland County, Thirty-first Senatorial District, for appointment as Commissioner of Professional and Occupational Affairs, to serve at the pleasure of the Governor, vice Ian Harlow, Harrisburg, resigned.

I respectfully request the return to me of the official message of nomination on the premises.

TOM WOLF Governor

MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF TEMPLE UNIVERSITY OF THE COMMONWEALTH SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

April 15, 2020

To the Honorable, the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

In accordance with the power and authority vested in me as Governor of the Commonwealth, I do hereby recall my nomination dated April 6, 2020, of Elise Claire Schell, 1500 North Sixth Street, Harrisburg 17102, Dauphin County, Fifteenth Senatorial District, for appointment as a member of the Board of Trustees of Temple University of the Commonwealth System of Higher Education, to serve until October 14, 2020, and until the successor is appointed and qualified, vice H.F. Gerry Lenfest, Huntingdon Valley, deceased.

I respectfully request the return to me of the official message of nomination on the premises.

TOM WOLF Governor

MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF TEMPLE UNIVERSITY OF THE COMMONWEALTH SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

April 15, 2020

To the Honorable, the Senate of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

In accordance with the power and authority vested in me as Governor of the Commonwealth, I do hereby recall my nomination dated April 6, 2020, of Elise Claire Schell, 1500 North Sixth Street, Harrisburg 17102, Dauphin County, Fifteenth Senatorial District, for appointment as a member of the Board of Trustees of Temple University of the Commonwealth System of Higher Education, to serve until October 14, 2022, and until the successor is appointed and qualified, vice the Honorable James Cawley, Newtown, resigned.

I respectfully request the return to me of the official message of nomination on the premises.

TOM WOLF Governor

HOUSE MESSAGES

SENATE BILL RETURNED WITH AMENDMENTS

The Clerk of the House of Representatives returned to the Senate SB 613, with the information the House has passed the same with amendments in which the concurrence of the Senate is requested.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Pursuant to Senate Rule 13(c)(2)(i), the bill will be referred to the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations.

HOUSE CONCURS IN SENATE AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL

The Clerk of the House of Representatives informed the Senate that the House has concurred in amendments made by the Senate to House amendments to SB 841.

BILLS INTRODUCED AND REFERRED

The PRESIDENT pro tempore laid before the Senate the following Senate Bills numbered, entitled, and referred as follows, which were read by the Clerk:

April 13, 2020

Senators ARNOLD, MUTH, MARTIN, BARTOLOTTA, SANTARSIERO, YAW, MENSCH, SCAVELLO, STEFANO and AUMENT presented to the Chair SB 1075, entitled:

An Act amending Titles 18 (Crimes and Offenses) and 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in minors, further providing for the offense of sexual abuse of children; and, in sentencing, further providing for sentencing for offenses involving sexual abuse of children.

Which was committed to the Committee on JUDICIARY, April 13, 2020.

Senators IOVINO, HUGHES, FARNESE, BREWSTER, FONTANA, MUTH, SANTARSIERO, SCHWANK, BAKER, A. WILLIAMS, MASTRIANO, BLAKE, COLLETT, LEACH, BOSCOLA, COSTA, STREET, KEARNEY, L. WILLIAMS and DINNIMAN presented to the Chair SB 1107, entitled:

An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in terms and courses of study, further providing for pandemic of 2020.

Which was committed to the Committee on EDUCATION, April 13, 2020.

Senators FARNESE, MUTH, SCHWANK, A. WILLIAMS, FONTANA, KEARNEY, TARTAGLIONE, COSTA, COLLETT, LEACH, BOSCOLA, STREET, HUGHES, BREWSTER, L. WILLIAMS, DINNIMAN and IOVINO presented to the Chair SB 1109, entitled:

An Act establishing public health emergency leave.

Which was committed to the Committee on LABOR AND INDUSTRY, April 13, 2020.

Senators K. WARD, PHILLIPS-HILL, COLLETT, REGAN, MARTIN, BAKER, STEFANO, ARGALL, BROOKS, DiSANTO, DINNIMAN, MASTRIANO, KILLION and ARNOLD presented to the Chair **SB 1110**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of April 23, 1956 (1955 P.L.1510, No.500), known as the Disease Prevention and Control Law of 1955, further providing for confidentiality of reports and records.

Which was committed to the Committee on HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, April 13, 2020.

Senators FARNESE, BREWSTER, FONTANA, MUTH, SCHWANK, A. WILLIAMS, BLAKE, COLLETT, LEACH, BOSCOLA, COSTA, STREET, KEARNEY, HUGHES, L. WILLIAMS and DINNIMAN presented to the Chair **SB 1111**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of April 6, 1951 (P.L.69, No.20), known as The Landlord and Tenant Act of 1951, in preliminary provisions, providing for effect of declaration of disaster emergency.

Which was committed to the Committee on URBAN AFFAIRS AND HOUSING, April 13, 2020.

April 15, 2020

Senators BLAKE, HUGHES, FARNESE, COLLETT, FONTANA, SANTARSIERO, SCHWANK, BREWSTER, GORDNER, A. WILLIAMS, DINNIMAN, COSTA, TARTAGLIONE and IOVINO presented to the Chair **SB 1113**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, in manufacturing and investment tax credit, providing for personal protective equipment retrofitting tax credit.

Which was committed to the Committee on FINANCE, April 15, 2020.

Senators HUGHES, KEARNEY, FONTANA, SANTARSIERO, TARTAGLIONE, BREWSTER, SCHWANK, ARGALL, DINNIMAN, BOSCOLA, LEACH, IOVINO, FARNESE, MASTRIANO, COLLETT, COSTA, MUTH and BLAKE presented to the Chair **SB 1114**, entitled:

An Act providing for coverage under business interruption insurance during the COVID-19 disaster emergency.

Which was committed to the Committee on BANKING AND INSURANCE, April 15, 2020.

Senators HUGHES, BLAKE, SANTARSIERO, FARNESE, FONTANA, SCHWANK, BREWSTER, DINNIMAN, COSTA, A. WILLIAMS, KEARNEY, STEFANO, TARTAGLIONE, MUTH and IOVINO presented to the Chair **SB 1115**, entitled:

An Act amending Title 64 (Public Authorities and Quasi-Public Corporations) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Commonwealth Financing Authority, further providing for First Industries Program.

Which was committed to the Committee on COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, April 15, 2020.

**RESOLUTION INTRODUCED AND REFERRED**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore laid before the Senate the following Senate Resolution numbered, entitled, and referred as follows, which was read by the Clerk:

April 13, 2020

Senators MASTRIANO, ARGALL, MENSCH, PITTMAN, STEFANO, J. WARD and PHILLIPS-HILL presented to the Chair **SR 323**, entitled:

A Concurrent Resolution terminating the disaster emergency declared in response to the cases of COVID-19 in Pennsylvania.

Which was committed to the Committee on VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, April 13, 2020.

**BILL SIGNED**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore (Senator Joseph B. Scarnati III) in the presence of the Senate signed the following bill:

**SB 841.**

**JOURNAL APPROVED**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Journal of the Session of February 3, 2020, is now in print.

The Clerk proceeded to read the Journal of the Session of February 3, 2020.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I move that further reading of the Journal be dispensed with and that the Journal be approved.

On the question,  
Will the Senate agree to the motion?

The yeas and nays were required by Senator CORMAN and were as follows, viz:

YEA-50

Argall	Dinniman	Leach	Stefano
Arnold	DiSanto	Martin	Street
Aument	Farnese	Mastriano	Tartaglione
Baker	Fontana	Mensch	Tomlinson
Bartolotta	Gordner	Muth	Vogel
Blake	Haywood	Phillips-Hill	Ward, Judy
Boscola	Hughes	Pittman	Ward, Kim
Brewster	Hutchinson	Regan	Williams, Anthony H.
Brooks	Iovino	Sabatina	Williams, Lindsey
Browne	Kearney	Santarsiero	Yaw
Collett	Killion	Scarnati	Yudichak
Corman	Langerholc	Scavello	
Costa	Laughlin	Schwank	

NAY-0

A majority of the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Journal is approved.

## CALENDAR

### SECOND CONSIDERATION CALENDAR

#### BILLS OUT OF ORDER

Without objection, the following bills on today's Calendar were called out of order by Senator CORMAN, as Special Orders of Business.

#### BILLS ON SECOND CONSIDERATION AND REREFERRED

**SB 1106 (Pr. No. 1626)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of June 28, 1935 (P.L.477, No.193), referred to as the Enforcement Officer Disability Benefits Law (Heart and Lung Act), further providing for disability benefits.

Considered the second time and agreed to,  
Ordered, To be printed on the Calendar for third consideration.

Upon motion of Senator CORMAN, and agreed to by voice vote, the bill just considered was rereferred to the Committee on Appropriations.

**HB 1869 (Pr. No. 3537)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 35 (Health and Safety) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in emergency medical services system, further providing for basic life support ambulances.

Considered the second time and agreed to,  
Ordered, To be printed on the Calendar for third consideration.

Upon motion of Senator CORMAN, and agreed to by voice vote, the bill just considered was rereferred to the Committee on Appropriations.

#### RECESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Centre, Senator Corman.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I request a recess of the Senate for purposes of off-the-floor committee meetings to be held here on the floor of the Senate, starting with the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations, and then followed by the Committee on Appropriations.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. For purposes of off-the-floor committee meetings of the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations, followed by the Committee on Appropriations, to be held here on the floor of the Senate, without objection, the Senate stands in recess.

#### AFTER RECESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The time of recess having

expired, the Senate will come to order.

### CONSIDERATION OF CALENDAR RESUMED

#### THIRD CONSIDERATION CALENDAR

##### BILLS OVER IN ORDER

**HB 64, HB 280, HB 355, SB 417, SB 462, SB 494, SB 679, SB 693, HB 716, SB 798, HB 1045, HB 1210, HB 1379, HB 1405, HB 1522 and HB 1907** -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

### SECOND CONSIDERATION CALENDAR RESUMED

##### BILLS OVER IN ORDER

**SB 207, SB 258, SB 284 and HB 342** -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

##### BILL LAID ON THE TABLE

**SB 531 (Pr. No. 566)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in general provisions, providing for findings regarding firearms and ammunition; and, in preemptions, providing for regulation of firearms and ammunition.

Upon motion of Senator CORMAN, and agreed to by voice vote, the bill was laid on the table.

#### SB 531 TAKEN FROM THE TABLE

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I move that Senate Bill No. 531, Printer's No. 566, be taken from the table and placed on the Calendar.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The bill will be placed on the Calendar.

##### BILLS OVER IN ORDER

**SB 565, SB 766, SB 784, SB 809, SB 954, SB 995 and HB 1174** -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

#### BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION AND REREFERRED

**HB 1796 (Pr. No. 3137)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of May 30, 1984 (P.L.345, No.69), known as the First Class City Business Tax Reform Act, further providing for definitions.

Considered the second time and agreed to,  
Ordered, To be printed on the Calendar for third consider-

ation.

Upon motion of Senator CORMAN, and agreed to by voice vote, the bill just considered was rereferred to the Committee on Appropriations.

### BILLS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE

Senator CORMAN, from the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations, reported the following bills:

**SB 327 (Pr. No. 1637)** (Amended) (Rereported) (*Concurrence*)

An Act amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175), known as The Administrative Code of 1929, providing for COVID-19 emergency statutory and regulatory suspensions and waivers reporting requirements, for COVID-19 debt cost reduction review and for COVID-19 Cost and Recovery Task Force; in powers and duties of the Department of General Services and its departmental administrative and advisory boards and commissions, providing for report of State facilities owned or leased; providing for COVID-19 county emergency mitigation plan for businesses; and making an appropriation.

**SB 613 (Pr. No. 1636)** (Rereported) (*Concurrence*)

An Act amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175), known as The Administrative Code of 1929, in administrative organization, repealing provisions relating to employees with access to Federal tax information and reenacting provisions relating to criminal history background checks of employees and contractors with access to Federal tax information; and providing for COVID-19 emergency mitigation plan for businesses.

### SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS SUPPLEMENTAL CALENDAR No. 1

#### BILL ON CONCURRENCE IN HOUSE AMENDMENTS

##### SENATE CONCURS IN HOUSE AMENDMENTS

**SB 613 (Pr. No. 1636)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175), known as The Administrative Code of 1929, in administrative organization, repealing provisions relating to employees with access to Federal tax information and reenacting provisions relating to criminal history background checks of employees and contractors with access to Federal tax information; and providing for COVID-19 emergency mitigation plan for businesses.

On the question,

Will the Senate concur in the amendments made by the House to Senate Bill No. 613?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Centre, Senator Corman.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I move that the Senate do concur in the amendments made by the House to Senate Bill No. 613.

On the question,

Will the Senate agree to the motion?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington, Senator Bartolotta.

Senator BARTOLOTTA. Mr. President, I rise today in support of Senate Bill No. 613. The Governor ordered the closure of all businesses not deemed, quote, "life sustaining," on March 16 in response to concerns about the spread of the coronavirus. Although a haphazard wavier system was eventually created for businesses that wished to remain open, that process lacked any sense of transparency or accountability to the public, not to mention a great deal of confusion among all Pennsylvanians. Senate Bill No. 613 would create a better process for protecting citizens' health and determining which businesses can safely continue to remain open, provide clarity on mitigation strategies necessary to protect the health and safety of both customers and employees, and give county leaders a stronger voice in which mitigation measures should be implemented locally. Specifically, Senate Bill No. 613 would require the Governor to create clear guidelines for businesses to operate during the COVID-19 pandemic. Businesses that are able to operate safely under the guidelines would be permitted to reopen as long as they comply with mitigation strategies. It would also require COVID-19 mitigation plans to be developed by the Wolf Administration based on the most recent guidelines issued by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and the U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA). The legislation, paired with Senate Bill No. 327, will put local communities in charge of when our neighbors can come back to work, not officials from other States. Adopting CDC standards will put health experts in charge, not State bureaucrats. This bill will allow county governments to develop and implement their own plans to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

Governor Wolf's arbitrary decision about what businesses are essential, and which are not, resulted in a quarter of the State's working population being unemployed. Over 1.2 million people are unemployed right now in Pennsylvania, leaving the State's unemployment compensation system severely overwhelmed. As a result, hundreds of thousands of displaced workers are struggling for hours on end and days to file claims, and tens of thousands more who are self-employed do not even have a way to file for new Federal benefits that were approved recently by Congress. As chair of the Committee on Labor and Industry, I know that we must, and we can, do better for our communities. They deserve better, and Senate Bill No. 613 will create a path forward that continues to protect the lives of vulnerable Pennsylvanians without sacrificing the livelihoods of more than a million workers. I urge my colleagues to cast an affirmative vote on Senate Bill No. 613.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Chester, Senator Dinniman.

Senator DINNIMAN. Mr. President, I am going to reserve my comments for a remonstrance, and so I will pass at this time.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Northampton, Senator Boscola.

Senator BOSCOLA. Mr. President, I offer these remarks in opposition to Senate Bill No. 613. I pride myself, as a legislator, on enacting and pursuing legislation that makes sense. I do believe that more businesses can be operating at this time while abiding by appropriate social distancing guidelines and requiring

employers to provide appropriate protective equipment to employees, which is why I offered an amendment in the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations to narrow the scope of Senate Bill No. 613. This bill, at the time, Senate Bill No. 613, goes too far for this day and this time, and it does not protect employees enough.

