

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
**Legislative Journal**

TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2020

SESSION OF 2020 204TH OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

No. 14

**SENATE**

TUESDAY, April 21, 2020

The Senate met at 11 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:

Good morning. Psalm 28 tells us: "The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and He helps me. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise Him."

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, You are our Creator and our Sustainer. You are our strength and our shield. You are our rock and our fortress. You are our wisdom and our strength. We ask for Your guiding hand to lead us through this Session. May we approach our tasks with wisdom, and may we approach one another with respect. Thank You for helping us to accomplish our important work this day. All this we ask in Your name. Amen.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**BILL INTRODUCED AND REFERRED**

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

April 21, 2020

Senators BROWNE, MARTIN, PHILLIPS-HILL, AUMENT, MASTRIANO, LANGERHOLC, REGAN, VOGEL, YUDICHAK and MENSCH presented to the Chair **SB 1126**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of June 13, 1967 (P.L.31, No.21), known as the Human Services Code, providing for Department of Health and Human Services; transferring powers and duties of the Department of Health and the Department of Human Services to the Department of Health and Human Services; making related repeals; and making editorial changes.

Which was committed to the Committee on HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, April 21, 2020.

**JOURNAL APPROVED**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Journal of the Session of February 5, 2020, is now in print.

The Clerk proceeded to read the Journal of the Session of February 5, 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**

**THIRD CONSIDERATION CALENDAR**

**BILL LAID ON THE TABLE**

**HB 64 (Pr. No. 68)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of July 2, 1993 (P.L.345, No.48), entitled "An act empowering the General Counsel or his designee to issue subpoenas for certain licensing board activities; providing for hearing examiners in the Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs; providing additional powers to the Commissioner of Professional and Occupational Affairs; and further providing for civil penalties and license suspension," further providing for civil penalties.

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

**HB 64 TAKEN FROM THE TABLE**

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I move that House Bill No. 64, Printer's No. 68, 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**

**HB 280** and **HB 355** -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

**BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION AND FINAL PASSAGE**

**SB 417 (Pr. No. 1652)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of June 3, 1937 (P.L.1333, No.320), known as the Pennsylvania Election Code, in party organization, further providing for who shall be declared elected members of national or State committee and party offices; and, in returns of primaries and elections, further providing for manner of computing irregular ballots.

Considered the third time and agreed to,

And the amendments made thereto having been printed as required by the Constitution,

On the question,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

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

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I do not know whether the prime sponsor will be speaking on the bill or not. I have a couple of things to put in the record as it relates to this legislation. As I understand it, there are three provisions or three parts to this legislation. One dealing with the changes, modifications, or amendments that were made over the course of the last several days to Act 77, which I think are important for us to be able to implement that legislation, as well as Act 12, subsequent to Act 77, or vice versa. The bottom line is, Mr. President, that is one of the things I am supportive of. The second piece of it relates, if I am not mistaken, to a tax collector process by which we would make changes along those lines. That is where there is some objection from folks at the Department of State, and, similarly, there is objection from the Department of State as it relates to the number of write-in votes required as it relates to the number of votes in a general election to bring it into conformity with the primary election process, as I understand it, the same number of votes as necessitated for a petition, which I think makes sense. So, I want to make sure that we put on the record some of the concerns that have been raised by the Department of State. I intend to vote for the measure, given the two provisions that I think make sense, and I wanted to put that on the record.

And the question recurring,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

**YEA-35**

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

**NAY-15**

Collett	Iovino	Sabatina	Tartaglione
Farnese	Kearney	Santarsiero	Williams, Anthony H.
Haywood	Leach	Schwank	Williams, Lindsey
Hughes	Muth	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 present said bill to the House of Representatives for concurrence.

**ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE**

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. May I please remind the Members who are participating today remotely to turn down the volume of other devices to prevent any feedback and echoes for those who are participating remotely. Thank you very much.

**CONSIDERATION OF CALENDAR RESUMED**

**THIRD CONSIDERATION CALENDAR RESUMED**

**BILL OVER IN ORDER**

**SB 494** -- Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

**BILL LAID ON THE TABLE**

**SB 679 (Pr. No. 1395)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of November 26, 1978 (P.L.1375, No.325), known as the Dam Safety and Encroachments Act, further providing for definitions; and providing for programs for removing obstructions and flood-related hazards on streams.

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

**SB 679 TAKEN FROM THE TABLE**

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I move that Senate Bill No. 679, Printer's No. 1395, 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 693, HB 716, SB 798, HB 1045, SB 1097, SB 1106 and HB 1210** -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

#### BILL LAID ON THE TABLE

**HB 1379 (Pr. No. 1670)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act repealing the act of June 22, 1935 (P.L.446, No.187), referred to as the Sunday Polo Act.

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

#### HB 1379 TAKEN FROM THE TABLE

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I move that House Bill No. 1379, Printer's No. 1670, 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.

#### BILL LAID ON THE TABLE

**HB 1405 (Pr. No. 1725)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act repealing the act of June 22, 1935 (P.L.449, No.188), referred to as the Sunday Tennis Act.

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

#### HB 1405 TAKEN FROM THE TABLE

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I move that House Bill No. 1405, Printer's No. 1725, 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.

#### BILL OVER IN ORDER

**HB 1522** -- Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

#### BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION AND FINAL PASSAGE

**HB 1869 (Pr. No. 3582)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 35 (Health and Safety) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for COVID-19 benefits for members of Pennsylvania National Guard; and, providing for COVID-19 enforcement officer disability benefits; and, in emergency medical services system, further providing for basic life support ambulances.

Considered the third time and agreed to,

And the amendments made thereto having been printed as required by the Constitution,

On the question,

Shall the bill pass finally?

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

Senator MUTH. Mr. President, I am going to defer my comments. I know Senator Iovino wanted to speak on the bill, but I am obviously very supportive and, again, grateful that we are able to get this done.

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

Senator IOVINO. Mr. President, I rise today in support of House Bill No. 1869. As amended yesterday, House Bill No. 1869 will provide emergency benefits to members of the Pennsylvania National Guard who contract COVID-19 during a State active duty deployment. With this amendment, House Bill No. 1869 corrects an existing gap in benefits for this category of public service. Members of our Pennsylvania National Guard who are on State active duty are not currently eligible for benefits parity with other first responders. Currently, we have Pennsylvania Guardsmen and women on the front lines in an unprecedented disaster, risking their own safety and that of their families in a way they never have before. They are in communities across our Commonwealth helping to respond to the virus, including here in southwestern Pennsylvania, where they are assisting with food distribution for the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, and some Guard members in our State have been diagnosed with COVID-19 as a result of their deployment and are no longer able to work. Our Pennsylvania National Guard members and their families need our support. As Democratic chair of the Committee on Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness and a 23-year veteran of the United States Navy, I recognize and strongly believe in our need to stand with our men and women in uniform. House Bill No. 1869 does just that. I ask my colleagues to stand with our Pennsylvania National Guard members and their families with an affirmative vote on this bill.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, briefly, I want to extend thanks to all the folks who were involved with the work yesterday - Senator Muth, Senator Iovino, and Senator Regan - to amend House Bill No. 1869 to allow it to really be comprehensive and protect individuals who are on the front line. I thank the Majority Leader for his work in helping to facilitate and understand where we needed to be with respect to the language of the amendments that we offered, and I say thank you to everyone for working in a bipartisan way in that regard.

Thank you, Mr. President.

And the question recurring,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution 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 constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the affirmative.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate return said bill to the House of Representatives with information that the Senate has passed the same with amendments in which concurrence of the House is requested.

BILL OVER IN ORDER

**HB 1907** -- Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

SECOND CONSIDERATION CALENDAR

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

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

BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION  
AND REREFERRED

**SB 273 (Pr. No. 224)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of May 21, 2013 (P.L.32, No.10), known as the Community-Based Health Care Act, in health care assistance, further providing for Community-Based Health Care Program.

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.

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

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

BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION

**HB 360 (Pr. No. 3583)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 23 (Domestic Relations) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in marriage license, further providing for restrictions on issuance of license and for oral examination.

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

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

**SB 531, SB 565, SB 766, SB 784, SB 809** and **SB 954** -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION  
AND REREFERRED

**SB 959 (Pr. No. 1650)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of June 13, 1967 (P.L.31, No.21), known as the Human Services Code, in public assistance, further providing for medical assistance payments for institutional care.

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.

BILL OVER IN ORDER

**SB 995** -- Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

BILLS ON SECOND CONSIDERATION  
AND REREFERRED

**SB 1076 (Pr. No. 1560)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 51 (Military Affairs) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in military leave of absence, further providing for military family relief assistance.

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.

**SB 1110 (Pr. No. 1651)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, 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 definitions and for confidentiality of reports and records.

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.

**SB 1119 (Pr. No. 1643)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in limitation of time, providing for declaration of judicial emergencies.

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.

**SB 1120 (Pr. No. 1644)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in sentencing, further providing for payment of court costs, restitution and fines.

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.

**SB 1122 (Pr. No. 1647)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 35 (Health and Safety) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in grants to fire companies and emergency medical services companies, providing for COVID-19 Crisis Fire Company and Emergency Medical Services Grant Program.

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.