Mr. President, I do want to safely and incrementally open up certain businesses here again in Pennsylvania. I have looked at other businesses that are operating in other States and I believe we can, and should, be allowing more. Why, for instance, in New Jersey can real estate agencies and car dealerships operate with appropriate regulations in place, but in Pennsylvania we cannot? Why can we have landscapers working here, but not residential home construction? And why can Home Depot and Lowe's operate, but a garden center cannot? These inconsistencies are concerning, but more importantly, how are we going to recover? It puts us at an economic recovery disadvantage even to our other States. If these businesses can operate in surrounding States with appropriate safeguards, they can operate here in Pennsylvania. We must act in a responsible manner in a way that makes sense for people.

While Senate Bill No. 613 certainly goes over the top, to do nothing is equally bad policy. We can open more segments of our economy and get people working again safely and responsibly. We cannot limp along requiring every business in Pennsylvania to apply for a waiver and hope for the best. There has to be middle ground here between us, one that can be supported in a bipartisan manner. Pennsylvania deserves representatives who set aside their partisanship and scoring political points. They deserve legislation that is rooted in common sense and will help our economy claw back. I am willing to work with any of my Senate colleagues, and you know this, I always have, to put forward a sound plan to open those parts of the economy that we believe can function with appropriate protection for Pennsylvania workers and citizens.

My guiding principle remains, as it always has been, does it make sense? Senate Bill No. 613 in its current form does not make sense at this time, but I am confident we can craft something that does. It is up to us, as Senators, to work together toward that end.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Farnese.

Senator FARNESE. Mr. President, I rise to state my objections to Senate Bill No. 613. If we have learned a couple of lessons from this pandemic, the coronavirus pandemic of 2020, number one, is that Dr. Levine's leadership and guidance through this pandemic is a true asset to the Commonwealth, and, number two, is that sick people should stay at home and not be at work. The reference that the unemployment situation right now in Pennsylvania has anything to do with how the Governor rolled out his mitigation plan, or any of the plans at the State level, are just unfounded. One of the supporting arguments, Mr. President, in support of Senate Bill No. 613 was the fact that some parts of the State were not being as affected as other parts of the State; in certain parts of the State cases were not as prominent as they were in others, like Philadelphia. But the point that nobody is really getting to, Mr. President, is it could be precisely because

of the guidelines that are in place right now, and the fact that the stay-at-home orders and the restrictions that are in place right now, that is the reason why other parts of the State have not been affected and the virus is not as prominent as it is. If we do not continue to follow the directions of Governor Wolf and Secretary Levine, there is a real serious concern of that happening. If we have areas of the State right now where there are not a lot of cases, it could certainly be because of the measures that have been in place, and they need to stay in place.

Again, on Senate Bill No. 613 and the pieces that were put in, or at least the amendments that were tried to be put in by myself and others, specifically, the paid sick leave, no health expert would dispute that no employer who cares about his or her employees and his customers should encourage anything else. We need to do this. Philadelphia did this a few years ago. There was heartburn at the State level, some folks tried to preempt it, but the truth is that if it was in place today--in Philadelphia it is in place, and because of that, 200,000 Philadelphians right now have protection under paid sick leave because we did it. If we had it in place today, right now, across the Commonwealth, we would have protection for people who need it the most. So, again, I am going to be voting "no" on this bill, and I ask my colleagues to support me on that.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Dauphin, Senator DiSanto.

Senator DiSANTO. Mr. President, the Governor's business closure order and waiver process has been unfair and inconsistent from the beginning. He has rejected efforts by the legislature, business community, and labor organizations over the past 4 weeks to allow reasonable and responsible operations to continue. His extreme approach has forced more than 1.3 million Pennsylvanians out of work so far, put businesses at risk of permanent closure, and imperiled the long-term health of Pennsylvania residents and our economy.

Today's action by the Pennsylvania State Senate would, if signed by the Governor, bring much-needed fairness and consistency and a new level of transparency to the business closure rules. I encourage everyone to reach out to the Governor's Office and encourage him to support this legislation and begin implementing it immediately. Other States and countries have been able to maintain additional business activities and employment, and Pennsylvanians must be afforded the same freedom to take appropriate precautions about their lives and livelihood. This legislation is optional for business owners, employees, and customers. If someone does not want to follow applicable safety protocols and open their businesses, work, or shop, they should not. Pennsylvanians can allow businesses to operate safely, and at the same time continue to support our healthcare system and frontline emergency responders. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Montgomery, Senator Collett.

Senator COLLETT. Mr. President, I rise today to offer comments to Senate Bill No. 613. Like many of you, my staff and I have spent the past month working with constituents facing unimaginable challenges. Every day, I know that the people in my district and across the Commonwealth wake up scared. Scared that they or their loved ones will get sick; scared that they will

not be able to pay their rent or buy groceries; and scared that they will have no choice but to go to work in warehouses, offices, and job sites that they know are not equipped with the equipment and resources necessary to protect their safety. While those advocating for the passage of Senate Bill No. 613 vow that businesses will provide the PPE needed to keep their employees safe from this deadly virus, there is no question that masks, gloves, and other protective equipment are in short supply, and that those supplies must go to our frontline caregivers first and foremost.

Like you, there is nothing I want more than to offer Pennsylvanians a return to normalcy and a return to economic stability, but I cannot, in good conscience, vote for a bill that disregards the recommendation of the nation's top medical and public health experts. As a nurse, I believe it would violate my duty of care to support a bill that our State's top health official, Dr. Rachel Levine, says, quote, "would be reckless and irresponsible," and, quote, "place more lives at risk." Make no mistake, the outcome of today's vote will cost or save lives, and we must save lives before we can save livelihoods. I do not wish to keep businesses closed a day longer than necessary. I have the greatest respect for the hardworking men and women in the construction industry, and it breaks my heart to have to make this choice, but as a nurse, I know that if this shot will save your life, I am not going to withhold it just because you do not want to feel the pinch.

Until we further flatten the curve, until we have adequate supplies of tests and concrete plans to expand testing, until we address the shortages of personal protective equipment, not just in our hospitals but in our nursing homes, physicians' offices, pharmacies, grocery stores, and on public transportation, and until the medical and public health experts agree, we are not ready. We cannot afford to be wrong here when the price is our families' and our community members' lives. I will be voting "no" on this bill today, Mr. President, and I urge my Senate colleagues to make the choice that we all know will save lives and join me in voting "no."

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Philadelphia, Senator Tartaglione.

Senator TARTAGLIONE. Mr. President, I rise to highlight some measures that are conspicuously missing from the current version of Senate Bill No. 613 - provisions that we proposed earlier today in committee as part of an omnibus amendment and would have provided vital emergency relief for the many Pennsylvania workers and their families during this unprecedented health crisis. Speaking of Pennsylvanians who work at food processing and protein plants, those who work in grocery stores and drug stores, as well as nurses, doctors, EMTs, police, firefighters, pharmacists, and so many others who are working on the front lines of this pandemic, the mere fact that these folks continue to work, day in and day out, is a testament to their dedication to their jobs and to the essential nature of their work.

The language I proposed would have formally designated those who work at food processing and protein facilities, as well as those who work at grocery stores and drug stores, throughout the Commonwealth as essential and frontline employees for all matters including, but not limited to, childcare, workplace safety, and paid leave. It would have required employers to adopt small robust social distancing standards, including the allocation of

more space for employee break and meal periods, staggering start times and break times, and the reduction of meetings and training group sizes. Among other social distancing requirements, the amendment would have reduced the frequency of reassignment for temporary employees among different facilities. It also would have limited the number of outside visitors to the workplace to further reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure. It would have required employers to increase the frequency and thoroughness of cleaning in all facilities, while allowing employees more time to wash hands and sanitize. It would have guaranteed that employees who are forced to leave their jobs due to illness or quarantine would continue to receive full, regular financial compensation, and would get to keep their prior health coverage. It would have guaranteed the right of these workers to take leave without sanction or penalty to care for a family member or a child during this emergency.

If an employee tests positive in a workplace, the amendment would have required employers to follow specific, immediate protocols for sanitizing the workplace and for granting paid leave to other potentially exposed employees at their regular rate of pay. The amendment would have required employers to post and communicate these policies and protocols in the language spoken by employees to insure that workers are able to understand these protections. In addition, the amendment would have mandated additional cleaning and personal hygiene protocols for grocery and drug stores, including reduced hours of operation, increased spacing for active checkout stations, and scheduling for handwashing breaks.

Last, but not least, my language would have provided essential workers who test positive for COVID-19 with a presumption of workers' compensation eligibility so that they would not have to prove where they contracted the virus. The reality is, in today's environment, exposure to this virus is an occupational hazard for workers in essential occupations. Therefore, COVID-19 must be classified as an occupational disease. Each day, more and more essential workers are exposed to COVID-19 and are testing positive for the virus. Mr. President, time is of the essence. We must act now to help them. All essential workers and their families should be incredibly disappointed that the Senate is not advancing legislation to give them this critical emergency relief. I ask for a negative vote.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Montgomery, Senator Mensch.

Senator MENSCH. Mr. President, I do not believe there is a legislator in the House, the Senate, Republican or Democrat, who wishes ill for any of our workers, for any of our citizens, but there is a real reality out there that we have gone a little bit too far in some of our regulations and controls over who can work and who cannot work, and the amendment from the House in Senate Bill No. 613 begins to provide some more judicious management of the process. Mr. President, we want people to stay at home. We do not want to spread the coronavirus, but do you know who is staying at home? More than 1.3 million new unemployed, sitting on the couch with no paycheck. That is what we are doing to our economy right now, Mr. President. There has got to be a compromise between where we are and where some people suspect the Republicans want to take this. I do not believe

the Republicans want to take this as far as is being insinuated in much of the debate here today. I believe that we want to give greater structure around the authority and begin to have more transparency. This is an administration that, for 6 years, has argued for transparency and now does not want to share any of the data. I find that kind of incredulous, and I think that we have to begin to force the administration to work with us and begin to manage this much more practically.

Mr. President, over the weekend there were 13 countries in Europe that their legislatures wrote a joint letter to their collective CEOs, chief executive officers of the government, suggesting that they were concerned. They, the legislature, were concerned that the chief executives were taking too much power in this crisis. That is a sentiment that I hear all of the time. We have talked about the emails that we get, so many of the emails that I receive are speaking to the fact that the Governor is empowered to act way too unilaterally in this process. So I believe that we need to put some curbs or bumpers around this, as the terminology in the legislature often goes. I also want to point out, Mr. President, an article today that was in the morning news from *The Economist* magazine, certainly not a conservative publication by any stretch. They are citing that in France and India, they have extended shutdowns, so there are some countries that are doing that. They also said that in Italy and Austria they are now beginning to loosen restrictions. Italy, we all know what we were hearing about the death rate in Italy. They also suggest that Spain has people back at work. China has people back at work.

So there is a more practical reality to this problem, and that is that we can evolve forward with this if we do it with the proper management, the proper structure. CDC, Homeland Security, they provide great guidance in this regard. Many of the other States in our nation are doing that. A previous speaker spoke about car dealers that are effectively working in New Jersey. Being from the southeast, we are losing customers right now, I can tell you that. I can show you the emails. But we are losing people who are going to other States to do business. We have people who are going to Delaware to buy their booze. We have way too many constraints on this process that, Mr. President, would make sense if we could lift some of these and move forward.

Earlier today, also, there was a forecast by the IMF, or the International Monetary Fund, suggesting that the world economy has now slipped about 3 percent. Their caution is that if we slip any further, it would be as bad as the Great Depression. When we had the Great Depression, we had one-third of the people in America than we have today, and we were a manufacturing nation. Here we are now a service nation, Mr. President, which will require a longer time to recover, and we are risking a Great Depression. I think the reality here is that we need to do something for our economy, for our people, help these people get back to work. Someone said earlier, citizens are scared. Yeah, they are scared. They are scared that they cannot pay for their mortgage, or they are afraid they cannot buy food, they are afraid they cannot put their kids in school. There is a great deal of concern in our country, Mr. President, right now, and in our State, for the economic situation that people have been boxed into. Nothing they did, but they are being asked to suffer immensely in their personal lives when we, the legislature, can begin to work with

them and provide some greater guidance and put some greater control over the unilateral power that the Governor has assumed in this case.

So, Mr. President, I ask for an affirmative vote on Senate Bill No. 613. Thank you very much.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Bucks, Senator Santarsiero.

Senator SANTARSIERO. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to Senate Bill No. 613. We are in the midst of a pandemic, the likes of which none of us has ever experienced before. It truly has upended not only our State, but all of the States, and not only the United States, but the entire world. Now, early on, the goal across this country was to try to contain the virus. Unfortunately, the slow and ineffective response of the Federal administration made that goal impossible. So quickly it shifted to mitigation, and again, because of some of the problems at the Federal level, many of the States had to take the leading oar in mitigating the spread of this virus. Governor Wolf and our administration here in Pennsylvania took the bull by the horns and led, ultimately shutting down the State.

Now, as many of the speakers before have said, I will echo, we are all sympathetic to the businesses that have been shuttered, to the workers who have been put on the unemployment rolls, to the families who are wondering about what the future holds. These are serious issues, and there needs to be a serious and robust response to make sure that we can get the economy moving again when the time is right. That needs to be a response at the Federal level, as we have seen with the various stimulus bills that have been passed already, and even here in Pennsylvania with some of the measures that this legislature and the Governor's administration have undertaken. But the first order of business before any of that has to be that we protect the public health and we save lives. Public health experts and the medical experts here in Pennsylvania and across the country have repeatedly said that unless we do our work to flatten the curve, our healthcare systems are going to be overwhelmed, and when that happens, people die. We saw what happened in other countries, in Italy and Spain, for example, and even here in the United States in New York, where the effects of the virus have been most pronounced because of the density of population. Hospitals throughout the city of New York were overwhelmed. Even now, the death toll is staggering in that State.

So far, we have been able to avoid the worst of that here in Pennsylvania precisely because Governor Wolf instituted a broad lockdown of the State. Now, it is true that the rate of increase of new cases seems to be leveling off for the time, and if, indeed, that trend continues, then it is an example of the fact that the mitigation that has been undertaken to date has been successful. This is not a time, however, in reaction to that news, to take our foot off the pedal. All of the health experts, including Dr. Levine, as was previously mentioned, have made it clear that if we were to broadly open up business in Pennsylvania, as is contemplated and would happen under Senate Bill No. 613, we would see a spike in new cases. Everything we have done over the last 3 or 4 weeks to prevent that from happening would be undone, and not only would that be a public health catastrophe, but economically it would set us back months, because, once again, we would have



to go into a broad lockdown. God only knows how long that would take as a consequence of the fact that we would now have a healthcare system that is overwhelmed.