#### BILL LAID ON THE TABLE

**HB 1174 (Pr. No. 1360)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act repealing the act of April 25, 1933 (P.L.74, No.49), entitled "An act relating to baseball and football on Sunday; prohibiting baseball

and football on Sunday during certain hours, and also during certain other hours unless the electors of a municipality are in favor of the same and, in certain cases, a license has first been secured from the municipal authorities; providing for referendums to ascertain the will of the electors, and for the enactment and repeal of licensing ordinances and resolutions in accordance therewith; providing penalties; and repealing inconsistent laws."

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

#### HB 1174 TAKEN FROM THE TABLE

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I move that House Bill No. 1174, Printer's No. 1360, 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.

#### BILL ON SECOND CONSIDERATION AND REREFERRED

**HB 1838 (Pr. No. 3590)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Titles 35 (Health and Safety) and 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in emergency medical services system, further providing for support of emergency medical services; in general provisions, further providing for EMS costs; and, in driving after imbibing alcohol or utilizing drugs, further providing for Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition.

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 a couple off-the-floor committee meetings to be held here on the floor of the Senate; first, the Committee on Appropriations, followed by the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. For purposes of meetings of the Committee on Appropriations, to be followed by the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations, 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.

#### BILLS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEES

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

**SB 368 (Pr. No. 1383) (Rereported)**

An Act amending Title 23 (Domestic Relations) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in child protective services, further providing for notification to department and development of plan of safe care for children under one year of age.

**SB 530 (Pr. No. 1331) (Rereported)**

An Act amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, in pupils and attendance, providing for students convicted or adjudicated delinquent of sexual assault; and, in safe schools, further providing for safe schools advocate in school districts of the first class.

**SB 532 (Pr. No. 1187) (Rereported)**

An Act amending Title 38 (Holidays and Observances) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for holidays and observances.

**SB 606 (Pr. No. 791) (Rereported)**

An Act providing for expedited partner therapy and for liability.

**SB 647 (Pr. No. 807) (Rereported)**

An Act amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in budget and finance, establishing the Drug Recognition Expert Training Fund.

**SB 927 (Pr. No. 1320) (Rereported)**

An Act amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in licensing of drivers, further providing for issuance and content of driver's license.

**SB 935 (Pr. No. 1516) (Rereported)**

An Act amending the act of April 27, 1927 (P.L.465, No.299), referred to as the Fire and Panic Act, further providing for standards for Class VI buildings.

**SB 968 (Pr. No. 1480) (Rereported)**

An Act amending Titles 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) and 61 (Prisons and Parole) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in judicial boards and commissions, further providing for definitions and for publication of guidelines for sentencing, resentencing and parole, risk assessment instrument and recommitment ranges following revocation; in depositions and witnesses, further providing for confidential communications involving law enforcement officers and for confidential communications to peer support members; in juvenile matters, further providing for inspection of court files and records; in particular rights and immunities, further providing for immunity of State parole officers and for immunity of program administrators and supervisors; in post-trial matters, further providing for postconviction DNA testing; in sentencing, further providing for mandatory period of probation for certain sexual offenders, for disposition of persons found guilty but mentally ill, for information required upon commitment and subsequent disposition, for judicial power to release inmates, for transfer of inmates in need of medical treatment, for applicability, for registry, for initial registration, for duty to inform, for enforcement, for assessments, for administration, for global positioning system technology, for immunity for good faith conduct, for Pennsylvania State Police, for duties of probation and parole officials, for board, for annual performance audit, for applicability, for registration procedures and applicability, for assessments, for administration, for global positioning system technology, for immunity for good faith conduct, for duties of Pennsylvania State Po-

lice, for duties of Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, for board and for annual performance audit; in other criminal provisions, further providing for supervisory relationship to offenders; in preliminary provisions, further providing for definitions; in general administration, providing for powers of peace officers; in community corrections centers and community corrections facilities, further providing for definitions, for department, for offenders who may be housed, for authority of Commonwealth employees, for authority of chairman and for escape and providing for certain offenders residing in group-based homes and for reporting; in Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, further providing for definitions, for operation of parole system generally, for Pennsylvania Parole Board, for board chairperson, for board action, for meetings and for offices, repealing provisions relating to district directors, to district office employees, to disciplinary action and to certain offenders residing in group-based homes, further providing for general powers of board and for specific powers of board involving parolees, repealing provisions relating to probation services, further providing for sentencing court to transmit records to board, for general criteria for parole by court, for right of access to inmates, for parole power, for violation of terms of parole, for parole procedure, for victim statements, testimony and participation in hearing, for general rules and special regulations and for early parole of inmates subject to Federal removal order and repealing provisions relating to definitions, to status as peace officers and to supervisory relationship to offenders; providing for supervision of offenders and for agents; in county probation officers' firearm education and training, further providing for definitions; in Interstate Compacts, further providing for Interstate Compact for the Supervision of Adult Offenders application fee, for deputization and for supervision of persons paroled by other states; conferring powers and imposing duties on the Department of Corrections; providing for the transfer of functions, powers and duties of the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole and for appropriations for the Office of Victim Advocate; and making editorial changes.

**SB 969 (Pr. No. 1463) (Rereported)**

An Act amending the act of November 24, 1998 (P.L.882, No.111), known as the Crime Victims Act, in preliminary provisions, further providing for definitions; in crime victims, further providing for responsibilities of department, local correctional facilities and board; in administration, further providing for office and for powers and duties of victim advocate and providing for confidentiality of records; and, in financial matters, further providing for costs for offender supervision programs.

**SB 976 (Pr. No. 1481) (Rereported)**

An Act amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in organization and jurisdiction of courts of common pleas, further providing for problem-solving courts.

**SB 997 (Pr. No. 1465) (Rereported)**

An Act amending Title 71 (State Government) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in membership, credited service, classes of service and eligibility for benefits, providing for election to purchase nonintervening military service; and, in administration, funds, accounts and general provisions, further providing for construction of part.

**SB 1030 (Pr. No. 1489) (Rereported)**

An Act amending the act of January 24, 1966 (1965 P.L.1535, No.537), known as the Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act, further providing for official plans.

**SB 1108 (Pr. No. 1654) (Amended) (Rereported)**

A Supplement to the act of June 28, 2019 (P.L.839, No. 1A), known at 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 102 (Pr. No. 101)** (Rereported)

An Act amending Title 34 (Game) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in hunting and furtaking licenses, further providing for eligibility for license.

**HB 1050 (Pr. No. 1779)** (Rereported)

An Act amending the act of December 15, 1982 (P.L.1266, No.287), entitled "An act conferring limited residency status on military personnel, their dependents and civilian personnel assigned to an active duty station in Pennsylvania," further providing for residency of students.

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

**SB 857 (Pr. No. 1388)** (Rereported) (*Concurrence*)

An Act amending Title 40 (Insurance) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for telemedicine, authorizing the regulation of telemedicine by professional licensing boards and providing for insurance coverage of telemedicine.

**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. 1, Senate Bill No. 1108, and move the Senate proceed to consider Senate Bill No. 1108, 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. 1**

**BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION  
AND FINAL PASSAGE**

**SB 1108 (Pr. No. 1654)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

A Supplement to the act of June 28, 2019 (P.L.839, 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.

Considered the third time and agreed to,  
And the amendments made thereto having been printed as required by the Constitution,

On the question,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

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

Senator HAYWOOD. Mr. President, this is a very challenging format, but I am glad to try it. This legislation, as I understand it from the Committee on Appropriations, was intended to allow

new Federal dollars to be appropriated through a legislative process. Upon some research, it has come to my attention that the Treasurer's Office does not believe that this is necessary, and that this legislation is redundant. I also understand the Governor's Office may have the same position. It appears to me, through some research, that it, in fact, is redundant. In our General Appropriation bill that we passed for 2019-20, we have a Section 2005(B), and that section allows for the Federal dollars to flow through the General Fund to the administration. So, I am explaining that my vote in the Committee on Appropriations and my vote on the floor will be "no," was "no" in the Committee on Appropriations, will be "no" on the floor for the same reasons, that it appears to be legislation that is redundant and not needed.

Thank you, Mr. President, for allowing me to speak.

And the question recurring,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution and were as follows, viz:

**YEA-49**

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

**NAY-1**

Haywood

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

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate present said bill to the House of Representatives for concurrence.

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

**BILL OVER IN ORDER TEMPORARILY**

**SB 857** -- Without objection, the bill was passed over in its order temporarily at the request of Senator CORMAN.

**BILLS ON THIRD CONSIDERATION  
AND FINAL PASSAGE**

**SB 647 (Pr. No. 807)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in budget and finance, establishing the Drug Recognition Expert Training Fund.

Considered the third time and agreed to,

On the question,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution 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	Langerholz	Scavello	
Costa	Laughlin	Schwank	

NAY-0

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

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate present said bill to the House of Representatives for concurrence.

**SB 997 (Pr. No. 1465)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 71 (State Government) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in membership, credited service, classes of service and eligibility for benefits, providing for election to purchase nonintervening military service; and, in administration, funds, accounts and general provisions, further providing for construction of part.

Considered the third time and agreed to,

On the question,  
Shall the bill pass finally?

The yeas and nays were taken agreeably to the provisions of the Constitution 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	Langerholz	Scavello	
Costa	Laughlin	Schwank	

NAY-0

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

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Senate present said bill to the House of Representatives for concurrence.