Now, the Governor has decided, I think rightly, to join with other States here in the northeast on putting together a plan that will be informed by medical science and healthcare professionals as to how we can slowly reopen our economy when the time is right. Why work with those other States? Because our economy and, in fact, our people are intertwined with those other States, and it makes sense that we coordinate our efforts with them. Now, I know some of my colleagues have stated, well, why are you not choosing other border States like Ohio and West Virginia? That is not a question for Governor Wolf, that is not a question for this General Assembly, that is a question for those States, ultimately. They have to make the decision as to whether they are going to act in unison with us and our neighbors. But, ultimately, that plan will enable Pennsylvania, as the health crisis begins to stabilize, to slowly and deliberately open sectors of our economy in a way that gets people back to work while at the same time protecting public health and safety. Now, this is not going to be easy, and I do not know what the new normal will be even when we start to do those reopenings, but what is clear to me is that we cannot get this wrong. We cannot simply decide that we are going to do a broad reopening of businesses right now and risk the consequences that can occur to both the health and, ultimately, to the lives of many Pennsylvanians. To get that wrong is not just a mistake that we make legislatively or in the economy, it is a mistake, ultimately, that could have an impact on whether people live or whether they die. This is not the time to do this. We can take a much more methodical and deliberate approach. We can do the right thing both for the health and safety of our constituents as well as the health and safety of our economy in the long run. It is going to take a concerted effort, but it can be done.

I urge that all of us vote against Senate Bill No. 613. There is a better way to go about what we are trying to do here, and this is not it. This is not the time to let up on the pedal. This is not the time to jeopardize public health and safety. This is the time to stand with the Governor, to stand with Secretary Levine, and make sure that we give our frontline medical and health workers the time that they need to treat people, and, ultimately, then begin to open the economy again and get people back to work and provide them with all the resources and all the benefits and support that they need to do that. We can do that together, Democrat and Republican. Now is not the time to risk the lives of the people of Pennsylvania.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Lancaster, Senator Martin.

Senator MARTIN. Mr. President, I rise today asking my colleagues to support Senate Bill No. 613, because I want to offer the people of Pennsylvania who are worried about their health, I want to offer the people of Pennsylvania who are worried about their livelihoods more than sympathies, more than at-a-boys, it is to address the confusion, the chaos, the favoritism, and lack of transparency that has been implemented in this shutdown. Make no mistake about it, Mr. President, people would like you to think that the idea that either one side wants to have health and

the other side wants our economy to pick up, they are not mutually exclusive goals. We are the ones in our home community who are looking at folks in our face who say, I have settled on one house but I cannot move into my other, I have nowhere to live. What do I do? Or, I am stuck with two mortgages, what do I do? We are the ones with constituents who see every State surrounding us allowing construction, allowing auto sales, and allowing other types of business saying, why are we different? We are the ones who have to come up with the answer. I am looking at the State's e-commerce portal today and I see a solicitation by the administration for two Ford Expeditions Limited posted on April 10 with solicitations due by April 17. Who is supposed to bid on that? Ohio? West Virginia? They are allowed to do that.

I give amazing kudos to the folks who are out there right now operating within the safety guidelines, whether it is the butcher down the street from me, whether it is Weis Markets up the street, whether it is the True Value that is open and selling supplies and seeing all of the amazing things that the private sector is implementing in terms of safe guidelines not only for its employees, but for the customers who come through their door. This discussion does not have to be about things that are mutually exclusive. I have homes waiting to be finished for construction so families can move in. We have 1.3 million Pennsylvanians who no longer can work, who are trying to get through in order to apply for unemployment compensation and cannot get an answer. Do you know what scares me about that? Not only people who are not getting money to take care of themselves, but yesterday I was sent pictures of this wonderful food bank in Lancaster County called Blessings of Hope. They provide 3 million to 4 million pounds of food every month to those who are in need. Yesterday, I was sent the pictures of an empty warehouse. They are completely panicking because the supply chain is broken, they realize that farmers, dairy folks, and everyone else who are completely disjointed are dumping food, there is no way to transport it, they cannot have their normal people operating with them. We have so much to fix in order to make these two goals happen.

What this would do, in Senate Bill No. 613, is be transparent, which if there is a single person in this body or the Chamber across the hall that says that this process has been fair and transparent, they are kidding themselves. As I look at my district at two different employers who do the exact same thing, one gets a waiver, the other does not, how am I to answer that? To the thousands of my employers who never even got a response back, to the fact that they allowed Penn Manor High School to continue with their \$100 million construction project in order to be able to have school on time in August, yet they denied Saint John Newman and the elementary school that is being built that is faced with the same timelines to start school in August. Is that consistency? Is that fair? We have had individuals go through every single State's guidelines in terms of what they are operating for. We have discovered 45 States that are operating under the Centers for Disease Control and the CISA guidelines - transparent, gives good guidance, does not pick winners and losers, and gives people the comfort of safety and health recommendations that they can operate for their employees and for their customers.

I appreciate the efforts and I know the Governor's intentions were very well intended in terms of wanting to flatten that curve

and that spike and its impact on our healthcare system, but it is time for him to coordinate with us, it is time for him to also stand with the people of Pennsylvania who always ask me the question, I could have five baristas standing in a Starbucks who are practicing--and God bless them--amazing safety protocols in doing their job in this tight little section of Starbucks, but they want to know why we cannot trust the people of Pennsylvania who may work in construction to follow the same social distancing practices and to do their jobs safely. Yes, they want to be safe, but, yes, they also want to work.

In closing, Mr. President, I will just say this. We have a responsibility here in this Capitol to take care of the folks who need help, who have been unemployed, who have been impacted by this. We all know that our systems are tremendously overwhelmed, and we all know the massive budget hole that we are faced with. It is another motivation. We need those revenues. We need people to be able to do residential real estate, to be able to do construction, to do online auto sales. That also generates tax revenue that we are going to turn around and also fund programs that are going to help people during these times. So if you stand for transparency, if you stand for wanting to make sure people are healthy, and if you want to stand to insure that we can do this and get our economy going again at the same time, I ask you and my colleagues to please support Senate Bill No. 613.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Montgomery, Senator Muth.

Senator MUTH. Mr. President, I rise today with immense concern for the people of our Commonwealth and, therefore, in opposition of Senate Bill No. 613, allowing businesses to reopen without adequate testing, which means mass testing of the people of our Commonwealth. We have yet to test 1 percent of our population. The numbers reported that are low in some of the counties that have not been hit, like mine, are because we do not have access to test kits. We do not have the ability to mass test. This virus is everywhere. This virus does not have a cure, does not have a vaccine. There is no township, State, borough, or country, for that matter, on this earth that has the capacity to provide a solution to stop it from killing people. In the absence of having adequate supplies - not just test kits, but protective equipment and cleaning supplies - it is virtually impossible to safely operate businesses and keep both workers and our communities safe. I have yet to hear from anyone who wants to open the flood gates, which, of course, is a flawed, lacking transparency process with waivers. I have yet to hear the plan as to how we are going to provide workers, and each person in this Commonwealth, with the adequate protection so they are not harmed by this virus.

I get it. I have lots of constituent inquiries. Our in-box is full. The 44th Senatorial District was the first hard-hit district in this Commonwealth, taking out entire police departments for me. I had six veterans die in the same veterans home this week. I would love to know how many of my colleagues are able to identify how many people in their county have actually been tested. How many people know how widespread this virus is? We do not know, and that is step one to insuring we have a safe return for businesses and for schools to reopen. I cannot explain to my constituency why there is a pipeline being drilled in their backyard that is deemed essential when it is supposed to allow natural

gas liquids to be used to make plastics overseas and how that is essential. I get it. I fight those waivers too. The answer is not to give everybody access to do whatever they want in the absence of protections.

I am offended that there are Members of this General Assembly who want to talk about the lengths of food pantry lines when we have failed to raise the minimum wage, when we have had Members of this Senate vote to gut the General Assistance program. Putting people back to work and rejuvenating an economy, that is doable. We cannot bring people back from the dead. That is impossible. While we have this back and forth, losing customers is nothing compared to losing lives. Explain that to the families who are in your districts who are going to, if they have not already, have deaths because of this virus. There is no stopping it, that is why we have no alternative but to stay at home and social distance. Construction companies taking away supplies that are not available for our nurses, that are not available for our frontline workers, is unacceptable. We do not have these resources yet. In the absence of a plan to acquire these resources, reopening businesses is negligent. Harm will happen. It will increase. Death numbers will increase. We know this. There is no compromise when we are dealing with a life-threatening virus that does not have a cure, that does not have a vaccine. The economic frustrations we all share, the solutions to those cannot entail allowing more people to die from this virus.

Do not make this virus partisan. It is not. It kills Republicans, Democrats, Independents, and everyone else. So I urge a "no" vote. I urge that we come back and visit this. I urge public investment in our health system. We are one of the worst-ranked States in the nation for our State investment in our public health structure. I do not know any infectious disease experts in our Senate. So if I missed that, I would appreciate your feedback, but otherwise, we cannot, as a single body, make decisions about people's health and well-being. There are people who are able to help guide us to make these decisions. If we have the effort to make that plan work, it does work. But do not tell me about CDC guidelines that are cherry-picked when a major CDC guideline was to allow for vote-by-mail. Instead, we prefer to pack polling locations. Do not make this partisan. There are people looking to every single one of us to get our act together and save lives.

Transparency during a pandemic is imperative, I wholeheartedly agree. Waiver processes, none of this is going to be perfect. In the absence of a vaccine, we cannot open the flood gates to allow this to spread further than it already has. I ask for a "no" vote today, and I ask for all of us to come back and have this conversation about a real plan and work with the administration and work with health experts to establish that plan and implement that plan.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from York, Senator Phillips-Hill.

Senator PHILLIPS-HILL. Mr. President, I rise to express my strong support for Senate Bill No. 613. I look around the Senate Chamber and I see some of my colleagues wearing masks, gloves, and protective gear. Some of my colleagues are voting via ZOOM meeting because of unprecedented rules that this body had to pass to address a worldwide pandemic. We are seeing frontline employees being demanded to be there because they

are essential. They are risking their lives to go to and from their places of employment to care for others, and we are grateful. We are so very grateful for healthcare workers, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, delivery drivers, grocery and convenience store employees, nursing home staff, first responders, police, firefighters, and emergency medical staff. So many brave men and women who are continuing to keep the essential services running in our Commonwealth and all across our country. This truly is a national crisis.

This past weekend, those of us of the Christian faith, we celebrated one of the holiest of holidays on our calendars, but it was without family, friends, and loved ones. Yes, the sacrifices that we had to make this weekend to cancel traditions we have held dear for so many years pale in comparison to the sacrifices our essential workforce have made each and every day during this pandemic. Today's action by the Senate is an attempt to bring well-thought-out, nationally-normed Federal guidelines to assure safety to our Commonwealth. In fact, as referenced by my good colleague from Lancaster County, 45 other States in our nation follow these Federal guidelines devised by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency of the United States Department of Homeland Security under the CDC's standards for the health and safety of our citizens.

Now, the Governor has expressed his desire for collaboration. While I may disagree with collaborating with elected officials in other States, States like Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Delaware, New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, I note that the majority of these States are implementing the guidelines that we are debating here today, and, as a matter of fact, the States that are not, they have many more businesses open in their States. So you could say that this legislation would simply put Pennsylvania on level ground with all of the States that the Governor would like to collaborate with to reopen our Commonwealth for business.

I agree that during this national crisis that we need more collaboration. I am hearing from women and men who are adversely impacted by the shutdown, hardworking Pennsylvanians, employees and employers, small business owners, and independent contractors. We need to collaborate with them. They could easily operate under CISA guidelines and CDC standards, but because our Commonwealth has implemented an arbitrary and opaque list, as opposed to a systematic and transparent list, they cannot operate or they risk punishment. Their very livelihoods are on the line and they are forced to remain unemployed or shuttered. Meanwhile, we have big-box stores that can operate. Questions come up over and over again, what can be open? What cannot be open? I am sure I am not alone having to answer and clarify what the Governor's life-sustaining list includes and does not include. Let me be clear, every business is life sustaining. Every business employs people and helps them to put roofs over their heads, meals on their tables, and clothing on their backs.

On Monday, I had to deal with a local crisis created by the Governor's arbitrary list. The Governor's non-life-sustaining list included a vendor that the county of York uses called Vigilnet America, LLC. For those of you who do not know, Vigilnet is the York County Court's primary vendor for electronic monitoring of defendants, both pretrial and post-conviction, who would otherwise be incarcerated. They were ordered to shut down because they were denied a waiver by the administration. If Vigilnet shuts

down, the York County Court will have little choice but to return these defendants to the county prison, 500 inmates in total. Meanwhile, at the same time, the administration was putting together plans late last week to release inmates from State correctional facilities. Fortunately, we were able to keep this company and the services that they provide operating after having to send an eleventh-hour letter to the Governor who said that they would receive an email response in a few days allowing them to operate.

This is just one example of so many of an arbitrary list that lacks transparency, clarity, and consistency. I should not have had to send a letter for this company. There is already a list at the Federal level that 45 other States have found to be effective. Yet, if we listen to the opponents, we will leave here today and be forced to explain to our constituents, again, how big-box stores can be jam-packed with customers while small businesses that could adhere to CDC guidelines must remain closed. We would have to go back to our districts and continue to explain that the unemployment compensation center is overwhelmed with 1.4 million new claimants. Let me say that again, 1.4 million new claimants, and people cannot get the assistance that they need. Employees who could be working under strict CDC guidelines are, instead, forced to stay home and wait on hold with the Department of Labor and Industry about their unemployment compensation claim while 45 other States allow certain industries to continue to operate. In the end, the current process has created more confusion, and that confusion has begun to lead to chaos, and that is why we are here today, to say we want to collaborate with the people of Pennsylvania. We want to collaborate with the Governor and the General Assembly. Based on what I am hearing from my constituents, this is the best path forward during this crisis.

Protecting public health and worker safety by adhering to CDC guidelines in a place of employment and protecting our economic health, these are not mutually exclusive goals. Now, some of our colleagues have put forward a false narrative here today, that the only way to improve public health is shutting down the economy and that any improvement to the economy would come at the expense of the public health. Nothing could be further from the truth. Senate Bill No. 613 charts Pennsylvania on a better path to recovery. It is the same path 45 other States have opted to use following this pandemic. If the Governor believes in collaboration, let us collaborate and move away from an arbitrary process that has some companies being granted waivers while other similar companies are denied waivers and stay closed. Let us end the unfairness in the process. Let us end the confusion we are all trying to explain. Let us work together. Let us be transparent and open, and let us be consistent. Let us assure our public health, our workforce safety, and our economic health as a Commonwealth and as a nation, let us come together to protect lives and adhere to CDC guidelines that red States and blue States, 45 in total, have found to be effective. Let us pass Senate Bill No. 613.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Berks, Senator Schwank.

Senator SCHWANK. Mr. President, what this pandemic has proven to us is, most certainly, some of the inequities in our society that have really been highlighted by the fact that people do

not have good healthcare, people do not have safe workplaces, and people do not have decent housing. They do not have the opportunity to have adequate childcare so they can send their children to school and to be educated, as well. So the question as to whether this bill is the right thing to do, I really cannot answer that now, because I think the timing is wrong. We are not ready. We are not ready to totally reopen every business in the Commonwealth because we do not have a number of things in place to make that a safe environment. Number one, we do not have adequate testing. How do we know, for example, on a construction job if there is an individual there who is a silent carrier of the coronavirus? We do not know because, generally, they are not tested. You can put masks on all the people that you want to, but we absolutely have to know and be able to put in quarantine, people who are carriers of this virus.