SB 857 CALLED UP

**SB 857 (Pr. No. 1388)** -- Without objection, the bill, which previously went over in its order temporarily, was called up, from page 1 of Supplemental Calendar No. 2, by Senator CORMAN.

BILL ON CONCURRENCE IN HOUSE AMENDMENTS

SENATE CONCURS IN HOUSE AMENDMENTS

**SB 857 (Pr. No. 1388)** -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending Title 40 (Insurance) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for telemedicine, authorizing the regulation of telemedicine by professional licensing boards and providing for insurance coverage of telemedicine.

On the question,  
Will the Senate concur in the amendments made by the House to Senate Bill No. 857?

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. 857.

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

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Beaver, Senator Vogel.

Senator VOGEL. Mr. President, I rise today to ask for a "yes" vote on concurrence to Senate Bill No. 857. This is not a new piece of legislation, by any means. It has been passed out of this Chamber on two previous occasions. We have recurring events that have clearly shown the need for us to move this bill to the Governor's desk as quickly as possible. No one was even remotely aware of COVID-19 and the impact it would have on our society when I first introduced this bill. That has definitely changed as this deadly virus has derailed our healthcare system. The basic healthcare services that we previously took for granted are now out of reach. Most primary care offices are closed to walk-in traffic. Elected procedures are indefinitely postponed. In this new reality, many people with chronic diseases simply cannot receive the medical care and guidance that they need. If we take nothing else away from this pandemic, we now fully understand the critical need for telemedicine. At this time, when a statewide stay-at-home order is in place, telemedicine is vital for patients who suffer from chronic illnesses and for families who live in rural areas where they would have to travel great distances to receive medical care. COVID-19 has changed the landscape for medicine in Pennsylvania, and so we need to make this option available for all Pennsylvanians. There are some healthcare systems in Pennsylvania that have internal telemedicine services in place. They have proven that it is efficient and cost effective.

My bill, Senate Bill No. 857, simply opens up the practice statewide. This bill is about building the infrastructure for telemedicine. It is about establishing who gets paid for what and how to affordably increase the access to healthcare. Senate Bill No. 857 specifically defines telemedicine as the delivery of healthcare services provided through telecommunication technology to a patient by a healthcare practitioner who is at a different location. It establishes guidelines regarding who can provide telemedicine services, and provides clarity regarding insurance company reimbursement for these services. While Senate Bill No. 857 makes substantial changes in the healthcare industry, physicians and other healthcare practitioners delivering telemedicine services will still be required to follow standard State licensure and medical practice laws and requirements in Pennsylvania.

In closing, Mr. President, I recognize that some Members in the Chamber have concerns about some of the particular provisions of this amended bill. A number of those Members argued passionately just last week about the need to insure all actions by this State are made in the interest of protecting lives and insuring the safety of our citizens. Senate Bill No. 857, as it is presented today, does just that. It will insure the safety and well-being of our citizens, and it will save lives. I ask for an affirmative vote on concurrence.

Thank you, Mr. President.

**The PRESIDING OFFICER (Senator John R. Gordner) in the Chair.**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Luzerne, Senator Baker.

Senator BAKER. Mr. President, passage of telemedicine legislation is a true reflection of our reality. We are all in this crisis together. For several years, I have strongly advocated for this measure as extremely vital to the extension of accessible healthcare, which is a major concern in rural areas and small communities. Healthcare providers in my district have been in constant contact asking for this capacity, and now, the coronavirus crisis has magnified the necessity for consultation, diagnosis, and determination of treatment done at a distance. One of our primary purposes for telemedicine is to ease the pressure on emergency rooms and curtail costs, a need magnified in our current circumstances. This will substantially increase the capacity for healthcare professionals and providers to respond to medical problems and address patient concerns before treatable conditions turn into emergencies requiring more intrusive intervention.

The urgency and the broad agreement on the scope and direction of this legislation has overridden concerns about specific provisions that prevented passage at an earlier time. Whatever flaws or conflicts might be contained in this bill, they can be worked out over time. At present, the imperative is to begin implementing telemedicine on a broader basis and realizing its advantages in improving and saving lives. This is by no means a stopgap measure. This is adding to the critical infrastructure of our healthcare system going forward.

It is truly transformative, and in the midst of this good news, there is an important consideration. Telemedicine cannot be fully implemented in many parts of the Commonwealth until the lack of broadband access is remedied. As the last recession painfully proved, rural areas are hit hardest in downturns and have the

most difficult road to recovery. If Pennsylvania again fails to meet the responsibility of providing accessible, reliable broadband service in every corner of our Commonwealth, the death toll attributable to the coronavirus is going to include more than a few of our historic communities. Telemedicine is the lifeline we provide today, and broadband is the lifeline we must provide for tomorrow. I rise in support of this legislation.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Farnese.

Senator FARNESE. Mr. President, I will be brief. I want there to be no question, I know Members have probably already heard our comments. Let us be clear. Folks who are going to be voting "no" on this measure are not directing their opposition to the issue of telemedicine. Quite the contrary. That has been noted numerous times. This bill actually passed our Chamber back in October with one "no" vote. I think it was 47-1. So, the issue of telemedicine, for those of us who will be opposing this bill today, is not what the sticking point is here.

The point is that the inclusion of a prescription drug that is necessary in legal abortions for women across Pennsylvania is what is coming under attack. When you look at the health agencies and providers across the country and across the State, numerous health organizations have come out in support of telemedicine. The American College of OB-GYNs, the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and the American Society of Reproductive Medicine, say it over and over again. Yes, Mr. President, we agree that telemedicine is critical. However, they also say that the consequences of being unable to obtain an abortion profoundly impacts a person's life, health, and well-being, and there is no question that the inclusion of this provision, that was included in the House when it came back over to us, does exactly that. That is what this is about. This is a fact that we are in the middle of a pandemic and, for some reason, we cannot control ourselves in this building because we seize on every opportunity, even in the middle of a pandemic, to frustrate a women's legal right and legal access to medical treatment, including for—I am going to say the word, "abortion." We are so afraid to say that word. This impinges, it infringes, it restricts, it limits, whatever word you want to put in there. Yes, it provides telemedicine, which is critically important, but, at the same time, it impinges and restricts a woman's legal right to accessing medical care, including an abortion. That is right, an abortion.

That, Mr. President, is wrong, and that, Mr. President, I believe, cuts against the strong bipartisan comments that were made by the Majority Leader back on the 18th when we decided to institute remote rules to allow us to do the people's business that we are doing right now, but that does not include hurting, restricting, and making people's lives, people's access to healthcare that they have right now, more difficult. Why? Because the House of Representatives will not pass the damn thing? How many times, Mr. President, have we stood here in this building, or in this Chamber, and dealt with issues of great concern to the people of Pennsylvania and we have said, it does not matter, we are going to do the business, do the right thing, send it over there to the House and let them deal with it. That is what we should be doing today. People who are opposed to this bill have absolutely nothing against, at least in my opinion, telemedicine, especially at the time of a pandemic. But, by God, you should not be and it should not come at the expense of a

woman's legal right to access medical treatment, including, but not limited to, an abortion. I am going to be a "no" vote.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

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

Senator BOSCOLA. Mr. President, I support telemedicine, and I always have. It makes sense. However, the bill was negotiated in a very different time, over several Sessions. It has always represented, in the past, baby steps to the telemedicine world. Well, over the past few weeks, because of COVID-19, we have seen the effectiveness and potential of telemedicine and how beneficial it really is to providers, insurers, and patients. Now, remember, before COVID-19, most insurers were not covering telemedicine, and certainly not with parity. Now, it is a different time and most insurers are with parity without legislation, but we are going to need legislation in the future, because after we see maybe COVID-19 subside a little bit, I do not know if it is going to be 2 months, 6 months, a year, 2 years, I do not know what that timeframe is, but telemedicine still works during flu season and for other ailments that occur. It makes common sense. We have got to do something, but with the abortion language in it, no, absolutely not right now. What we should be doing is looking at what makes sense and reevaluate this bill in the light of everything that has worked during this time and use that to lay the groundwork for a broader telemedicine bill, one that is broader and will include more services and better payment arrangements. I believe both providers and insurance companies have learned much and realize the potential that telemedicine provides in streamlining services, keeping patients safe, and keeping them connected to needed healthcare. I fear that enacting this bill at this time will take a step backwards. Rather, I would like to build upon what has worked in real time and develop regulations based on what we know works.

For example, 36 States have payer parity laws which would require private insurance companies to cover telehealth the same way they would in an in-person visit. This bill would not provide for that. In light of what has happened over the last few weeks, does this make sense? I would like to see us work with all the stakeholders and reevaluate what we can do with telemedicine here in Pennsylvania. I know we can do better. We must do better. Then, Mr. President, I do have to put on the record that the abortion language that was inserted into this bill is very offensive. It does not belong here. Look, I am disappointed, extremely, because the House knows this and the Governor and our Caucus do not want this abortion language, so please, will somebody have some common sense, take it out and let telemedicine stand on its own, where it belongs?

Mr. President, at the end of the day, the decision--the physician is making the choice as to what is in the best interest of their patient, and that is as it should be. The language in the Senate version gave that option to the patient and physician, and that is where medical care belongs, with them making the decisions together. So as long as this abortion language is in any telemedicine bill, you will never see me support it.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Senator Pittman.

Senator PITTMAN. Mr. President, Senate Bill No. 857 is about saving lives, and as we heard last week during our debate on this floor, many believe that all lives matter, and I agree, all lives do matter. But you cannot believe that all lives matter if you do not believe the unborn life matters. If you do not believe the unborn life matters, then only some lives matter, Mr. President. Senate Bill No. 857 was not a debate about the protection of the unborn. That was not a debate we were looking for, but it is a debate I, personally, am happy to have. I am happy to stand to protect the unborn.

Mr. President, as was stated here time and again, this legislation simply codifies existing rules and regulations set out by our government. It does nothing more, and nothing less. So, Mr. President, let us not politicize Senate Bill No. 857 any more than it already has been. Let us focus on saving lives, let us focus on saving all lives, let us get this bill to the Governor so he can sign it and allow Pennsylvanians to have access to healthcare in their most desperate hour.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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. 857. Senate Bill No. 857, as originally written and voted out of the Senate in October with overwhelming bipartisan support, would have clarified the rules of practice for telemedicine, expanded its scope, and made insurance reimbursement easier, all of which were in great demand before the current coronavirus crisis, and are even more needed now. What the House has done by amending this piece of legislation is to specifically limit women's reproductive freedoms by prohibiting the prescription of medication like mifepristone by telemedicine, and what is being done in the Senate right now by forcing a vote on this amended, now highly politicized, version of an otherwise good and much-needed bill is an amoral display of the kinds of partisan gamesmanship Pennsylvanians hate. A bill to increase access to medical care that would have easily sailed through both Chambers and obtained the Governor's signature, to the benefit of all Pennsylvanians, was amended to include an incendiary, antichoice provision and brought to a vote during the height of a public health crisis because those who control the agenda want to stoke a hot-button issue ahead of a major election. You cannot argue one day that Pennsylvanians should be able to disregard stay-at-home orders because it is their bodily choice whether or not to risk getting sick, while holding up good legislation intended to increase access to medical care because it would allow women the bodily autonomy to seek reproductive medical care the next.

I will be voting "no" on this bill, Mr. President, and I urge my Senate colleagues to reject this attempt to put partisanship over the public health and join me in voting "no."

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator PHILLIPS-HILL. Mr. President, whether you live in a highrise in center city Philadelphia, or you live on a thousand-plus acre farm in Forest County, there has never been a more important time to pass telemedicine legislation than now. I thank the good gentleman from Beaver County for his intrepid,

steadfast advocacy of this legislation. COVID-19 has inextricably changed the way we do so many things here in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The way we conduct business, if you can still conduct business, the way we educate, and the way that we deliver healthcare. I want to share some numbers with you all to illustrate why this legislation is so incredibly essential.

I reached out to the local healthcare folks in York County and they shared with me their numbers. I said to them, what is this looking like to you? I think it is really important that we make data-driven decisions. So, the healthcare organization that provides the majority of healthcare in York County also provides healthcare in Adams, Lebanon, and Lancaster Counties. In all of 2019, that healthcare organization completed 1,900 video visits providing telehealth to patients in those four counties. In April of 2020, on average, they are completing 1,900 video visits per day. I think that says an incredible amount about the essential nature of this legislation.

So in the 4 weeks prior to that date in March when we were essentially shut down, this organization completed 47 video visits. In the 4 weeks after we were shut down, they completed 33,014 video visits. Prior to the shutdown, six practices participated in video visits. After the shutdown, 238 practices participated in video visits. Prior to the shutdown, 12 providers completed those video visits. After that, 870 providers completed video visits. Prior to the shutdown, .4 percent of outpatient visits were completed remotely. After, 47.2 percent of those visits were completed remotely.

Many other people who have spoken today have spoken on the essential nature of this: Why healthcare professionals need this, why the hospitals need this, and why Pennsylvanians need this. Helping our healthcare professionals, helping our hospitals, and assuring that our constituents, the people of Pennsylvania, receive the essential healthcare that they need is now more important than ever. Now, we can have a conversation about which medications are on the REMS list from the FDA and which are not. I took a cursory look. Things like thalidomide that cause significant birth defects, and antipsychotics that have tremendous side effects. I am not a doctor, but the doctors at the FDA believe that these are dangerous medications. I do not have a problem with this. What I do have a problem with is people not being able to receive the essential healthcare that they need, and in my district and across this Commonwealth, lack of telemedicine services is going to dramatically impact the lack of access to medical care.

Now, my understanding is that CMS expanded the benefit as a temporary measure under the 1135 waiver authority and Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act. The reality is that all Americans and all Pennsylvanians, particularly those who are at high risk of complications from the virus that causes the disease, COVID-19, need to have telemedicine services. They are easy to use, they are accessible, and they have great benefit. I recognize that we still have some challenges in closing the digital divide. I think we are going to make great progress there. So, again, I will say, whether you live in a highrise in center city Philadelphia or you live on a thousand-acre farm out in Forest County, now is the time to pass this legislation.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator SCHWANK. Mr. President, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this legislation. I voted for this. I voted for it twice on the floor, and I voted for it in committee as well. I and my colleagues fully support telemedicine, but there are some provisions to this bill that really have not even been discussed yet today that I think are important that I need to bring up.

This bill contains a problematic provision requiring synchronous communication. A provider must either use store-and-forward in conjunction with real-time audio, or use real-time video. A provider must also provide the option for patients to request real-time video in all cases. Pretty technical, is it not? But it just so happens that the app that Planned Parenthood uses to provide their services which allow patients to access several methods of birth control and pre-exposure prophylaxis program and education for HIV/AIDS prevention relies on the store-and-forward technology alone. Another term for store-and-forward technology would be electronic transmission, like sending it via an email. Many States do allow for use of telemedicine and for reimbursement when store-and-forward technology is used alone. Store-and-forward is not the same thing as chat. Requiring real-time communication, which is what this bill does, will result in longer wait times for patients, no matter what it is or what the services are.

Whatever the telemedicine service may be, this is going to be problematic. I do not think this is anything that anybody had thought of. If this bill--park the issue of abortion for a moment--is going to prevent the provision of birth control services by one of the biggest providers in our State, as well as prevention guidance for HIV/AIDS, why would we want to do this? This is like sending us back to the 1960s and 1970s. It does not make sense at all.

Look, I would love to see telemedicine, and I frankly resent it when I hear that it is our fault that we are not passing this legislation because these provisions have been put in place in this. No, that is not the case, and anybody watching this argument would understand it as well. This bill really should be passed clean. We want telemedicine. We should have it in the Commonwealth. Other States are doing this as well. This is really just an attempt to erect new barriers to safe and legal care for not only women, but for men as well, and families. Let us go back to the prior printer's number and let us rethink this again.

I commend Senator Vogel for his persistence in continuing to bring this up, but this is not the bill that we should be passing right now. It is taking advantage of a situation. Speaker after speaker brings up the pandemic. Really, the pandemic is beside the point. Yes, we should use it and we should have it now, but most certainly, this is not the time to put this provision in. You want to talk about rural care, or you want to talk about care for folks in urban and suburban areas? This bill will actually delay treatment for people.

I urge a "no" vote. Thank you.

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

Senator BARTOLOTTA. Mr. President, I, too, am concerned with the REMS list as presented by the FDA. Again, this bill addresses 58 different medications on that list. The one that we seem to be stuck on is the one that provides medical abortions, and, yes, I am not afraid to say the word "abortions." What we are concerned with when it comes to allowing the prescription of this particular medication and only dealing with the side effects

that even the Mayo Clinic has a list of on their Website, people can go there now and take a look at what this medication can do when used. The guidelines that the Mayo Clinic suggests when using medical abortion medication includes a long list of things. Medical abortion is not an option if you are too far along in your pregnancy. You should not attempt a medical abortion if you have been pregnant for more than 9 weeks after the start of your last period. Some types of medical abortion are not done after 7 weeks of pregnancy. You should not have one if you have: an IUD; if you have a suspected pregnancy outside of the uterus, an ectopic pregnancy; or with certain medical conditions, and there is a long list of those; if you take a blood thinner and you cannot make a follow-up visit to your doctor or do not have access to emergency care, that is a very important provision; and if you are allergic to the medication.

But, again, let us go back to you should not have a medical abortion if you cannot make a follow-up visit to your doctor or if you do not have access to emergency care. We are talking about providing safe, legal provisions here for people in rural areas. Well, if you are going to have telemedicine available and you are going to allow this particular -- it is a procedure, it is not just a medication. We are not talking about antihistamines, it is a procedure, and it creates a dangerous situation for certain women, or young girls, for that matter, who may be relying on this at home secretively, away from medical care or any access to emergency care. There is a long list of side effects, and I am not going to go through all of them, but one of the things that the Mayo Clinic says that you should do in preparation for a medical abortion is evaluate your medical history and overall health. Confirm your pregnancy with a physical exam. Do an ultrasound exam to date the pregnancy and confirm it is not outside the uterus, in other words, an ectopic pregnancy, and not a tumor that developed in the uterus. Do blood and urine tests. Those are all things that the Mayo Clinic recommends be done for a medical abortion procedure. This is a lot more complicated than some people are saying. So that is why this is included in a list of 58 other drugs on the REMS list that the FDA put forward.