The other issue is the issue of protective equipment. We already know that so many of us have made really dramatic attempts to try to get masks, gowns, and the kinds of equipment that our health care workers need in order to do their jobs. If they do not have enough equipment, how can we possibly redirect more to some other businesses? I just do not feel that we are prepared, at this moment, to take this step. It will come, and believe me, just like the rest of you, I want just as badly to see our economy restart. I have very personal reasons for that, as well as my entire district, people who are anxious to get back to work. But make no mistake, there are people who are concerned, too. Even in businesses that have received waivers, have you not heard the same complaints that I have? People who say, wait, I do not want to go back to work, I have an elderly person at home who I am caring for; or I do not want to bring the virus back to my children in my home. So, you know, it is a mixed bag.

Yes, we are all concerned about our jobs, we are concerned about where the money is going to come from to pay the rent, to pay the mortgage, to buy food. But first things first. We have got to focus on our personal safety, and our jobs as Senators is to make sure that we protect the people of the Commonwealth, that we protect our constituents, while at the same time building and creating the environment where they can go back to work safely. Time after time, we have heard and we have seen these folks on TV, these heroes. We call them heroes, and rightfully so. They are the people in the hospitals, the emergency room doctors, the nurses, the people who are cleaning the hospitals, and the people on the front lines in grocery stores and in food processing plants. We have seen them, and we have heard from them talking about their concerns. But the one message that should hit home to us the most is that, what they have said is, if we open up too quickly, if we try not to stay at home and follow the guidelines that we have been carefully following for at least some time now, we are going to see an onslaught of this virus. We are going to put them in the position where they are not going to have the personal protection and safety that they require as well. We are not ready for this yet.

I urge the Governor to continue to look at how we cooperate with those other States, those other governors, cooperate with the business community, as well as the legislature, to see how we build a thoughtful plan to come back, to bring our economy back, but to bring our health back, too. We do not have to make that choice, but we start by being safe right now. I urge my colleagues

to consider the vote that they are making today and the position that you are putting some people in, particularly our healthcare workers, if we take this vote. We are making their lives that much harder and that much more dangerous.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Franklin, Senator Mastriano.

Senator MASTRIANO. Mr. President, I rise in favor of Senate Bill No. 613. As a 30-year active duty military intelligence veteran in the U.S. Army, just 2 years out of uniform, vectors and pandemics was something we studied ever since I wore the uniform in 1986. We had fears back then, during the Cold War, that the Soviet Socialists would use that as an indirect way to attack our economy. Alas, the Soviets did not go that way, and the pandemic came inadvertently from China, but it is having the exact effect and impact that we feared it would had the Soviets done the same during the Cold War. Lost in this debate from a national strategic perspective is the economy. Our lives, well-being, and our healthcare system are tied to it and cannot exist without it. That is why we feared the Soviets would attack us indirectly with a vector of pandemic during the Cold War, and it is exactly what is coming about now.

My fears are borne out that the heavy-handed approach regarding the economy in Pennsylvania will have far-reaching effects that will live on long past our time. We are, indeed, in the greatest crisis of our lifetimes, yet the impact of this crisis is far worse than it needs to be. I regret to say that I fear the cure may well indeed prove worse than the disease. The one-size-fits-all approach to choose which businesses can and cannot remain open defies reason and logic. This, combined with the cloak of secrecy surrounding the waiver process, is distressing and needlessly causing the ruination of thousands of our people's lives. Furthermore, the proposition that this is an either/or decision is absurd.

Our people are crying out for action. They are calling out for reason and common sense to prevail. The mischaracterizations and slogans fly in the face of what Senate Bill No. 613 is designed to do. Our constituents are growing weary of the dithering and look to us to do the good, transparent, appropriate, and safe thing. Yet many questions remain. How is it that Pennsylvania is the only State in the nation that forbids car sales, golf courses to be open, forbids all types of construction, and even now moving to close garden shops? The inconsistency of these decisions is not lost on any person in the State. Meanwhile, aisles packed with shoppers in super stores and food stores go on, where I postulate is not a safe environment from a COVID-19 perspective. Or the dangers that exist in our beautiful big cities where mass transit continues to operate and is a more likely place to spread the virus, while many, many businesses and functions across the Commonwealth can employ commonsense Centers for Disease Control-compliant safety measures to reopen. This is about doing the right thing, and we live in a great Commonwealth with smart, innovative people who can safely reopen for business.

Hardest hit among these suffering during this economic shutdown are single-parent families and independent business owners. I am hearing from many independent business owners of a distressing time they are going through, still unable to apply for unemployment, many of whom have not received any income in

over a month. This is unconscionable. It is time for good, commonsense measures to be implemented. So, indeed, this is not an either/or proposition. We can, with the provisions in Senate Bill No. 613, allow businesses to reopen without threatening the health of our population. We need to hear the voice of our people. We need to be the voice of the people.

I have studied extensively the guidelines from a national strategic perspective as laid out by the Centers for Disease Control and the Department of Labor's Occupational and Safety Health Administration, which clearly delineates and outlines how we can safely and smartly reopen key sectors of our State without compromising the integrity of our population. This is, indeed, the time for action, not for dithering and inaction. I urge all my colleagues to do the right thing, to not be deaf to the needs and cries of our people. Senate Bill No. 613 will not threaten anyone's life. It is a safe, informed, and proven way to get back to work without increasing the spread of the virus. The massive shutdown order is having a far-reaching impact that is undercutting every sector of our State and, I fear, our lives.

For instance, the unnecessary mandate to shut down car dealers across the State, except those lucky enough to get a waiver, is keeping essential personnel from getting to their jobs. A personal friend of ours is a nurse. She is on the front line of freedom here fighting the good fight. Her car broke down, is not repairable, and she is having a heck of a time getting to where she needs to be to help our people. That is just one vignette of many that I am hearing. This is why I am concerned about this one-size-fits-all shutdown order. We also know the impact it is having on dairy farmers, especially in my district, who are forced to dump their products in the midst of this crisis here because they cannot put it in containers or get it to the shops in time. There is too much friction caused by the shutdown order. Then the waiver process, which I alluded to already, has proven inconsistent and flawed throughout its existence. It is time to stand up for our people, to be their voice, to safely open up sectors of the State.

As a historian, I look across the centuries of our great Commonwealth and I see the many crises we have come out better and stronger. The French and Indian War, the Revolution, the Civil War—which devastated my district in 1863—the First World War, the Great Depression, the Second World War, the Cold War, and, of course, 9/11. Yet, I fear the ill-advised decisions closing vast swaths of our economy will make the consequences of this pandemic far, far worse than it needs to be.

I agree with my esteemed colleague from York County that all jobs are essential, all jobs are life sustaining. I urge my colleagues to do the right thing, to look out for our people, not be deaf to their cries, and vote to support Senate Bill No. 613.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Allegheny, Senator Lindsey Williams.

Senator L. WILLIAMS. Mr. President, we are living in a new world today than we were living at the beginning of the year. We are in the middle of a global pandemic. The impact of that has been extremely painful. We have lost at least 647 Pennsylvanians to COVID-19, more than 26,490 of our neighbors have been sickened, with more than 2,369 of those neighbors needing hospitalization. We went from historic low unemployment to historic

high unemployment in a matter of days. The Department of Labor and Industry received more than 1.3 million initial unemployment claims in the last few weeks. I thank those State employees who are working 10-hour shifts, 7 days a week, trying to get benefits to those who desperately need it. The unemployment office was understaffed before this happened, and the system was not designed for this volume. Secretary Oleksiak is bringing on more staff as quickly as possible. I know that is not much help to the people who need their unemployment benefits to pay their bills right now, but I want you to know that our State employees really do care about you and they are doing the best they can to get you your check.

I have also been getting many calls, emails, texts, and Facebook messages from small business owners who are struggling. We do have to address this problem, but simply allowing nearly every business to reopen is not the solution. We will need Federal and State stimulus dollars to help these businesses stay afloat. Many of the complaints I have received are centered around the waiver process. They are wondering why one business similar to theirs is allowed to be open while theirs is not. Their complaints are fair, and I have been equally frustrated with the opaque process. I am trying to be sensitive to the fact that we are basically building a plane while we are flying it. That does not mean that the government's actions do not have consequences. In uncertain times like these, we need to be more transparent than ever. The small businesses that are making tremendous sacrifices to do the right thing have to know that the rules they are following are the same for everyone.

I sent a letter to DCED Secretary Davin in March stating that the process for obtaining a waiver should be clearly defined, uniformly applied, and transparent, and I stand by that. But while I know that the process has been far from perfect, Senate Bill No. 613 is not the answer. The answer is not to open up almost all businesses right now. Despite what those in favor of this legislation say, the guidelines it refers to, read closely enough, would open up a range of businesses across Pennsylvania that will put our collective public health at risk. We can deal with the economic impacts of these painful mitigation efforts, but we cannot bring people back from the dead.

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) memo, that Senate Bill No. 613 mandates the Governor follow, says in bold letters: (*Reading*)

This list is advisory in nature. It is not, nor should it be considered, a federal directive or standard. Additionally, this advisory list is not intended to be the exclusive list of critical infrastructure sectors, workers, and functions that should continue during the COVID-19 response across all jurisdictions. Individual jurisdictions should add or subtract essential workforce categories based on their own requirements and discretion.

It makes zero sense to mandate that the Governor follow a list that they specifically say is not meant to be followed like that. We are talking about how we believe these mitigation efforts are working. We are seeing a little bit of that evidence. That does not mean we stop because some politicians say so. We need to transition out of these closures in consultation with medical experts and based on scientific data. The experts are opposed to this legislation. The fact of the matter is, we still do not have the test-

ing capacity to determine what we need to do. We need way more tests across the Commonwealth.

Some of my colleagues have talked about how, if a business follows the CDC guidelines, they will be allowed to open and work if they want to work under Senate Bill No. 613. The part that they leave out is that there is literally no enforcement of these guidelines. There is no penalty for employers who do not follow these guidelines. There are no meaningful protections for workers who speak up about violations of these CDC guidelines. There are some employers who are doing the best they can to protect workers. However, I have heard from countless workers that their employers are not even doing the bare minimum. I have spoken to workers who are in tears about the conditions at their employment. They are afraid to go to work, but they cannot afford to stay home. They are sick and do not have access to a test, but they do not have paid sick days. They are afraid to speak up about their concerns because they are afraid to lose their jobs.

That fear is not unjustified. I had an employer, Aramark, in my district fire two employees on Monday who had a doctor's note to self-quarantine due to the danger of possible exposure to COVID-19. That is unacceptable. Senator Costa offered an omnibus amendment in the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations that would have provided workers with paid sick days, access to proper PPE, strong anti-retaliation protections for workers who speak up, and civil penalties for employers who do not protect their workers. This amendment failed in committee. We cannot widely open business if we do not protect workers. If we do not take precautions, more workers will get sick. More workers will die, and that will absolutely negatively affect our businesses. Our businesses cannot run without workers.

We have to be honest with Pennsylvanians. We do not have adequate PPE for the people who are working right now. We have nurses who are reusing masks. We have home healthcare workers and first responders who still do not have masks or hand sanitizer. We have grocery store workers, bus drivers, letter carriers, and many, many other frontline workers who lack adequate PPE, and those workers are getting sick, and some of those workers are dying. Broadly opening businesses without having PPE in place will literally cost lives. We need to work with Governor Wolf, Secretary Levine, and medical experts to develop a plan to safely reopen business. If Senate Bill No. 613 did that, I would vote for it, but it does not do that. Therefore, I am a "no" vote, and I ask my colleagues to also vote "no."

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Westmoreland, Senator Kim Ward.

Senator K. WARD. Mr. President, I had waived off because much of what I was going to say has already been said over and over, so it would be quite repetitive, but I will add, we would love to work with the Governor and the administration on reopening businesses, but they do not work with us, and he announced a couple of days ago they are going to work, instead, with governors from other northeastern States. I think if we had been involved at some level at some point, we would not be in this position right now, because as has been said over and over, the waiver process has been, really, almost disastrous. I know the folks are working as hard as they can to get through those waivers, but the fact is we cannot find out who is making those deci-

sions or what they are basing those decisions on. There has been zero transparency as we try to work with the administration, and that has been very, very much of the frustration. There are many, many sectors of our economy that could go back to work and go back to work safely using the coronavirus protocol, but we do not really have input into what any of those are.

This state of emergency has taken away our three equal branches of government that we are supposed to be living under. So I am not going to go on and on and repeat everything that has already been said, but I do think we need transparency, we need accountability, and we need to be involved, because while we are working, we are collecting a paycheck, while many of our other constituents are working, and while, thank God, the first responders and the front lines are working, many, many people whom we represent are not working. They are not able to collect their checks. It has been weeks. That is the question that we get constantly in the office, and we try our best to help. I know that the folks at Labor and Industry are doing their best. They were not prepared for this because there was no preparation for 1.3 million applicants in a month when we had a total of 750,000 last year.

I had a message shortly ago from a constituent saying that he has not been paid in 3 weeks, he was deemed nonessential, even though if you look at the supply chain, he should have been deemed essential, and he cannot pay his child support. When you cannot pay your child support, not only does the child suffer, you are not going to get your stimulus check. So it is a very, very big ball of trouble we are experiencing right now, and anything we can do to help get people off of those unemployment rolls while also keeping their health safe, we should be doing.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Hughes.

Senator HUGHES. Mr. President, I appreciate this opportunity to speak on the matter, and as I was listening to everyone, I jotted down lots of notes and I will do my best not to be repetitive. A number of things come to mind. I think it is important that we see this in context and that we see this issue also from a vantage point that, for example, Senator Schwank provided us. Senator Schwank talked about a person in her district who says, yeah, I would like things to open up, but we need to be real careful about that because if things start to open up again, I cannot be sure that I will be able to protect my family when I go home from work because the necessary equipment is not available, the necessary PPEs, the necessary masks, the necessary protective equipment, all the things that are needed in this pandemic that we are involved in.

Senator Muth talked about the fact that we can bring an economy back but we cannot bring a life back. You know, we need to be very careful in not rushing and being thoughtful about what it is that we are trying to get done with respect to bringing our economy back, but paramount, number one, first and foremost, is protecting the health of the people of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the health of the people of this nation. That is our number one job. That is our number one responsibility. We can bring an economy back. We can put people back to work. We cannot bring a life back. Context is important.

Transparency. So many folks talked about transparency. You know what? In this issue, transparency starts at 1600 Pennsylva-

nia Avenue. That is where transparency starts. Transparency starts at why this whole thing was ignored years ago when it should have been addressed on the front end. That is what has put us there. You want transparency out of the Governor's Office, you damn sure better be prepared to ask for transparency out of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue and the person who occupies the White House right now. You have outrage with the Governor, you should have that same kind of outrage at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. You want to adhere to the CDC guidelines? Why do we not demand that the person occupying the White House adheres to CDC guidelines there? You want masks and PPEs for all of our frontline workers? We give them false platitudes if we ignore their one request, their one request is to stay at home. Frontline workers, healthcare workers, their one request is to keep everybody at home. So do not say that they are heroes and then ignore their one simple request: Stay home. We want masks, we want people to come to work, we want people to revitalize the economy, we want people out, engaged, and spending what few dollars that they may have, but if we do not have the PPEs, if we do not have the masks, if we do not have the tests available to all of Pennsylvania's citizens so that people can fully and safely engage, then what are we sending people actually to do? We are putting them in harm's way.