Further points, and then I will shut up. One is, no one is making abortion illegal. No one. That is not what this bill is about, at all. The Governor himself has a long list of elective procedures that are not allowed to happen right now, and a lot of our community hospitals are suffering because of it. No elective procedures. However, abortion is not considered an elective procedure by the Governor. Women can still get an abortion today. No one is limiting their rights. No one is saying it is not allowed. This is a procedure that the FDA says should not be done via telemedicine or outside of the care of a physician, and the Mayo Clinic says that you should have access to emergency care. These are things that we must consider to protect the health and well-being of women when they make a decision to have an abortion.

Lastly, we have to consider that without telemedicine available right now and to provide the insurance coverage that is needed, we are going through such a tragic event right now across the whole country. In Pennsylvania, in particular, we have one of the highest demographics of veterans in the country. We have, on average, 22 veterans committing suicide every day, and that was a statistic that was existing long before the COVID-19 pandemic. We are seeing instances of people overdosing on drugs. And do you know what they are overdosing on now? Not

just heroin and opioids; antidepressants. They are overdosing on antidepressants and combining it with alcohol. There are people out there who desperately need therapy, they desperately need telemedicine, telepsych, and we can provide that for them. We can give it to them by passing this bill.

So I urge a "yes" vote for all of those veterans who are out there relying on us to help them and give them a lifeline, especially in the atmosphere today where everyone is so isolated and secluded. A lot of our seniors right now are very, very desperate. They have no other contact with the outside world. Telemedicine can help those individuals, too; people who are too afraid to go to a doctor's office or to go to an emergency room if they need one. Telemedicine is something we need now more than ever before, so I urge my colleagues to vote "yes."

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

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

Senator HUGHES. Mr. President, this is kind of like an incredible conversation. We passed the bill 47-1, we passed the bill 50-0. Everybody is good to go. Everybody is in love with telemedicine, everybody wants to make it happen, everybody wants to deal with the vets, everybody wants to deal with those folks who are secluded, cannot come out, or are on lockdown because they cannot go anywhere but they need to see their physician, everybody understands the benefits of telemedicine. We saw it, we passed it, we understood it, passed it 47-1 and 50-0, and then in the midst of a pandemic--so let us be clear, a pandemic, people are dying every day, right? The United States of America has the most deaths from this pandemic of any nation in the world, though we saw it coming before everybody else did. That is a whole other story. In the midst of a pandemic, somebody decides to add what we know to be extremely controversial language around the issue of abortion and reproductive healthcare. Everybody knows that that language would be controversial, would be problematic. We are supposed to be dealing with all things as it relates to the coronavirus, COVID-19. That is what we are supposed to be dealing with. Say a little bit, it is agreed to, it is okay, we will deal with it, but somebody decides to add this language around the issue of reproductive healthcare and abortion. It was not in there when we passed it 47-1, it was not in there when we passed it 50-0, but somebody decided that they were going to--somebody in, quite frankly, the House Republican Caucus, decided to add this into the mix when everybody knows in this pandemic we need to get telemedicine done and to not add language and issues that are of this level of controversy. Come on.

This is a pandemic, and we are bowing now to the House Republican Caucus, even though we passed this 47-1 and 50-0, with this being a nonissue, we move it straightforward, the Governor said, unequivocally, I have got it, I will sign it, it is a done deal, just get it to me, except if you add any controversial craziness, and now here is the controversy added to the mix. The boil on the butt of progress. We are trying to deal with a pandemic, trying to keep people happy, trying to keep people safe, trying to keep people healthy, Mr. President, and then someone wants to add this controversial issue in the mix.

The gentlewoman said earlier, the number of our folks who are utilizing video diagnosis and everything like that, how it has ratcheted up dramatically. The gentlewoman said earlier, all of us are saying how everyone is utilizing it and how much of a

lifesaving technique it is available to us, how it has transformed health reality for thousands of people all across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. But then the controversy gets added in when they knew it would be controversial, when they knew that without it it passed the Senate 47-1, it passed the Senate 50-0. Come on.

Let us get this thing done. This issue does not belong in this conversation. This is purely about telemedicine that we are trying to get done, but someone wanted to add the abortion issue, the reproductive healthcare issue, the rights and the freedoms of women into this conversation, when all we were doing was getting something done that was only going to improve the health outcomes of the people of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, then comes the point of controversy. I urge a "no" vote, Mr. President. Let us get back to what the statement that this body made on two separate occasions in a dramatic and powerful way, 47-1, 50-0, with no issues of controversy in the mix. That is the statement. That is the best of us in this pandemic. That is the best and brightest and most insightful of us in this pandemic. That is what we need to be about, Mr. President. Rising to that level, not stooping to the low level of adding a controversial issue around abortion and around reproductive healthcare freedoms that only will hurt people and scuttle this legislation.

The Governor has said keep the controversy out. Let us deal with what it is that we have to deal with. It has already passed the Senate 47-1. It has already passed the Senate 50-0. That statement is strong, that statement is significant, let us not bow down to these other issues that have come into the mix when we were not even thinking and focused on them, Mr. President. The best of us rises up. This now does not represent the best of us, Mr. President. Not in any way, shape, or form. Thank you.

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

Senator MARTIN. Mr. President, I rise today in support of Senate Bill No. 857, and I think it is very clear in talking to everyone in this Chamber what that means to our local medical facilities, especially during times when they expect social distancing, and if we can keep people at home without having to go to the doctor, the better. I have to correct something, Mr. President, that was really just implied to the people of Pennsylvania. These provisions that were inserted by the House about this procedure, which pretty much will be the only procedure that is ever allowed by telemedicine, happened on November 21 of last year. They were not put in during a pandemic. Let us be honest with the people of Pennsylvania. This was out of a sincere concern for the health and well-being of individuals. Now, I was not in this Chamber a few years ago when these bodies, during the Kermit Gosnell case, whether they believed in abortion or they believed in life, where they came together and said that people who go to a facility should have actually safe means and support around them when going through the procedure. I may be a pro-life politician, but I certainly know this: for any young lady who is going to go get an abortion, I fully expect that they will be surrounded by people who are more than capable of assisting that individual if something goes wrong. And if anyone here wants to say that with drugs that are administered for this procedure, do a simple Google search. FDA, last year, 24 women killed; 42,000 cases of individuals who had reactions when self-administering chemicals. It is okay to be about safety. It is okay that people are mindful enough to think of the fact that they may not want their

daughter upstairs in a bedroom self-administering medications to induce this abortion and not even knowing if they are having a reaction to it, not even knowing if potentially it could take their own life.

The Majority Leader was very clear when he said this: There is nothing in this bill that impedes upon a woman's right to choose. What we are talking about here are safety measures put into place. I implore my colleagues, as they look at this issue, to think about if someone is administering these drugs, which in some people has the ability to cause a reaction, to injure them, and, unfortunately, in some cases kill them, do we still want them doing that in the presence of the medical personnel, in case something goes wrong? I, for one, Mr. President, am very happy that safety protocol was put into place in Senate Bill No. 857, but more than that, what Senate Bill No. 857 means in terms of telemedicine, in terms of the ability of communities all across Pennsylvania for people who receive medical care should outweigh everything. I ask my colleagues to please support the bill.

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

Senator STREET. Mr. President, I rise to remind us that at our best, we were able to move this legislation forward. I remind folks that we worked on this legislation together, it came through my committee, and I worked with my colleague, Senator Scavello, and we were able to move it out of committee in a bipartisan way. We worked the language that the vast and overwhelming majority of Senators could and did vote for. I applaud Senator Vogel for his efforts in putting this legislation in place. The reality is that there are many Pennsylvanians who truly do need telemedicine. However, there are issues in this body that we all know we are not going to reach common ground on today, or probably not in the near future. I believe passionately and support a woman's right to choose to have an abortion and believe that is a decision that should be left between her and her doctor. I respect the fact that there are folks on the other side of the aisle who disagree with me. The inclusion of this language in this bill is, in effect, a poison pill. It impedes our ability to get this done.

Now, Pennsylvanians have consistently voted for a divided, bipartisan government, and people have pointed out that Pennsylvanians voted for and elected a majority of Republicans in the House and Senate who are pro-life. Pennsylvanians have also overwhelmingly twice elected, in the last two elections, a pro-choice Governor who will not sign legislation that impedes and limits a woman's right to choose. It is important that when facing this pandemic that we move legislation that allows people to access telemedicine that we know can be enacted. It is important that we remember that there are people who are relying on us. We should not allow the House of Representatives to undo the work that we did in a bipartisan way in crafting legislation that could provide help to Pennsylvanians. We should revert to a prior printer's number, send back to the House of Representatives a bill that can be supported by both Republicans and Democrats, and if folks want to advance their beliefs around abortion, they should do that in another piece of legislation.

I will oppose efforts to limit a woman's right to choose, and I know others will do what they feel they need to do to advance their beliefs on this issue as well, but we need to understand that today, this is not the appropriate place for this measure. This body, which has been known as the deliberative body of this Capitol, needs to be deliberative, needs to be thoughtful, needs

to remove these provisions which are divisive and will not be enacted in law. Just as it has been pointed out that the House of Representatives seems recalcitrant in this issue and wishes to insert this, we should remind folks that Pennsylvanians have overwhelmingly elected a Governor who has been committed to a woman's right to choose and he will not allow this to become law. There are enough of us who will stand by him and make sure there are not restrictions on a woman's right to choose to have an abortion.

That being said, there are countless Pennsylvanians, both rural and urban, who could benefit from this legislation as the Senate advanced it. We should remove this provision from the legislation. We should be able to, as we have done on two previous occasions, advance a bipartisan bill that can be signed into law that Pennsylvanians can all be proud of. Let us be our best. Let us revert to a prior printer's number. Let us vote "no" on this version of the bill, and let us get Pennsylvanians the relief they need.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator MENSCH. Mr. President, a little while ago I know that I heard very clearly, and I understood very well, when the Majority Leader said that this piece of legislation does not affect in any way a woman's right to choose. So I understand the other side's argument. It is a philosophical one. They do not want to see something that could impinge upon abortion in any way to be included in this piece of legislation, but we know that it does not affect a woman's right to choose. So as I look at this, I look at it and say, you either have a philosophical disagreement or you have a reason to support the bill, which says we want to use telemedicine to help people's health and to save lives.

But let us talk about what telemedicine is, really. I do not know how many of you have ever visited a telemedicine center, but there is a hospital near to where I am that has a very extensive telemedicine operation, and I have visited it several times. So I want to talk about it a little bit, because we have talked about it in the context primarily of consulting for an abortion, but it really is so much more. In fact, I have not heard them or seen them consult on an abortion. It is about a heart monitoring. It is about a patient who may have a heart monitor and, using telecommunications, they are able to monitor that heart monitor. It is about blood pressure, they can take blood pressure remotely. These are things that become efficient for a hospital to do so that they are not dispatching visiting nurses to do these routine activities. Last week, I had a telemedicine visit with my rheumatologist. We were able to talk about my last blood results and how my Humira activity is working. Perfect. Gee, I did not have to drive 40 minutes to his office. I thought that was great. I told him I hope we do this all the time. The efficiency is great, Mr. President.

So before I get to two other examples of where I think telemedicine really has benefit, let me visit some things that have been said about the use of technology and the efficiency thereof. Someone introduced the term "synchronous." It is a data term, primarily. It is a two-way immediate communication between man and man or machine and machine using a common language. I spent 35 years in the telecommunication industry, so I dealt with synchronous environments and asynchronous environments. I think I can tell you the difference. It does not impede the

communication whatsoever. Let me give you a great example of what a synchronous communication is. It is that person living rural, as we have pointed out, on the phone with their doctor having a voice communication. A synchronous communication. That has not impeded the communication whatsoever, it has facilitated communication. It has made it easier, it has made it quicker.

We introduce concepts into these debates all the time, Mr. President, intended to purposely confuse the argument. I am here to tell you that telemedicine facilitates the exchange, makes it more professional, makes the lifesaving opportunities, so many increases to that opportunity, makes it so much greater. Whether it is a blood pressure, it is a heart monitor, or, God forbid, it goes into something like a burn situation or an automobile accident. That is where some of the greatest application of telemedicine is. If you are a first responder and you find someone at a fire situation and you see their burns, you are able to take a picture with your phone, send that to the hospital, it goes to the ER doctor immediately, that ER doctor can make best guesses about the severity of the burn, and by the time the patient is transported to the hospital, the ER doctor is already prepared for the necessary medical intervention. Does not have to wait for the patient to get there before they make that evaluation.

The same is true with a car accident. Imagine you find someone terribly injured in a car accident. Again, the first responders are able to take those pictures, send them back to the hospital, and the ER doctors, again, can be prepared by the time that the needy patient gets to the facility.

So, Mr. President, this is not about consultation on a nonissue about abortion. This is consultation about saving people's lives. This is about consultation about facilitating the medical interactions between that medical professional and the needy human being. So if you want to not vote for this, put your philosophy first. I understand that. I am going to support this because I have seen how effective it can be in communicating to that needy human and providing the necessary services. Senator Vogel has spent a great deal of time and energy working on this bill. I think we, as a legislature, generally have disappointed him in not getting it sooner, but it is now in front of us and we can support it because it supports human life, or we can vote against it because of our personal philosophy, not because it changes anything in abortion.

Mr. President, I encourage a "yes" vote for this particular bill. Thank you very much.

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

Senator MUTH. Mr. President, I am very disappointed that we are having this conversation in this context in that all three efforts of the amendments offered in the meeting of the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations failed to pass, because that really would have ended this debate if there was a true support system behind actually implementing this telemedicine program across our Commonwealth. The Governor has taken action already to allow these provisions, and, of course, making them a constant would be incredibly helpful to our constituencies and providing healthcare both remotely in a nonpandemic and a pandemic situation. It is troublesome that the narrative seems to now be if you vote "no" on this that you are not for telemedicine, but yet the other part of this is there was an effort to remove the controversial language of this bill and it was voted down.

It is important that we are clear and that we are honest, as mentioned before. This was never about anything other than using a pandemic to restrict a woman's constitutional protected right to choose. For those who may say that this language was put in earlier, before this pandemic, let us be clear on why it is on the Calendar now during the pandemic. Timing is key, right? It is part of that agenda. So being honest with the people of Pennsylvania means that we do not cherry-pick recommendations. We do not cherry-pick recommendations that may say the Mayo Clinic says this about abortion access, when the Mayo Clinic supports mass testing for COVID-19. I think it is very offensive to preach to the Chamber about how all lives matter when yesterday and last week we were in an intense debate about mass testing, protective equipment, and supply chain issues because of this pandemic.

There seems to be this confusion here on what the true end goal is, and I think that failing to advocate for a safe agenda overall, meaning for this pandemic, and using this bill as a means to make an argument against having something that could have been very helpful is a really poor strategy and it really leaves the people of Pennsylvania looking at this legislative body wondering, what is the end goal? Because if it is our end goal to provide healthcare that is important to veterans, that is telemedicine? Sure. That is also mass testing for nursing homes, for veteran homes. These are all not in separate silos. These are connected things that need to happen to insure the safety and health of people across our Commonwealth. I think it is a very dangerous pathway to go to try to say that a "no" vote on this legislation that has been amended to become incredibly harmful is really a false narrative that I am not here to entertain, and I am not here to be polite about that. I am here to tell the truth, and I think we need to have an honest conversation about what could have happened in this Chamber today, which was pass one of the amendments so that the bill was passed the way it has been before with a clean vote and not attacking women's reproductive freedom.

I really hope that there is a "no" vote on this bill so that we can revisit this and actually look at what we are doing in terms of our efforts both to help people during COVID-19 and on every other day of our job as elected officials. This is incredibly disappointing, and I really hope that there is a moment for reflection for my colleagues to figure out how we move forward working together without a narrative spun to advance a side agenda that has always been harmful but is now just insulting to put forth at this moment. So I encourage a "no" vote.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator J. WARD. Mr. President, my colleagues on the other side are correct. This is an argument that we should not be having. The sad and tragic fact is that abortions will continue in the Commonwealth and in our country. Babies will continue to die. In fact, presently, due to outpatient surgery closures and other restrictions, you are not able to have your shoulder fixed or a knee replaced, but you can have an abortion. As you heard earlier by our esteemed Majority Leader, this changes nothing at all. Women can still have an abortion. Do not be fooled.

Our job is to protect the people of Pennsylvania. The drugs on this Federal REMS list should never be prescribed without being seen first by a physician. This bill is extremely important to the people of my rural district. This is the great equalizer in medical

care for our rural areas. Please do not make this political. I urge a "yes" vote for Senate Bill No. 857 and telemedicine.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator L. WILLIAMS. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to Senate Bill No. 857. The sponsor of this bill stated that there is, quote, a "critical need" for telemedicine. I agree. We need telemedicine for all healthcare. We have needed it for a long time, and now, in the middle of a global health pandemic, it is even more critical. Medical abortion is healthcare. Research and doctors have said that medication used for a medical abortion can safely and effectively be prescribed through telemedicine just as safely as it is prescribed in person. We should not leave women behind when we give everyone else access to telemedicine. I urge my colleagues to 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 am wondering why, when we hear the word "abortion," it is automatically assumed to mean we are attacking a woman's right to choose. These women who are faced with this difficult situation, are they aware that the drug they are being administered is deemed not safe by the FDA? Are they made aware of that? If they were, would they continue with the procedure? You know, during the coronavirus crisis, we hear more and more about all lives are precious, because they are. Every single life of someone who is lost to the virus is precious. The babies' lives are precious, and the mothers who are having this procedure, their lives are precious.

Do you know what other lives are precious? The lives of our hospital systems, who are dying under the crushing mandate to not permit elective surgery. While we are permitting this procedure telemedicine-wise, abortion, which is deemed not safe, we are having people with backaches and knees, people in pain, people who need relief. Telemedicine is being done every day by our doctors and our nurses, and many times, as we have heard, they are not being compensated for that. They are handling medical issues. This bill is too important, especially during this crisis, to get caught up in something that is perceived as an attack on a woman's right to choose. I think it should be perceived as protecting a woman's life. Thank you.

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

Senator A.H. WILLIAMS. Mr. President, I am almost speechless. Almost. I have two daughters, young daughters, who kind of keep me current with phrases that we all kind of hear, and one comes to mind. It is called, "huh, wait." It goes sort of like this. My daughters walk in and say, dad, I want to borrow the car, I have to go to the store. Sure, take it. As they are walking out the door they say, oh, by the way, I am going to head to Vegas after I go to the store with the car. I would say, huh, wait, wait, wait, wait. So the narrative with this sort of reminds me of that.