Then the next question is, why do we not have that equipment? Why do we not have the masks? Why do we not have the PPEs? Why do we not have testing? Start at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue with the person occupying the White House and why have they shut down, why have they taken negotiated deals away from Pennsylvania and other States and taken that information, taken that equipment right from underneath ours and put it somewhere else? If you want transparency, ask that question. You have outrage, that is where your outrage should be addressed. That is where your outrage should be focused.

If we cannot get the equipment to keep ourselves safe, if we cannot create an environment where everyone understands that it is about saving lives first and then restoring the economy, if we cannot deal with the issue of transparency 24/7 across the board at every level, have that same outrage at every level, if we cannot make sure that if we put people back to work that they have the safe equipment, that they go to a workplace that is safe and secure, washed down, disinfected, and cleaned appropriately, if we cannot have safe environments for people to go to work in, then we are just sending them back to a situation where this disease will only continue even more. Only more people will die. Only the economy will be much more devastated than it is right now.

Mr. President, this is a "no" vote because what has been offered up here in an environment where, as I think Senator Lindsey Williams indicated, we are putting this thing together, we are putting the parts of the plane together while we are flying it, and it is a very difficult thing. We should respect the difficulty that exists for everyone as we put this process together. But until we get all of the equipment, until we understand, most importantly, that human lives have to be put first before we rebuild the economy, we cannot just willy-nilly go down this process and start opening things up without having everything in order.

Mr. President, I am a "no" vote. I encourage the same, and then let us not offer false platitudes to healthcare workers and say that they are heroes but then do not listen to what their simple

request is, to stay at home. To the gentleman who is a historian, who has studied pandemics, maybe the person at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue should have listened to you and studied pandemics.

Maybe if the Soviets had been involved in this, question that assertion.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Blair, Senator Judy Ward.

Senator J. WARD. Mr. President, I rise to express my strong support for Senate Bill No. 613. I, too, am a nurse, and I know what we have done has been incredibly helpful to flatten that curve, but my constituents, as well as my business owners, have spoken loud and clear. They know that they can return to work in a safe manner using CDC recommendations and guidelines. They understand that life and business will be different. The majority of my legislative district has little COVID-19. Hospitals in my district are actually laying people off, as we speak. The fact is, we currently have no plan. No plan has been offered to us. Why would we allow State bureaucrats or other governors to decide our economic destiny?

The provisions in the bill would expand the list of businesses that can work safely, just like our neighboring States. This is not, and should not, be political. It should not be political. A builder who works by himself in my district building homes has been building a home for a family who lost everything in a tragic fire. He has applied twice for a waiver and has been denied. This is insanity.

As my colleague from Lancaster County said very eloquently, the health of our community and the health of our economy are not mutually exclusive. I ask for a positive vote for Senate Bill No. 613.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Street.

Senator STREET. Mr. President, I rise to oppose this measure. Many have talked about the profits that we have lost. The fact that our businesses are not doing well, and, sure, we all want a strong economy, but there is a Scripture, I believe, in Mark, Chapter 8, that is written: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, but lose his soul?" We are fighting for the souls of individual Pennsylvanians, we are fighting for people's lives. The Declaration of Independence reads: "We hold these truths to be self-evident," self-evident meaning that they should not require explanation, the chief amongst them are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. People's lives are at stake. This is not a game, and our economy will come back, but the people who lose their lives will not.

Medical experts have all suggested that it is too early to begin a massive reopening of the economy and letting all businesses return to work. We simply do not have the protective equipment necessary for that, and adding nonessential personnel who would need personal protective equipment that would be pulled from our essential personnel puts nurses', doctors', police officers', grocery workers', and transit workers' lives at risk, many who already cannot get adequate personal protective equipment. By reopening the economy prematurely when we do not have adequate testing, so we do not really know who has COVID-19, we

do not know who is infected and who is healthy, and we know that a number of people will be infected and not manifest symptoms, but those people can still infect other people with a disease

that will kill them. We do not know, not because Governor Wolf or Secretary Levine failed to come up with testing; we do not know because the President of the United States failed to make sure we had adequate testing. He failed to act quickly. He failed to make sure we had adequate tracing systems, he failed to make sure we had adequate testing systems, healthcare ventilators, and other things that were needed.

Because of those failures, Governor Wolf and other governors around the country did what was necessary to protect human life, and they did what was necessary to make sure our healthcare system was not overwhelmed. Yes, it is unfortunate that so many people are out of work and it is unfortunate that we have had the negative consequences to our economy, but we are where we are, and at this point it would be irresponsible for us to put lives in jeopardy by massively reopening the economy in a manner inconsistent with our healthcare experts. Dr. Levine is a medical doctor. She has taken the appropriate steps to look at what is going on and to make recommendations tailored for Pennsylvania. The Federal government itself, which people want us to refer to, has said that its edicts and its directives should not be used as guidance to determine whether States should reopen but, in fact, that guidance should come from individual governors.

The reality is that the coordination that we are seeing across State lines by the Governor is because he is trying to create—he is trying to make sure that we do not have the disease tracked from State to State. That coordination is incredibly essential but can only be maintained if the Governor has the authority to make decisions as to what reopens and does not open. Now, sure, every process can be improved, but the reality is irresponsibly opening the economy before we are ready could have dire consequences to our health, and those consequences to our health ultimately will set us back further. Even our experts on Wall Street have suggested that the economic return and economic recovery must follow a health recovery. We must be prepared to have our government be prepared to provide for the health needs of people. A collapse of our healthcare system would only result in further economic losses and a redoubling of our efforts to have to shut down the economy once again.

I understand that Members of this Chamber want people to work and want people to prosper economically, and we all do. I understand that people are frustrated that people are at home who want to go out and work. I understand that we have people who simply want to go back to life as normal. None of us asked for this disease, and as Members of State government, there is only so much we can do. I applaud Governor Wolf for taking the steps that were needed and making hard decisions when people in Washington, the President of the United States, could not. I ask my colleagues to bear with this process and not act so rashly that we reopen the economy en masse only to have it close again, that we not, in our pursuit of profits for people's businesses, cause people to lose their lives. I remind Members that while it may seem like we have the whole world to gain, what profit a man, what profit the Commonwealth, gain the whole world, but we lose the lives of those we love? How many of us would trade the

life of a loved one who is older, who is vulnerable, who has asthma, who may have immune deficiencies, how many of us would trade that person's life for a stronger economy? I certainly would not. I suggest to us that a State that has one of the oldest populations, if not, I think, some statistics say the second oldest population in America, which means we have a significant portion of our population who are vulnerable, that we not subject all of those citizens to a massive spread of disease that we do not know where it is, do not yet have the tests, we do not yet have the tracing, and our healthcare system is not ready. The time to reopen the economy is not now, and we should not ignore the callings of our healthcare professionals. We should honor their requests. We should support the Governor. We should vote "no" on Senate Bill No. 613, and we should remember that we have to put people before profits, and it does us no good to gain profit and lose ourselves. I urge a "no" vote on this legislation.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Luzerne, Senator Baker.

Senator BAKER. Mr. President, I think we all recognize that extraordinary steps needed to be taken to reduce the spread of the devastating coronavirus. Healthcare judgments have been driving policy, and that is to the credit of everyone. Thankfully, those restrictions are having a positive effect on flattening the curve, as the healthcare experts put it. Still, the number of serious cases and the rising death total attributable to the virus are beyond heartbreaking for those affected. Decisionmaking is never more difficult when answers are lacking and risk is everywhere, and at the same time, the limitations we are living with are impacting other health and safety threats. These range from a rise in abuse and a drop-off in health maintenance and preventative care, all situations complicated by added stress levels that many people are suffering due to the declining economic circumstances.

Every day I hear worries about lack of funding and lack of money to meet an individual's basic needs. During my constant conversations with families, workers, and employers in every part of my district, there have been many questions raised about the extent of the State-declared business shutdown and the mysterious process for deciding who can reopen and who cannot. I cannot tell you the number of constituents who have said, why is the General Assembly not a check and balance in this process? Why are we not involved? How can a business in my district apply two times under the waiver process because they did not hear from the first one and be given two separate answers in the same week? How can the Pennsylvania State Police be constructing a new headquarters in northeastern Pennsylvania when a township in my Senate district is not permitted to continue finishing a new fire station?

An inherent difficulty in statewide emergency mandates is that 67 counties are very different in makeup, perspective, and priority. In reality, that is too familiar to many of us. Rural counties in normal times are at a disadvantage in so many ways. I have worked continually with workers, employers, local leaders, and organizations as we try to create opportunity. As the last recession brought home, rural counties recover and are hardest hit in an economic emergency situation. They are slower to recover than some of our more populous areas. Now the engine is thrown in reverse again and the fear of free fall is all around.

So here is the hard truth we must confront: Can the rest of the



State afford to wait for clearance until certain areas are ready to reopen? In response to such concerns, I believe we have crafted, in advance, legislation that will put primary responsibility for decisions on reopening at the county level, not with governors in States far away, putting discretion in decisionmaking power in county courthouses, in the hands of local officials who are closest to the people. This is not a mere exchange of mandates; rather, it allows greater discretion than the State has been willing to grant. There is suitable consultation and notice required, which is more than the State has shown. From my vantage point, I must say this is not meant as an indictment of the intentions of the Governor or our Secretary of Health, nor is it rearguing the lines of authority. They acted when it required executive leadership and example, and respect is certainly due for that role in what they have done. However, the manner in which some decisions have been executed and implemented is, regrettably, as you have heard, unbalanced, inconsistent, and secretive. Unbalanced, inconsistent, and secretive, that is what we aim to remedy - shuttered small businesses on Main Street, while keeping open large facilities, where the risk is even greater. You can look at the impacts here in Luzerne County from some of those deemed essential businesses operating in large facilities.

We have all received communications charging that profits are being put ahead of lives. I have no interest in doing that. In this monumental fear and uncertainty, certainly those concerns are understandable, but that conclusion is truly incorrect. This measure is about giving people the chance to go back to work where there is an opportunity to do so safely and reasonably. If we wait, Pennsylvania may not have an economy left to sustain us going forward safely and reasonably. As you heard, the unemployment numbers are beyond belief and our system is buckling in providing these benefits, and more will continue to apply.

So this legislation is not a setback to the health-first approach that we have in place. It is a hard realization that things have gone too far in various ways and various places, such as construction. Saving lives, we simply cannot destroy the future hopes of those communities in which we live, work, and raise our families. So I, too, urge an affirmative vote.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Costa.

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I rise to express my opposition to Senate Bill No. 613, along with the nearly dozen Members on this side of the aisle who did so as well. As the gentlewoman from York mentioned, we are in unprecedented times. As we take to the floor here today utilizing technology that we have not thought of before, the way in which we live our lives, separated from each other, limited in our travel and shopping activities, things are different. Mr. President, all of these adjustments to our lifestyle have been made for a purpose. They have been recommended to us by health professionals for a particular purpose, and that is to flatten the curve and stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

On March 23, Governor Wolf made the difficult decision to close nonessential businesses. At the time, we had less than a thousand cases, but we were increasing those cases at a rate of about 34 percent every day. On April 1, he issued the statewide stay-at-home order, and our rates were dropping to 20 percent

each day over day. Within 2 weeks of the nonessential business closures and all of us staying at home, our rate dropped to a daily increase of about 7 percent. I give you those numbers because our efforts, our purpose with respect to these accommodations, is working, and it is working fine. Had we not done any of these mitigation efforts that Dr. Levine talks about so frequently, day in and day out, things like social distancing measures, washing our hands for 20 seconds, the testing that needs to be done, we would have seen an increase at a rate of 34 percent, which would have left us with nearly a half-million Pennsylvanians who would have been sick with the COVID virus. But now, instead, today we have 26,000 folks who have been impacted, and roughly a significant number of deaths.

It is clear these mitigation efforts have been advised, as I mentioned, by healthcare professionals, and they have been issued thoughtfully. That is what is important here. As I mentioned earlier, they have been effective in helping us deal with the spread of this virus. This virus is highly contagious and it is a deadly virus, and it was spreading faster than any of us had ever seen before, and with limited testing available through this process and still no vaccine, and now knowing that this virus spreads without symptoms, we had to make difficult decisions, and that is precisely what our Governor and our Secretary of Health did, but, again, I repeat, those decisions are working. We are bending the curve, we are flattening the curve, as we have heard so much about from Federal health officials and State health officials, and we are saving lives.

Every person who spoke here today, and I think all of our colleagues in this Chamber know a hard decision and we understand the difficulty Governor Wolf had and the decision he had to make with respect to closing nonessential businesses. No one in this Chamber, as I mentioned earlier in remarks, wants to do that. We do not want to harm our business community, particularly the strong and diverse small businesses that we have here in Pennsylvania that really make up a significant part of our economy that make us the great Commonwealth that we live and work in. But saving lives during this pandemic and flattening the exposure and the spread of this virus were essential. That effort has been led in a very remarkable fashion, in my view, by our Secretary of the Department of Health, Dr. Rachel Levine, who has provided to each of us and to the constituents of Pennsylvania, the residents of our Commonwealth, daily updates about our collective fight against COVID-19. As we know, and we all recognize and understand, this fight has come with sacrifices, and I know that our business community is feeling them deeply, but the most important thing at this point in time is our health.

We have heard the concerns of our business community. As someone residing in Allegheny County and representing a large part of the city of Pittsburgh, I clearly understand the impact it has had on our business community, in the third largest center with respect to the second and third largest economic centers in this Commonwealth. Here, in Harrisburg, we have already begun to do our work on creating a statewide stimulus package and a loan package to help those businesses recover financially, but, again, as many of my colleagues have stated, it is not time to reopen Pennsylvania businesses broadly, and that is what Senate Bill No. 613 does, unfortunately. It is not yet safe, and every recommendation we have gotten from experts ask us not to do

this. Dr. Levine has asked us not to support and open up the businesses. I will introduce Dr. Levine's letter that came today for the record, but I want to point out two parts to that, two sentences out of this lengthy letter that was written to all of us. "I write today to alert you about the devastating impact SB 613, PN 1636, or any other measure which would dilute the effectiveness of the statewide mitigation efforts, would have on the public health of Pennsylvanians." The devastating impact. Further in her letter she talks about, "Encouraging increased social movement of Pennsylvanians at this time by reopening a significant amount of businesses would be reckless and irresponsible."

We have heard from home healthcare workers who have asked us not to support this measure. We have heard from the Pennsylvania Association of Staff Nurses and Allied Professionals who also tell us not to support this measure, Dr. Levine, health experts, but, also, the folks at the frontline. This letter, too, I ask be admitted into the record for all of us to understand what was stated.

Frontline workers, workers all across different trades and different industries, have asked us not to pass Senate Bill No. 613. All of the experts on the front line, some of whom I mentioned, the front line of this crisis, have asked us not to pass this legislation. They indicate to us, to each of us, we still do not have a handle on this epidemic. This week is projected to be one of the deadliest that we see in our Commonwealth, and certainly in our country as well. Still, with just only 1/10 of 1 percent of Pennsylvanians who have been tested, we are not where we need to be with respect to opening businesses, but I ask the question, why, after we say all the wonderful things about the frontline workers who are helping fight this pandemic, why are we disregarding their voices today? Why are we saying to them, we like what you are doing, we thank you for what you are doing, but your opinion does not matter? What matters is the opinion of the local county commissioner or the county executive who is going to decide whether or not we should be opening our businesses in our Commonwealth.