So we have a bill which one of our Members suggested was in the Senate before the pandemic with this language. He is right. But what was not done was the bill did not move. The bill did not move because the General Assembly knew that the Governor would veto it, along with the fact that they did not have the votes in the Senate to move it. But now, under the cover of a pandemic, a bill that we could not figure out how to get done now

reveals its ugly head in the form that it currently reveals itself in. So all of us are sitting here saying, look, we think telemedicine is important for all Pennsylvanians, regardless of where you live, regardless of your income, regardless of your background. We think that we should support all of our colleagues who do not have access to the medical attention that some of us have in our communities. On board. Then we start talking about this current bill that easily could have been redrafted or reverted back to the prior printer's number that we all supported, and we decide to move a bill that, under the cover of a pandemic, to suggest that we need it even more now, and now we are talking about abortion. So all of us are sitting here saying, yeah, we support this, but wait, huh, wait, how did we go from telemedicine to abortion? By the way, yup, an earlier Member said we are talking and tweeting. Yes, some of my friends who live in rural Pennsylvania, I have friends who live in rural Pennsylvania, family and friends, yes, in some of your Republican districts--not enough--who are tweeting me saying, how did you vote for telemedicine, which we need, to abortion? They are not connected.

You talk about this drug as if it is not approved by the FDA, which is just egregious. You are playing with people's lives, and do not suggest to us that anybody, that the Democrats have anything to do with this. Republicans in the Senate have consistently pushed back on Republican initiatives in the House. Consistently. And we, as Democrats, have supported that, and so has the Governor. We are all surrounded by voices outside the conversation as it relates to when we do not agree with what comes from the House Majority, so do not even begin to suggest to the public that that is what this is about. It is not. It is a bunch of hogwash. This is simply about that movie we have all seen, the movie that says, you know what, to get what I want, I have to take a hostage, because if it were not about that, if it was about all lives matter, why would we still be having the level of deaths by homicides by guns in certain parts of Pennsylvania and we could not figure out how to compromise and get to a reasonable gun bill? If it was about the children in Pennsylvania, why do we cut \$17 million from child care? How dare you insult Pennsylvanians with regard to this. Why would we try to impose an asset test on SNAP when people are hungry in Pennsylvania?

This is the worst of the worst. My daughters are watching this. My mother is watching this. My wife is watching this. And there are Republican and Democratic women watching this. If you believe abortion is what you support, then do it. Just do not hold anyone hostage and suggest that you give two hoots about their children. You do not. You care more about your view about abortion than you do about sacrificing them in this space and moment that our Governor has said he will veto it. Do not tell me anymore that we have to accept it because the House Republicans sent it to us. You do not. I am not speaking to anyone on this floor who has already made up their mind. I am talking to the public who are watching this. The charade, the manipulation of words, the dishonesty is outrageous. Do not tell me you care about children, adults, or parents when we have done all these things, all these things I have talked about in budgetary season, and, by the way, we will do them again. We will do them again in this budgetary cycle. We will sacrifice children, seniors, and adults, Democrats, Republican, rural, urban, and suburban, because we do not have the money to support it as a result of this pandemic. Do not insult our intelligence.

I respect those who come up to the mic and say, look, I just do not agree with the perspective of a woman's right to choose and my view is that abortions are inappropriate, unfair, immoral, and I think that we are sacrificing a life. I respect that person because that is their view. I would even engage in an argument or debate and have to stand upon whatever the vote is on that day, but what I do not have to do is hear this drumming beat of nonsense that suggests that someone gives two hoots about rural Pennsylvanians when you represent it and you would rather attach your ideological view rather than that of all the folks who are in hospitals - doctors, nurses, et cetera - across Pennsylvania, who you are talking about.

I think you know what my position on this is. I am saying it to my daughters, who cannot speak on their behalf, who are young adults who pay their taxes, love America, want to stay in Pennsylvania, but are scratching their heads and tweeting to the world, to their families across Pennsylvania about how outrageous this conversation is. This is legislation by hostage. That is all this is. That is all it will ever be. It has nothing to do with the fairness and the process of telemedicine.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator MASTRIANO. Mr. President, does every life matter? Are we, in the midst of this crisis, medically helping people or putting our party politics above them? Ben Franklin wrote: Politics is the art of the possible. From the perspective of many, this piece of legislation is not perfect, but it is necessary and timely. I am asking my colleagues to put aside their minor differences on this here and take a look at it and how we can help people in the midst of this crisis. We are, indeed, in the midst of an unusual time when it should be usual to put aside our differences and fight together to save lives and help those in greatest need and, especially, our medical professionals. Sadly, the truth of the matter, the argument has nothing to do about limiting abortion but, rather, if the language was in there, it would be expanding abortion. So the red herring arguments here defy logic and reason.

Let us put aside our differences and help those in need across our great Commonwealth. This is no time for dithering or party politics. We need to act now, especially in the case of my many brothers and sisters who once wore the uniform who are in great need and suffering, they need medical assistance. Let us reach out to them. It is time for action. In the midst of this pandemic, it is time to move this bill. That we are having this debate and argument in the the midst of this defies reason. Do we take this crisis serious? Let us act. If you find fault with it, let us readdress it after this is behind us, but let us move now and defend those who need defense and help those who need help. In the midst of this pandemic, let us go with science, not party politics. In the midst of this pandemic, it is time to do the right thing. In the midst of this pandemic, I urge support of this much-needed and timely legislation. Do all lives matter? If so, let us do the right thing and move this bill today, now.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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. 857. Let us make it clear, the anti-choice provision that was put into this bill by the Pennsylvania House was not about safety. Just like the facilities bill that the gentleman

from Lancaster referenced earlier in his remarks was not about safety, limiting -- putting a number on the square feet that had to be in an examination room or the width of a hallway, that was not about safety. Prohibiting women from getting insurance in the healthcare exchanges that cover abortion services, that, too, was not about safety. Now, it is interesting that a number of my colleagues who have spoken in support of the bill today on this issue have talked about the right to choose. It is interesting, it is almost Freudian in a lot of ways, that they keep going back to that point, because what is going on and what has happened in this General Assembly over the last decade has been a slow but methodical effort to limit and ultimately undo a woman's right to choose. This is just another example of that. Let us call it for what it is. The fact that this provision was put into the bill in November, as opposed to this week, is irrelevant because, today, an attempt to take the provision out of the bill was defeated and the bill is being brought up now precisely because we are in the middle of a pandemic. The arguments that are being made today as to why this bill needs to be enacted are arguments that are based on the fact that we are in a pandemic. What is happening? Absolutely, ideology is being elevated above policy.

If we really cared about telemedicine and we really thought that telemedicine needed to be done now, particularly because of the pandemic, then this offensive provision would have been taken out in the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations earlier today. This is not about safety. This is about ideology and ultimately taking away a woman's right to choose. It is not the first time, it has been going on for a long time. It is yet another example of those who oppose the right to choose elevating that desire to undo it over important public policy that otherwise needs to be done. That is what is happening today. Let us be clear. That is why we should go back, take that provision out of this bill, and pass it in a form that the Governor will sign.

Mr. President, I urge a "no" vote. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Mercer, Senator Brooks.

Senator BROOKS. Mr. President, I am a Senator who represents, but also lives in, a rural area. I have always understood that telemedicine can be an important tool, but I have also always approached telemedicine very, very cautiously because I do not want our healthcare to become like ordering a hamburger. I want our healthcare to remain personal, to remain safe, to remain responsible. So I, for one, am happy that this language was put into this legislation. This language removes any ambiguity relating to several drugs that are known to have very, very serious side effects. Why would we not want the folks who are prescribed those drugs to have seen a doctor first and be in a doctor's care? Let us be very clear: There is no language in this legislation that refers to abortion. No language. What this language does is refers to a list of drugs that, again, they are known to have very dangerous, serious side effects. For the comments that really want to say this is just about abortion, it has nothing to do with abortion. The access, it is not changing anything in current law. Is there a drug on this list that is used for abortion? Yes, there is, and that drug has been determined by the Federal government that it can be very, very dangerous and it has very, very serious side effects at times. When that drug is used, it should be used by a person who has seen a doctor and been examined by a doctor. Why would we want to remove that safety net for any of these drugs? Even the

one pertaining to abortion. So I am greatly disappointed if the Governor vetoes this legislation, because what that veto says is that people should have the ability to take drugs via telemedicine, via online medical services, that have been known to provide very, very serious health consequences, and they should do it without seeing a doctor first or being examined.

So, again, for those who really want to hone in on the drug that provides for abortion, you would be giving that woman - a daughter, a granddaughter - a drug that could cost them their life, all because of the desire to provide for an abortion online. So I will say the word "abortion." It is you folks who are trying to make this about abortion. We are trying to make it about the health and well-being of the very people in our communities. Why would anyone want to have someone whom we love be given a drug that could have very serious side effects, all for the desire for those who want a woman to be able to have an abortion online, over the Internet? Seriously, that is what this conversation has been reduced to, is that this legislation will be vetoed because of the personal desire to want to prescribe a very dangerous drug, in many circumstances, online, over the Internet, so that someone can have an abortion? Online abortions. That is what this argument is if this legislation is vetoed. That is incredibly disappointing and sad.

So I hope that the Governor does sign this legislation. This is about telemedicine and doing it safely and responsibly for the people whom we love in our communities and for a list of drugs that have been known to have very serious health effects, that they should, before taking them, see their doctor first.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, the Chair recognizes, for the second time, the gentleman from Philadelphia, Senator Farnese.