Mr. President, when we have a better handle on the testing, as I mentioned, and our health experts agree that we can safely begin restarting our economy, phasing in our economy, then, and only then, will I not stand in the way of legislation that could assist to do that, and our Caucus will not stand in the way of that as well. But passing Senate Bill No. 613 right now has been indicated by my colleagues as a danger to every Pennsylvanian, and, as Dr. Levine said, is reckless and irresponsible. Through this process, Mr. President, workers will undoubtedly get sick, customers will get sick, and the virus will spread to their families and we will lose progress, all the progress that we have made over the course of the past 4 1/2 or 5 weeks with respect to the sacrifices that have been made by so many in this Commonwealth who are adhering to the stay-at-home order.

Mr. President, we are all frustrated, and certainly living with social distancing and not being able to work is not ideal. I understand and hear the concerns from our business community in particular, but there are things that we should be doing that we have not been doing with respect to moving our businesses back into compliance to be able to make certain that we will be able to open up businesses here in Pennsylvania, productive things that will allow us the opportunity to protect our frontline workers and

protect the workers who will now be called upon to go to work, and making certain that we have provisions in place to protect those men and women who are forced to go back to work when they feel they should not be able to do that. To think that all of our businesses that are going to be freed up under this legislation to conduct their businesses will have the opportunity to follow the CDC requirements, I think, is foolish to think that they are going to do that. There are a lot of good businesses that are doing it right now, but at the end of the day we know, at least I know in my heart, as much as I would love to see them all follow it, I do not see it happening, and it puts people and workers at risk.

Mr. President, over the past month we have worked, I believe, in a very positive, bipartisan fashion. We have made changes to our election law and moved the primary. We made changes to our requirements for unemployment compensation for individuals, eliminating the waiting week requirement, allowing them to collect from day one, and not impacting our businesses with rate increases, and looking at the work search requirement is no longer being required. We developed a program through DCED to provide loans to small businesses, and we have also allowed public education throughout our Commonwealth to continue via distance learning. We have had the opportunity to continue to work in that fashion, but this bill, Senate Bill No. 613, and Senate Bill No. 327 that is going to follow, does not do what needs to be done in this Commonwealth. As we saw yesterday, we certainly heard from so many folks who said they are opposed to this legislation, I referenced some of them in my remarks, but not a single Democrat in the House of Representatives supported this measure, nor do I expect that we will have any Democratic votes on this side. Mr. President, in my opinion, and I think in the opinion of many of my colleagues, Senate Bill No. 613 is an effort to take away the authority from our Governor, Tom Wolf, and Secretary Rachel Levine, who have been leading our collective fight against this epidemic.

Mr. President, in fact, just yesterday, last evening, I was watching our President speak on the White House lawn, and probably the most important thing that I heard him say was that the States should not be pressured by anyone, and by the President, to open up their economies. Those decisions, he said, should be left with the governors of those States to make those determinations. That is what we believe should be the case here as well. Democrats believe that Governor Tom Wolf, upon the advice of his Secretary of Health, Dr. Rachel Levine, should be continuing to guide us in a successful effort to mitigate, to do more testing, and to insure that we have the proper PPE in place for our frontline workers, particularly at our hospital facilities. Mr. President, governors across this country, including those in the northeast part of the country who we have heard so much about today, are all looking for one thing, and I think the people of Pennsylvania are looking for one thing, they are looking for expert guidance. They are looking for informed indicators about what we need to do, and as we move forward as an economy, what those things need to be to allow us to get ourselves back to some level of normalcy.

In other States, folks are beginning and proposing that we look at indicators which would tell us when it is appropriate for us to go back and restart and phase in our economy. They are looking for indicators that will show us and tell us that we have

the ability to monitor and protect our communities through testing, contact tracing, isolating, and supporting those individuals who have tested positive or who have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus; indicators that demonstrate that we have the ability to prevent infection in people who are at high risk and also those who are at high risk for more severe degrees of COVID-19; indicators that tell us that our hospitals and our healthcare systems have the capacity and the PPE to be able to handle the surges that will be coming across Pennsylvania, and they will be coming. As I indicated, we are looking at this week being one of the worst on record. Indicators that tell us that we have the ability to develop therapeutics to meet the demand that will be forthcoming; the ability of our schools, businesses, and childcare facilities to support physical distancing; and the ability to determine when and if necessary to reinstitute certain measures, such as stay-at-home orders, which have become effective.

Mr. President, these are good indicators, but we are not there yet. Our hospitals and our health systems still have a critical need for the PPE that we have talked about. They will continue to be strained, and as we go forward, that strain will only get worse. We do not have widespread testing, as I asked for and mentioned as an indicator. We do not have a vaccine or a way to stop the spread to folks who, as I mentioned, are at high risk. The list of businesses provided by the Federal government that Senate Bill No. 613 references are explicitly, as was mentioned by my colleagues, not Federal standards or guidelines or expectations. In fact, as was mentioned earlier, and I mentioned in my remarks regarding the amendments that were being offered, the list was advisory in nature, and, at the end of the day, they recommended that you look to the individual jurisdictions who may want to add or subtract essential workforce categories based on their own requirements and discretion. That is what this is about. We have given the Governor, and the law gives the Governor, discretion to do the things he wants to be able to do, and I remind folks that our Supreme Court upheld our Governor's ability to be able to make these decisions and these calls. That is what this recommendation says as well. That is what our Governor has been doing, exercising that discretion along with the advice of Dr. Rachel Levine, our Secretary of Health.

We are about to vote on a bill based on a vague list from the Federal government that health experts have warned us against. We should not be doing this. It is reckless and it is irresponsible. What we would like to see us take up and talk about are many of the measures that were contained in the amendment that I offered in the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations, working and standing with our frontline workers to keep them safe through this dangerous time, and if this legislation passes, at a time when things will get worse for them, providing healthcare, unemployment, and workers' compensation benefits to help keep working families who have been impacted by COVID-19 afloat. Those are the conversations that we should be having along those lines. We should continue to work to provide small businesses as a Commonwealth, in conjunction with what was done at the Federal level, financial assistance so they can keep their employees, and when the time is right for them to open and allow them to be able to be open, that we have the opportunity to allow them to do that in a fluid way.

Mr. President, these are bills that Senate Democrats have

introduced and are seeking action and cosponsors on as we speak, and we are hopeful that we will be able to talk about those in the weeks to come. I do appreciate the Majority Leader's comments earlier that there are some things that have merit in that conversation, and we look forward to that discussion. But, Mr. President, let us protect workers and their families instead of rushing to open up workplaces that are deemed to be ill-advised at this point in time. We can emerge from this crisis with both a financially and medically healthy population if we do so by working together and we listen to the doctors and our health experts. They will help us create a path. They will help us create a plan for a safe recovery through this process.

Mr. President, at the end of the day, our constituents want us to lead, but they also want all of us collectively to be led by the folks who know Pennsylvania best, those are our health experts. They know what is in the best interest of the health of this Commonwealth, and they have been exercising it for the past 4 weeks. My hope is that they will continue to be given the opportunity to be able to do that. They want to hear from doctors, they want to hear from nurses, and they want to hear from public health professionals, and they hope that their voices will be heard, not rejected like they are being rejected today. They want opinions, and our people want opinions of the frontline workers, and they are looking to be led by science, medicine, and evidence, not by partisan legislation and not by politicians both at the local or State level. That is not what they want. They want to be led in an appropriate way. I ask for a negative vote on Senate Bill No. 613.

Before I conclude, I introduce these two letters into the record, one on behalf of Dr. Rachel Levine, and the other one from the Pennsylvania Association of Staff Nurses and Allied Professionals.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, the letters will be spread upon the record.

*(The following letters were made part of the record at the request of the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator COSTA:)*

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
625 Forster Street 8th Floor West  
Health and Welfare Building  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

April 15, 2020

Dear Senators:

I write today to alert you about the devastating impact SB 613, PN 1636, or any other measure which would dilute the effectiveness of the statewide mitigation efforts, would have on the public health of Pennsylvanians. There is no doubt that this legislation would lead to more Pennsylvanians infected with COVID-19, as it undermines the integrity and effectiveness of the Commonwealth's collective response to this novel coronavirus. The health and safety of the public is our deepest and most serious responsibility as public servants. With respect, and with that responsibility in mind, I urge you and your colleagues to consider the impact SB 613, or any other legislation which would inhibit our statewide mitigation strategy, will have on the pandemic response and associated loss of human life.

The peak of COVID-19 cases has not yet been reached. The healthcare system has not yet been tested. But there is cause for hope.

We are no longer seeing exponential growth in new cases each day. Our statewide mitigation has slowed the virus in areas of widespread community spread. There is still much work to do to continue to drive new cases down, but the trend we see now is encouraging. Even so, we expect the next few weeks to be very difficult for all Pennsylvanians - for essential employees, for families, for older Pennsylvanians, for business owners, and for healthcare workers. The only way to shorten the length of time we need to weather these conditions is through aggressive social distancing. To continue to bend the curve and ensure we can adequately and equitably care for our friends and neighbors during this pandemic, people need to stay home. If we turn back from this strategy too soon, all of that progress will be lost.

Encouraging increased social movement of Pennsylvanians at this time by reopening a significant amount of businesses would be reckless and irresponsible. Since Senate Bill 613 mandates the Commonwealth conform to the March 28th United States Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) advisory memorandum, a significant amount of businesses would likely reopen. In fact, there are very few industries outside of retail (which would also see large exemptions) that wouldn't be able to make an argument that they could open under this legislation. While the Governor and I are as eager as anyone to begin getting people back to work, doing so prematurely will only increase the spread of the virus, further lengthening associated economic challenges, while also placing more lives at risk.

As the Governor has said, these are unprecedented times, with no easy choices. The decision to shutter non-life sustaining businesses that support families across this Commonwealth was a painful one, but before we can save livelihoods, we need to save lives. I ask, therefore, in the best interest of the public health, that you do not support this proposal or others that would dilute our statewide mitigation strategy.

I deeply appreciate your consideration and your dedication to your constituents through this crisis.

Sincerely,

RACHEL LEVINE, MD  
Secretary of Health

---

Pennsylvania Association of Staff  
Nurses & Allied Professionals  
One Fayette Street, Suite 475  
Conshohocken, PA 19428

TO: Members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly

FROM: MAUREEN MAY, President of PASNAP

RE: **Opposition to SB 613**

DATE: Tuesday, April 14, 2020

On behalf of 8,500 nurses and healthcare professionals, **we are expressing our strong opposition to SB 613**. The legislation, if passed, will risk the public health and the continued effort to combat the spread of COVID-19. SB613 creates a giant loophole that will encourage many businesses to re-open as the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) guidance would be the determining factor for the business closure list in Pennsylvania. Many businesses would be able to use the new list to reclassify as essential and re-open for business.

Any effort to re-open non-essential businesses must be done in consultation with public health officials and not based on partisan politics or purely economic factors. If those businesses were to re-open without a comprehensive plan from public health officials, it would encourage members of the public to break from the Commonwealth's stay at home order - and break from the progress in controlling the spread through mitigation efforts. Any haphazard break in mitigation efforts will cause the case rate to increase drastically and to flood our hospitals and health systems with new COVID-19 patients.

**We are still without the following, which makes re-opening**

**non-essential businesses and other activities complicated:**

- Safe levels of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for healthcare professionals and other essential workers
- Publicly available testing for COVID-19
- Publicly available antibody testing for COVID-19
- A cure or vaccine

We can all agree that we want daily life to return to the world we all knew before this pandemic, but it must be done in a thoughtful manner as we are faced with a new reality.

Thank you so much for your attention to this issue, and please do not hesitate to reach out if we can answer any questions.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Centre, Senator Corman.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I spoke a lot during the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations, so I will not speak that long here today, but I want to make a couple comments. First of all, I do not know that I can think of an issue or the last time that we had an issue that drew so many speakers. It shows you the importance of what we are dealing with. We all are dealing with this pandemic, this emergency, so there is a great desire as legislators to be involved in crafting public policy to help with this crisis, and I commend all of the people who have spoken today, and it has been a very worthwhile debate.

A couple of things that I think we can all agree on. First of all, during this pandemic, there are businesses that need to stay open. I did not make that decision, no one in this Chamber made that decision, the Governor made that decision, by executive order, allowing, despite the shutdown of the Commonwealth and the stay-at-home order, essential and life-sustaining businesses to stay open. That is not an argument, whether some businesses should be open or not, the Governor made that decision, and I do not know that anyone has disagreed that some businesses should stay open during this pandemic and state of emergency. It seems like, and I do not want to speak for all 50 Members, but listening to their speeches here today, there is at least a bipartisan nature that Members of the legislature are frustrated with the current process by which the Governor has determined what is life-sustaining and what is essential and nonessential. I have heard that from both sides, they are very frustrated with the process and it has been difficult for all of us dealing with our constituent requests on how to comply with what the Governor is requesting and the Governor's standards that he has set out there.

So the question before us is whether we continue, or allow this to continue, through the Governor's process that has driven such frustration, that has not been transparent, that has been uneven across the Commonwealth, or do we come up with another system. As legislators, that is our right as public policymakers. Certainly, the Governor has the power, and no one is questioning his authority, but we as legislators can legislate as well to try to develop a system that we think works better for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. So we came up with this bill that would, again, adopt CDC and CISA standards for what is essential and what is nonessential. Again, it is not us deciding this, it is not us picking winners and losers, we want this business open, we do not care about this business, let us get to a nationally recognized standard that can determine what is essential and what is not essential. Get away from this waiver process. Look, I am as guilty as the next

on this because I think I am the one who suggested to the Governor that he should allow for waivers, and I guess that is one of those things - be careful what you wish for, because it has turned out to be a real problem and a real sore spot for everyone who has tried to circumvent the process or deal with the process. So this seems to be, for us, a scientific way to determine what is essential and what is nonessential.

Now, I have heard during this debate of a massive reopening of businesses. That is not what this is. This is not a massive reopening of businesses. This is still a very select amount of businesses that the CDC and Department of Homeland Security, through CISA standards, have determined to be essential. Now, the Governor initially adopted these standards. When he put his first order out, he adopted these standards, and then, as was his right, and no one is questioning that, he has deviated from that and got us into this morass where people cannot figure out why this business is open and why this business is not. So, again, this bill would take some of that unclear process away and bring clarity to what scientists of the CDC and scientists--I assume there are some scientists--at the Department of Homeland Security have developed as recommendations for us to follow. Now, I hear the Minority Leader, my good friend and colleague, talk about what Dr. Levine has suggested, and look, she has done a marvelous job, the doctor has done a marvelous job through this process, and a very difficult process that no one, when they signed up to be the Secretary of the Department of Health, ever envisioned they would be going through. But when you refer to this bill as reckless and irresponsible, I can only take that you are referring to the people of the CDC and the Department of Homeland Security CISA standards as reckless and irresponsible. When we are adopting their recommendations in this bill, that people are referring to them, at the CDC, as reckless and irresponsible.

Now, it was suggested earlier that the CDC is saying not to open up the economy, and we are not. We are not doing that here today. We are not going any further than what they have recommended. This bill does not go any further than what the CDC and Department of Homeland Security have recommended. That is it. No further than that. So when people suggest that it is profits before people, I guess they are suggesting that the recommendations from the CDC and the Department of Homeland Security are profit before people. Because that is all we are doing is adopting those recommendations. I do not think that is a fair characterization of the people at the CDC who are working very hard during this pandemic, I do not think it is a fair characterization of the people of the Department of Homeland Security who developed the CISA standards. I think they put out what they believe is the best. Now, again, the Governor has the power, and has shown it, to deviate from that, and he has. He has the power to try to make it the best way he thinks he can. We have all lived it and have all decided that it has been a disaster, it has been unfair, and it has not been transparent. Let us come up with a better way.

Adopting these standards, scientifically put together, in our mind, was the best way to move forward, not just picking out who we think should be open and who should not. This is not a massive opening of the economy. It goes exactly where, probably, the most nationally renowned folks dealing with disease

control tells us to go. That is what this debate is about. So, do we stick with the current system which everyone is frustrated with, or do we adopt a system developed by some of our leading experts on disease control in this nation? I recommend a "yes" vote on this bill.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes, for the second time, the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Costa.

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, with respect to the wording of "reckless and irresponsible," I do not believe, in my opinion, that Dr. Levine is saying that the work of the CDC or the work of the CISA are reckless and irresponsible. I believe what is meant by those phrases, and also by the other concerns raised by other organizations that I mentioned, is that the timing, that what we are doing at this point in time is a reckless measure. Not the measure itself, but doing this legislation at this point in time is what is reckless and irresponsible. As I laid out in my remarks, and many of my Members have done the same thing, this is not right for prime time. That is what the bottom line is. You all think that it is appropriate to move forward here. The Secretary, as well as many others, disagree, but it is no reflection on the belief of what the CDC says and does or the folks at CISA, if I am saying it properly, indicate what essential businesses are going to be and not be. The fact of the matter is, what we have been through and where we are at in this stage of our collective fight in the pandemic is the concern that is being raised and will continue to be the concern until we hit those benchmarks and points in time where it is appropriate for us to be able to move forward. That is what we are talking about, in my view, or my belief or interpretation of her words in that letter.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes, for the second time, the gentleman from Centre, Senator Corman.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I understand, maybe just a difference of opinion, but I do not know how you can characterize this vote as reckless and irresponsible if we are just adopting the standards of the people who are recommending, the experts, and not saying that their recommendations are not the same. Having said that, we will agree to disagree.

#### LEGISLATIVE LEAVES

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Centre, Senator Corman.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I request a temporary Capitol leave for Senator Browne, and a legislative leave for Senator Arnold.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senator Corman requests a temporary Capitol leave for Senator Browne, and a legislative leave for Senator Arnold. Without objection, the leaves will be granted.

And the question recurring,  
Will the Senate agree to the motion?

The yeas and nays were required by Senator CORMAN and were as follows, viz:

YEA-29

Argall	DiSanto	Mensch	Vogel
Arnold	Gordner	Phillips-Hill	Ward, Judy
Aument	Hutchinson	Pittman	Ward, Kim
Baker	Killion	Regan	Yaw
Bartolotta	Langerholc	Scarnati	Yudichak
Brooks	Laughlin	Scavello	
Browne	Martin	Stefano	
Corman	Mastriano	Tomlinson	

NAY-21

Blake	Farnese	Leach	Tartaglione
Boscola	Fontana	Muth	Williams, Anthony H.
Brewster	Haywood	Sabatina	Williams, Lindsey
Collett	Hughes	Santarsiero	
Costa	Iovino	Schwank	
Dinniman	Kearney	Street	

A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate inform the House of Representatives accordingly.

**MOTION PURSUANT TO SENATE RULE 12**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Centre, Senator Corman.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, as a special order of business, I call up Senate Supplemental Calendar No. 2, Senate Bill No. 327, and move the Senate proceed to consider Senate Bill No. 327, notwithstanding the provisions of Senate Rule 12(m)(2).

On the question,  
Will the Senate agree to the motion?

A voice vote having been taken, the question was determined in the affirmative.

**SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS  
SUPPLEMENTAL CALENDAR No. 2**

**SENATE CONCURS IN HOUSE  
AMENDMENTS AS AMENDED**

**SB 327 (Pr. No. 1637)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175), known as The Administrative Code of 1929, providing for COVID-19 emergency statutory and regulatory suspensions and waivers reporting requirements, for COVID-19 debt cost reduction review and for COVID-19 Cost and Recovery Task Force; in powers and duties of the Department of General Services and its departmental administrative and advisory boards and commissions, providing for report of State facilities owned or leased; providing for COVID-19 county emergency mitigation plan for businesses; and making an appropriation.

On the question,  
Will the Senate concur in the amendments made by the House, as further amended by the Senate, to Senate Bill No. 327?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Centre, Senator Corman.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I move that the Senate do concur in the amendments made by the House, as further amended by the Senate, to Senate Bill No. 327.

On the question,  
Will the Senate agree to the motion?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Lancaster, Senator Martin.

Senator MARTIN. Mr. President, I rise in support of Senate Bill No. 327. Very briefly, I state that this pandemic has been a new case of a type of emergency that we have not dealt with in our modern lifetime. The ability to put forth a task force to analyze its impact on Pennsylvania and where we can improve not only will benefit us for the long term, but in the short term, if there happens to be any virus coming back when the seasons change.

Secondly, Mr. President, I also rise in support of the provision in terms of counties being able to make the decisions. I have been a county commissioner for 8 years. I have overseen emergency management prior. I worked hand-in-hand with the entire emergency operation center team that is tuned in with the business community, tuned in with your local healthcare systems, and the things that are going on in your local communities. County commissioners are more than capable and connected, and I argue more so than from anywhere up here in Harrisburg, in knowing what is best for their communities, the timing of it, and the medical impacts or considerations that need to be given.

So I ask my colleagues to please vote to concur in amendments to Senate Bill No. 327.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Allegheny, Senator Costa.

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I will be brief in my remarks. I echo some of the comments I made earlier today, I believe, in committee, but a couple of things concern me about Senate Bill No. 327, that is why I rise and ask for a negative vote. First and foremost, the provision that was added today that relates to delegating the authority to our county commissioners or county executives and the like in consultation, I presume, with our emergency responders, what that creates, Mr. President, is a situation where, theoretically, we can have so many different types of issues going on in our counties as it relates to a plan in place for the Commonwealth. It will not be a common plan, it will be a mishmash of 67 different varieties of what is taking place in each of those counties. As we know, Mr. President, one of the things that we are seeing right now is the competition among borders. We look to see what Ohio is doing with liquor. We look to see what other States are doing. No doubt those types of competitions for businesses will be taking place as well as we go forward. That is a provision that concerns me, and if we are going to have a directive, my preference is that it come from the Secretary of Health in this Commonwealth and in consultation with the administration as we go forward.

Second provision, Mr. President, while I recognize, agree, and support the notion that we should have oversight or a task force that is put together, I believe that it should be one that, in my view, is deemed to be balanced in terms of representation. This one is not. As I stated earlier, while there would be 10 essential Republican appointments to the legislature, only 6 among the

Democrats in the General Assembly, 4 from the Governor, but the 3 pivotal ones that make the difference are the ones coming from the court, from our Supreme Court, from our Chief Justice in the Supreme Court, Republican Chief Justice, who will have the unfettered discretion to pick whomever he likes from a couple different bands of courts. To me, that is where the difference lies, and that is what provides for an unbalanced type of a task force that needs to be addressed.

The third thing, Mr. President, is removing or asking the Governor to remove himself from dealing with this pandemic for our Commonwealth and whether or not we deal with other States in the eastern part of the country or whether we go west into Ohio and West Virginia and have that conversation. The fact of the matter is, removing the Governor from opportunities to be able to address this pandemic in requiring him to respond and answer to questions we may have as General Assembly Members or task force members, to me, is not appropriate. That conversation should wait until after we do a lookback and see the things that we have done, whether they were done well or whether they were done poorly and what we can improve upon to insure that we address the next pandemic; and whether or not we have to revisit this one once we get our economy back up and going; and whether or not we have in place the procedures and practices and equipment to allow us to be able to address that. That is where I want to see the Governor's attention through this process, but more importantly is the lookback being part of that conversation to better equip us as a Commonwealth as we go forward.

For those reasons, Mr. President, I ask for a negative vote. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Anthony Williams.

Senator A.H. WILLIAMS. Mr. President, I mentioned in the meeting of the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations the math, and I will get even more specific with that. If this is an advisory committee, which, on the face of it, I am not opposed to an advisory committee, but I do believe we should be reviewing the facts based upon history and circumstances for the future. I think that is in the best interest of all people in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. What I do not understand and I cannot support is the contradiction in terms of how you arrive at numbers of representation on the advisory committee. Absent the fact that it is Republican versus Democrat, let us get even more specific. If this is an advisory committee, and we just voted a bill that talked about all Pennsylvanians are not the same and should not be treated the same, why would you not have this advisory committee represented by those areas that are most impacted? Why would you not have an advisory committee, regardless of Democrat or Republican, I could care less, why would it not be represented by those most impacted in Pennsylvania by this epidemic and make sure it does not happen again? Why would we not be talking about communities that are impoverished and do not have quality healthcare, do not have access to testing? Why would we not be talking about the obvious, that, unfortunately, African Americans are disproportionately affected by this virus, and we are not quite sure why, given the fact there has been a rollout of testing sites in those communities, but they have never been tested?

There is hypocrisy in this conversation that people sometimes

are frightened, and I am not quite sure why we treat it in the manner that we do. This is a serious set of circumstances, and I believe everybody is earnest in their humanity. I truly believe that. But when you really get down to reading the details of some of the things we are talking about, there is not just a gap, there is a chasm of integrity as it relates to how we got to where we are. So while my colleague talked about the simple difference between Democrats and Republicans, which is stark, I talk about the most obvious: Communities that are being ravaged, if it is a small business, a tiny business, a family business, those who are dying, those who will not have a lifeline to come back, frontline workers, hospital workers, nurses, why would they not be represented in a significant way--frankly, in a majority way--on this panel if it is advisory, investigatory, and desires to find conclusions that result in solutions going forward?

For those obvious reasons, I have to rest with my colleague in opposing this. Now, that said, I am more than happy to go back and revisit it if the true work that needs to go into it in terms of its design, its execution, its implementation, and, most importantly, its construct to get to a bottom line. So with those issues in mind, I hope that those who are feeling this is very important to do get beyond the limitations of the numbers of who is a Democrat and who is a Republican in this building and get to the true purpose of what supposedly is behind all this and how we help Pennsylvanians going forward after this pandemic has subsided.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Berks, Senator Schwank.

Senator SCHWANK. Mr. President, I want to address the aspects of this legislation that gives the authority to counties, and particularly county commissioners or county executives, the authority to open up businesses to make some of these decisions that heretofore have been under the Governor's jurisdiction. Like my colleague and friend from Lancaster County, I, too, was a county commissioner. I was a county commissioner for 8 years, and I also was the county commissioner who served on the emergency management team. I was the one who had the direct authority in working with those agencies. The experiences were amazing, the ability to work with people and volunteers - our firefighters, our police - on the local level was afforded to me by being able to do that. I agree with him wholeheartedly, the county commissioners serve with the best intentions and they truly do know what is going on in their communities, probably better than we do. No doubt about it. But I can tell you this, there are two things that we are forgetting here. One is the fact that, by saying this, we are literally transferring the authority to make these decisions to county commissioners who may not actually even want this authority. Do we know that? Is this something that they desire that they are going to be making these decisions? I think it is wrong for us to abdicate our responsibility by trying to transfer this authority.

Finally, and maybe the most important point is, this virus does not respect political boundaries. It is crazy to think that each individual county can make independent decisions in terms of what they will open up or what they will not open up when they cannot see this enemy, when we have no cure, when we do not have enough protective equipment, where, just think of it, the differences in terms of healthcare from county to county varies

so much. This is really a wrong move, and I will hope--I do hope that my colleagues reconsider about making this decision. As much as I respect my county commissioner colleagues, and I will always fondly remember that experience, back then I only had to worry about 2 other votes, not about 49 other votes, but honestly, this is the wrong move to make. This will only exacerbate the problem, and I urge you to vote "no" on this. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Montgomery, Senator Mensch.

Senator MENSCH. Mr. President, to be very brief, we are in the situation we are in because we did not approach this logically in a county-by-county fashion. We have much diversity across our State, not only racial and economic, but population density. There are many different measures that you can apply to any one political subdivision called a county. We are not mandating to any of the county commissioners that they need to accept this responsibility. They can opt in if they want to. I think it gives greater flexibility to the counties where many of the county commissioners recognize that one size does not fit all. We have some situations where counties were closed early, Montgomery being one of those, where we had many other counties that were still working because we did not have any of the virus. We are going to see those curves flatten faster in those counties where the virus was late to get to, we are going to see those curves flatten quicker than it would in, say, Montgomery County. So I think that the county commissioners deserve the opportunity to make a decision for their citizens whether or not they want to embark on opening businesses.

In the legislation, the amendment provides the opportunity for those counties that would begin to do it if they chose, and if they decided it was not the right track for them, they could cease and desist. They would not have to continue with the process. So there is a great deal of flexibility here for the county commissioners, but, more importantly, there is a great deal of flexibility for the State. I think we all care very much about our citizens and we also care very much about the economy. If we can get some people back to work safely sooner than others, then it is incumbent upon to us to recognize that opportunity and to give this power to the commissioners.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Farnese.

Senator FARNESE. Mr. President, I will try to be brief. There is no question that the circumstances we are operating under right now are unprecedented. No one would argue with that, and they are historic, but the issues that we are dealing with right now, today, when you boil it down, they deal with literally the life and death of the citizens of Pennsylvania. That is what we are dealing with. And we have dealt with issues of this dire importance before, the life and death, the protection, how to keep Pennsylvanians safe. Who is best to make those decisions? Who to extend the authority to make those decisions? We have done it time and time again, because that is what we do. That is our job. So, while our conditions that we find ourselves in today are certainly historic and unprecedented, the issue which is at hand, the life, death, and safety and how to protect the people of Pennsylvania are issues that we have dealt with in the past. The fact that we are looking now at the decision on whether or not and how Pennsyl-

vanians are protected in the middle of a pandemic, that we are willing to say now is the time to go to our local officials, our local municipalities, because they, in terms of other speakers, they know what is best for the people they represent. They are on the ground. Mr. President, with all due respect, I have heard that argument time and time again in this Chamber when folks have put forward bills to protect the welfare, health, and safety of people in this State. This is not the first emergency disaster situation we have ever had. We have a gun violence epidemic in this State, specifically in Philadelphia, and we have brought the same argument up time and time again, municipalities and the people who run them at times are best suited to make those decisions to protect the men, women, and children in those municipalities and those communities, and this Chamber and this Majority has said no. It has said no.

Every section of Pennsylvania, it is the same issue today that we have dealt with in the past, specifically when it comes to issues like gun safety, where people are being killed in the streets across this Commonwealth. We need to remember the comments and the reasons that we state here today, because, again, not only what we are doing here is historic, but it does have consequences. We should be voting "no" on this bill today. We should follow the sage advice of Dr. Levine, and we should stop having these discussions, because I am going to tell you, I think an earlier speaker said it, you know, we are not mandating anything. We are allowing municipalities, we are letting them make the decision based upon guidelines. We are sending a message here today. This is the Senate of Pennsylvania. We are sending a message. Whether this bill is passed or not, or signed or not by the Governor, this sends a message. The fact that we have chosen to have this debate and this discussion at this particular time in this Commonwealth's history, yes, Mr. President, I do not think that is prudent; quite frankly, it is wrong. It is not something that we should be having a debate on in the Senate at this time. This is what people are going to see, what we are doing here today, and we are going to send a message.

Mr. President, I am going to be voting "no" because, again, like others have said, this is not the time and this is certainly not the reason. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Schuylkill, Senator Argall.

Senator ARGALL. Mr. President, this really comes down to a simple question of who do we trust to decide when our employees and our employers can go back to work? I have heard from some of the county commissioners of the district that I represent in Berks and Schuylkill Counties, where they support this legislation. I really think it just comes down to common sense. The Governor has decided to move forward in planning for our future with other governors, a select group of other governors - Democrats, not Republicans, governors from our north and our east, not our south and west. We can all speculate as to why he chose to work with some and not others, but in my mind, who should be making these decisions? I certainly believe in this case when we are talking about our future, our economic future, our health, we should trust people in Pottsville, Pine Grove, Reading, and Sinking Spring, not people in Rhode Island and Connecticut, who could not find Tamaqua on a map if their life depended on it. I strongly support a "yes" vote on this measure.



And the question recurring,  
Will the Senate agree to the motion?

The yeas and nays were required by Senator CORMAN and were as follows, viz:

YEA-29

Argall	DiSanto	Mensch	Vogel
Arnold	Gordner	Phillips-Hill	Ward, Judy
Aument	Hutchinson	Pittman	Ward, Kim
Baker	Killion	Regan	Yaw
Bartolotta	Langerholc	Scarnati	Yudichak
Brooks	Laughlin	Scavello	
Browne	Martin	Stefano	
Corman	Mastriano	Tomlinson	

NAY-21

Blake	Farnese	Leach	Tartaglione
Boscola	Fontana	Muth	Williams, Anthony H.
Brewster	Haywood	Sabatina	Williams, Lindsey
Collett	Hughes	Santarsiero	
Costa	Iovino	Schwank	
Dinniman	Kearney	Street	

A constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate inform the House of Representatives accordingly.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS  
BILLS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE**

Senator BROWNE, from the Committee on Appropriations, reported the following bills:

**SB 1027 (Pr. No. 1621) (Rereported)**

An Act amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175), known as The Administrative Code of 1929, in organization of departmental administrative boards and commissions and of advisory boards and commissions, further providing for State Geospatial Coordinating Board.

**SB 1097 (Pr. No. 1622) (Rereported)**

An Act amending Titles 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) and 57 (Notaries Public) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in Uniform Unsworn Foreign Declarations Act, further providing for heading of chapter, for short title of chapter, for definitions, for applicability and for form of unsworn declaration, and, in revised uniform law on notarial acts, further providing for authority to perform notarial act, providing for notarial act performed by remotely located individual and further providing for notification regarding performance of notarial act on electronic record and selection of technology.

**SB 1106 (Pr. No. 1626) (Rereported)**

An Act amending the act of June 28, 1935 (P.L.477, No.193), referred to as the Enforcement Officer Disability Benefits Law (Heart and Lung Act), further providing for disability benefits.

**SB 1108 (Pr. No. 1628)**

A Supplement to the act of June 28, 2019 (P.L. , No. 1A), known as the General Appropriation Act of 2019, adding Federal appropriations to the Executive Department of the Commonwealth for the fiscal year July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020.

**HB 752 (Pr. No. 802) (Rereported)**

An Act amending Title 34 (Game) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in property and buildings, further providing for price paid for acquisitions and improvements.

**HB 1869 (Pr. No. 3569) (Amended) (Rereported)**

An Act amending Title 35 (Health and Safety) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in emergency medical services system, further providing for basic life support ambulances.

**BILL ON FIRST CONSIDERATION**

Senator MARTIN. Mr. President, I move that the Senate do now proceed to consideration of the bill reported from committee for the first time at today's Session.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

The bill was as follows:

**SB 1108.**

And said bill having been considered for the first time,  
Ordered, To be printed on the Calendar for second consideration.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY**

The following announcements were read by the Secretary of the Senate:

SENATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2020

12:00 P.M.	RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS (to consider certain Executive Nominations) <b>C A N C E L L E D</b>	Senate Chamber (LIVE STREAMED)
12:15 P.M.	JUDICIARY (confirmation hearing to consider the nominations of George R. Twardy, Jr., Esquire, appointee for the Court of Common Pleas, Philadelphia County, and Mark J. Moore, Esquire, appointee for the Court of Common Pleas, Philadelphia County; and to consider Senate Bills No. 1119 and 1120; and House Bill No. 360)	Senate Chamber (LIVE STREAMED)
Off the Floor	HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (to consider Senate Bills No. 273, 959 and 1110)	Senate Chamber (LIVE STREAMED)
Off the Floor	VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS (to consider Senate Bills No. 1076 and 1122; and House Bills No. 1459 and 1838)	Senate Chamber (LIVE STREAMED)

**PETITIONS AND REMONSTRANCES**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senator Tartaglione has submitted remarks for the record. Without objection, the remarks will be spread upon the record.

*(The following prepared remarks were made part of the record at the request of the gentlewoman from Philadelphia, Senator TARTAGLIONE:)*

Mr. President, today marks 5,029 days since the Pennsylvania legislature last raised the minimum wage. That is more than 13 1/2 years, and it is far too long. Mr. President, I am a firm believer that actions speak louder than words. Unfortunately, the General Assembly's actions over the last 13-plus years, and in more recent times, speak volumes about how many regard the working people of the Commonwealth.

In recent weeks, the coronavirus pandemic has required many of us to retreat into our homes, precipitated the downsizing and closing of countless schools and businesses, and caused massive layoffs here in Pennsylvania and across the nation. During this period of upheaval, we have turned to our essential, frontline businesses and workers to satisfy many of our most basic needs: the food supply chain, healthcare, public safety, and transportation, to name a few. We have seen these essential workers become ill with horrifying frequency, and some have even died as a result of COVID-19 exposure. In Hazleton, a meat packaging plant was forced to shut down when at least 130 of its 900 employees, and perhaps dozens more, tested positive for the virus. Shutdowns have also occurred at food processing facilities in Mifflintown, King of Prussia, and Souderton, where one employee passed away from respiratory failure brought on by the virus. Similar scenes are playing out in other States, like Colorado, Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota.

Other essential occupations have been hit hard too. In the Philadelphia region, SEPTA has reported more than 140 confirmed COVID-19 cases among employees from at least 25 different work locations. At least two workers passed away after contracting the virus. More than 130 Philadelphia police officers have tested positive, while hundreds more are under quarantine with their test results pending. At least one officer passed away after contracting the virus. These are just some of the many examples of how the coronavirus is taking a heavy toll on our essential workforce.

Despite these realities, the Senate today chose not to advance legislation that would have provided critical emergency relief to frontline workers and their families in the form of enhanced health and safety protections, paid leave, and guaranteed benefits. My proposals and those of my Democratic colleagues would have helped many essential workers who already earn family-sustaining wages, thanks largely to collective bargaining. Yet, many more Pennsylvanians who continue to show up for work every day, despite the occupational hazards they routinely face, continue to be paid what can only be described as poverty wages. The irony is not lost on us that grocery store clerks, many of whom make minimum wage, or slightly above, are frontline workers; and only now have some of their employers agreed to increase wages by a dollar or two. But even with those modest increases, many clerks still are not making family-sustaining wages.

Mr. President, our inability to advance legislation to protect their safety, and our inability to advance legislation to raise the minimum wage, are two sure signs that these workers are undervalued in a financial sense and in a human sense. We, as a Commonwealth, especially the policymakers in the Capitol, should recognize and thank all workers - essential and otherwise - for the invaluable services they provide to the people of Pennsylvania every day of the year, services that many of them continue to provide in our time of greatest need as they jeopardize their own well-being. One profound way to recognize their vital contributions would be to raise the minimum wage and grant them the financial independence they have worked long and hard to earn.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senator Yudichak has submitted remarks for the record. Without objection, the remarks will be spread upon the record.

*(The following prepared remarks were made part of the record at the request of the gentleman from Luzerne, Senator YUDICHAK:)*

Mr. President, I respectfully submit these written remarks for the record on Senate Bill No. 327 and Senate Bill No. 613.

If the COVID-19 crisis has taught us anything, it has taught us we are all in this together and governments need to be collaborative in their approach to a global pandemic. Neither the President of the United States nor the Governor has total authority over our response to this crisis, we must marshal the resources and talents of all levels of government to battle the spread of the novel coronavirus in our communities.

Senate Bill No. 327 and Senate Bill No. 613 simply advance the idea that all three branches of State government - the executive, the legislative, and the judicial - should be working in tandem to meet the needs of every community and every citizen in the Commonwealth.

The unique challenge of the COVID-19 crisis is not an open-ended opportunity for the executive branch to make unilateral decisions that exclude representatives from the legislative and judicial branches of government. Protecting the public health and managing an economy that ensures safe working conditions are not mutually exclusive concepts, and certainly should not be partisan bickering points. Over 45 States in the nation currently operate under uniform CDC and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency's (CISA) guidelines regarding safe business mitigation efforts. The Department of Community and Economic Development and the Department of Health already have broad authority to implement safe business mitigation plans and enforce those measures.

We have talented men and women in all branches of State government, and it is necessary that in this most pressing hour we work together to save both lives and livelihoods. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Chester, Senator Dinniman.

Senator DINNIMAN. Mr. President, I purposely wanted to do this at the end and through a remonstrance. We all know the stage upon which we sit and stand today. The outcome we also knew even before this debate began: The Majority would vote for the two bills that were passed; the Governor now will proceed to veto those two bills that have been passed, and it will be impossible, based on partisan lines, to override the Governor's veto. The question is, what has happened to us as a people? What has happened to us as Americans? When 19 years ago, 2001, when 9/11 occurred, there was no Democrat, there was no Republican. We united together as one people against an external threat. The external threat of this virus is every bit as much as a 9/11 attack is or any act of war would be upon us.

So we are entering a very precious moment of time, a moment when now, with the veto, we can make a decision of whether we are going to really talk to each other, whether we are really going to solve what is going on. As I listened to my colleagues, everyone spoke with sincerity, everyone wants to protect the citizens of this Commonwealth. I have served in the Senate for 15 years, and I have great respect for the integrity and for the sense of purpose of each and every Member of the Senate, but are we going to be able to come together? Leadership at the State and national level needs to do this. The threat is too great for us to continue simply to make the votes along partisan lines. The precious moment in time is that we actually have the ability now, if we take it, to have this dialogue which is so necessary, and I hope we will do that.

No one is going back to work unless we solve three problems, and that is where we can unite. There is not enough testing going

on, there is not the enforcement of that testing, and in this Commonwealth we have not even begun to do what is called contact tracing, and that is going to require a whole new effort. So at least we can unite on the fact that we need a testing regimen, that we need to enforce what is out there, that we need to begin, which we have not, to track down each case by case, and that requires people to do it, and we have not heard any discussion of that.

I say that so that I can make the second of two issues, why I waited for this. I hope that what was put across in the omnibus amendment that we can all take what Senator Corman promised and make it a reality, that there are ways that we can work things out if we respect each other and we respect the positions that were stated today. There is a way to combine what is called for in Senate Bill No. 619 with worker protection, and I want to give you an example of what can be done, and this involves what I had put into that amendment. We all agree that there is a lack of testing. Yet, in my county we put up the money. We did not ask the State for the money. We put up the money to do point-of-contact testing so that all of our emergency service personnel would be protected. What occurred is, we got permission from the Department of Health, and I say this not as criticism, but to demonstrate a dialogue that has to take place. That permission, 2 weeks later after we ordered the point-of-contact tests, was taken away when the Department of Health refused to be what is called the high-complex lab partner. It was not that they had to do anything, it was that if something was not approved yet by the FDA, you needed to have such a partner.

Now, the argument was that people were questioning the point-of-contact testing. When you do not have enough of the other testing, this is a way to save lives. We wanted it for our emergency service personnel and we were told, well, we have to wait until this test is approved by the FDA. There are currently no tests approved for point-of-contact testing. Yet, we were willing to put up the funds. We worked with our neighboring counties so that we would have a way to protect our emergency workers.

So, I am trying to say, we have to respect each other, but we also have to listen to the wisdom that comes from all branches and all levels of government. The tests, let me read two things and then conclude. The tests, when the request was written to the Department of Health, it said the county went through a due diligence process, which included an evaluation of all of these tests. In evaluating the test kits, we found a test that was the proper test to use. Additionally, the county reviewed validation data and found that it performed well compared to other manufacturers. Now, we, on one hand, cannot get it through, and there are no point-of-contact tests right now. A Pennsylvania manufacturer who represents the biotech strength of our Commonwealth here in our suburban area has submitted their tests to the FDA. We do not know if it will come back in 1 week or 2 weeks. What are other States doing? Just to show you how we all have to listen to each other, how if we do not have the regular tests, we have to try other things, we have to listen to our counties, we have to listen to everyone and have this dialogue together.

Let me read you something. It was announced today by the Governor of Arizona that the test that the State will offer, antibody tests for healthcare workers and first responders across the

State, the State investment will allow the University of Arizona to test 250,000 Arizona frontline workers. These are the people, by the way, who might not have the symptoms. We are using these tests, by the way, in our prisons and in our nursing homes successfully. Let me read you one other thing. The tests will determine how many people have been exposed to the coronavirus and have successfully built an immunity against it. Experts say as many as 50 percent of the people who have been exposed to this virus have experienced few or no symptoms. Such testing is being used in Los Angeles County, California; in Palm Beach County, Florida; in San Miguel County, Colorado; and in Genesee County, Michigan. Today, I read—I guess it is good if you have money, because the wealthiest place in the United States, Fisher Island, Florida, has just purchased these tests so that they would be protected.

Mr. President, what I am trying to say is this, let us not waste this moment in time. Let us try to restore what we found in this nation in 2001. That requires us on all levels not simply to repeat partisan positions that we knew what the result would be today. We know it will be vetoed. Let us use this precious moment in time to come together, and, Mr. President, let us make sure that we really listen to each other. We are frustrated, as Chester Countians, when we want to protect our emergency service workers, when we put up the money, and, yet, we do not have an answer. This is not a criticism so much of the Department of Health. Dr. Levine is a hero for all of us. Tom Wolf is doing his best, but it is saying that unless we talk to each other, we cannot have the unity of response which we saw in 2001. Yet, we can be the greatest generation of the 21st century. We can do what Americans did in World War II, what we did in terms of 9/11 in 2001 if we only begin this dialogue together.

Thank you, Mr. President, and thank you to my colleagues for allowing me, instead of speaking on the floor for one bill or another, to make this plea here today.

### BILL SIGNED

The PRESIDENT pro tempore (Senator Joseph B. Scarnati III) in the presence of the Senate signed the following bill:

#### SB 613.

### RECESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Centre, Senator Corman.

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I move to recess the Senate to the call of the President pro tempore.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate stands in recess to the call of the President pro tempore.

### AFTER RECESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The time of recess having expired, the Senate will come to order.

### RECESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Centre, Senator Corman.

---

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I move that the Senate do now recess until Monday, April 20, 2020, at 1:26 p.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time, unless sooner recalled by the President pro tempore.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.

The Senate recessed at 10:59 p.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time.