He seems to be locked out. We will come back to him.

#### MOTION TO SUSPEND RULES

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

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I rise in opposition to the current form of the legislation, Senate Bill No. 857. But before I do that, I reiterate a motion that I made in the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations as it relates to reverting to a prior printer's number to avoid having this language in this bill, which will then get signed by the Governor. For that purpose, I rise and make a motion to suspend the rules to allow for a motion to revert to a prior printer's number, Printer's No. 1347 to Senate Bill No. 857.

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

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

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I rise to oppose the motion.

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

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

## YEA-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	

## NAY-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	

Less than a constitutional majority of all the Senators having voted "aye," the question was determined in the negative.

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

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

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, like many of my colleagues on this side of the aisle, I rise to object to the current form of Senate Bill No. 857. Let me first start by saying that I would like to incorporate all of the remarks that the Members on our side of the aisle have made relative to this measure. I would also like to incorporate the portion of all of our collective remarks as it relates to the underlying measure that Senator Vogel and all of us worked to pass on two occasions to the House, unencumbered with the language that brought about a lot of the discussion today, and that is the telemedicine language. I think, as was mentioned by one of my colleagues earlier, there is universal agreement that this is the right thing to do, and it is, but the problem is we have a barrier to getting that accomplished, and that is the language that was added regarding women's reproductive health ability and excluding them from the ability to be able to be part of the telemedicine legislation.

Now, Mr. President, some comments were made about we are all in this together, and, quite frankly, with respect to this legislation, that is not accurate. We are not all in this together. When you exclude a group of individuals who are seeking the ability to exercise a right that is legal and is safe, being denied that opportunity to be able to do it through this manner as it relates to telemedicine, when all the other types of things that will be done through telemedicine is going to be permitted, that is not stating that we are in this together. If we were in it together, quite frankly, we would not have this measure as part of this bill, or we would not be excluding these women from the ability to talk and work with their doctors as it relates to the prescription that we are talking about here today.

So, Mr. President, it is important to recognize that this language, as I mentioned at the outset of my remarks previously, is the barrier to getting this legislation to the Governor's desk with his signature affixed to it. Folks, that is not going to happen in this current form. As much as I support telemedicine, and I heard the statistics that were being offered by my colleagues, the gen-

tlewoman from York talked about specifically in her area and surrounding counties, and I recognize that and agree with that, that we are denying them the opportunity to be able to have that reimbursement and to be able to provide that healthcare service to so many folks in this Commonwealth, particularly our rural folks. But we are not going to be able to get there if we support this measure as it is. That is why in the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations today, I tried to remove this language that presents the barrier. That is why in the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations today, I tried to revert to Printer's No. 1347, which passed this Chamber 47-1. That is why, again, on this floor today, I tried to reiterate going back to the version that we pretty much unanimously agreed to, but for the inclusion by the House of language that we all know has been problematic in this Chamber for several years.

There is a reason why, when we passed it last Session and the House did the same exact thing, that we did not bring it up, because we all knew the Governor was not going to sign it, or at least I can speak for Members on our side of the aisle, that the Governor would not sign it in the manner that was presented to us last Session. That is why we never brought it up again here, I believe, but I could be wrong, because that decision was not my decision, or our Caucus's decision; as was described by one of my colleagues, that is your folks' decision to bring it up, and not bringing it up last time, which we appreciate, but we are concerned about the manner that it is being brought up at this particular point in time. So, as much as I appreciate hearing the statistics, and they are compelling, the fact of the matter is, we are not going to change anything relative to being able to offer telemedicine to the people of this Commonwealth because of this provision. That, to me, is wrong.

Mr. President, one of our colleagues referenced the art of the possible. This is not the art of the possible. This is impossible. What we are voting on today is impossible to make and reach the people we want to reach, to meet the desire, the goals of the well-thought-out legislation as it relates to telemedicine. This, the way this version is, is not going to make it. This is not the art of the possible. This is not the art of the compromise, because something is being forced on us, as one of my colleagues mentioned, it is being taken hostage. The House Republicans took hostage this good legislation and affixed abortion language, anti-choice language to it, and sent it back to us. As we did last Session, and for many months now, we have not addressed it. Rightfully so, but for some reason today, we are compelled to move forward and make a decision with respect to this legislation, again, knowing that the Governor is not going to sign it. I do not understand the reasoning why we are doing it knowing that this is going to be the case. I simply do not have any understanding as to why it has to happen this way. The purpose of reverting to a prior printer's number is to get it to the Governor's desk, to make certain that we are getting something that needs to be done.

At the end of the day, Mr. President, I see us, this Chamber, kowtowing to House Republicans who have insisted on this provision being part of it for whatever reasons they want to put into it. Some called it a political reason, it could very well be, but let me be clear: As someone said that we folks have made this a political conversation, we did not. We did not support this measure in the way it is fashioned. We supported the underlying bill. We did not bring the bill up for a vote today, you all did. Or, as

it was referenced, you folks did, okay? We did not do it. If we had our druthers, we would not be voting on this portion of the legislation. If we were bringing up the bill, we would strip out the language that has been offensive and excludes women across this Commonwealth from access to doctors and the ability to be part of the telemedicine program. We did not bring it up, but if we did and we would, that is what we would do. We would want to get it to the Governor's desk without this language, knowing that it is a barrier.

We know some facts. The facts are, A, the Governor is not going to sign the bill in its current form; B, we are within our power to make changes to address that barrier. What we know, we are neglecting to address that and are refusing to address that. We are saying we are not going to address the Governor's barrier. We are still going to send it to him and let him veto it. What we should be doing is either reverting, or we should be sending the bill back to the House--one caucus of the House--and saying, House, here is where we are at, you are not going to lead us and tell us exactly what we are going to do. The three groups - House, Senate, and the Governor's Office - get in a room and figure out what can be done and how we can address that. That is how we should be moving forward, not jamming this thing through and running roughshod over the Members in terms of the votes they want to take and sending it to the Governor, who will veto it.

Mr. President, I rise with my colleagues who have spoken so articulately and eloquently on this legislation, on both sides of the aisle, to say "no" to this particular bill, Senate Bill No. 857, and ask to allow us to go back to work and fix it so we can get the Governor's signature on it.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, there has been a lot of discussion and debate here today, and a lot of it talking about motivations, even though it is really against our rules to talk about motivations of another Member, there has been a lot of discussion about why we are voting this today and why now. I will say, back to motivations for a second, there was a lot of discussion that upset Members on the other side of the aisle, that there was a narrative out there that if you voted "no" on this, you were not for telemedicine. Well, that narrative has not been spread by any of us. I do not know one Member on this floor who said that if you voted "no" on this bill today, you are against telemedicine. Clearly, you are not. Clearly, we voted it 47-1 and 50-0 a couple of years ago. So that is clearly not our intent to lay out that narrative.

But back to motivations about why we are voting on it here today. As Majority Leader, it is my job. I am responsible to put bills on the Calendar and decide when we are going to vote on legislation, and so the buck stops here. I will agree with quite a bit of what my colleague from Allegheny County just talked about. This bill initially passed the Senate last Session, and at the very end of Session the bill passed the House with this provision in it that the Governor indicated he would veto. So I made the decision at that time, not wanting this bill to get vetoed, that we would not run the bill at the end of that Session and hoped that we would be able to find a new path forward to get everyone on board with telemedicine in the next Session, this Session that we are currently in. So, again, the Senator from Beaver County, who

worked so hard along with the two chairs in a bipartisan way in the Committee on Banking and Insurance to get this bill to a place where it came out of committee and we voted it out of the Senate, again, as was mentioned, 47-1. I guess last November the House moved, again, saying very strongly that this language, and I will discuss the language in a minute, was very important to them and this needed to be part of any telemedicine bill, and they passed it, I believe, with both Republican and Democratic votes in the House.

So, knowing that this would lead to a controversial issue again, and knowing that the Governor had indicated that he would veto it, we did not move the bill for a while. My job, and I know the Senator from Allegheny County agrees with this, our job is to try to find common ground. How can we find common ground so we can get this, ultimately, to a signature? That is ultimately our goal. I have said here on numerous occasions, we are judged by our accomplishments. It does not matter what we are for, it matters what we accomplish. We have a lot of Members who come to Harrisburg in both the House and Senate who are for a lot but accomplish little. Our job is to accomplish things for our constituents, and so my goal is to accomplish a Governor's signature for this bill. So we waded through a process trying to find middle ground and offered a few ideas here and there, and it has become very apparent that middle ground does not exist, unfortunately. That is disappointing to me, because, again, I would like to have a 47-1 or 50-0 vote here today. I also know the Governor is still indicating he may veto this bill, but reverting back to a prior printer's number is not going to get it to the Governor's desk either because it is just going to go back to the House, where they will not take it up or will put the same provision back in.

So, what are we to do? Obviously, now we are in this crisis, this state of emergency, this pandemic, where never has there been a more important time than to have telemedicine, not only from our constituents' point of view to be able to not have to go into a medical facility where there may be germs, or a hospital and be exposed to this virus, or any type of virus, for that matter. Telemedicine would alleviate that need to go into a medical facility and be able to see, obviously, during this pandemic, medical professionals and get advice. Also, as we said, hospitals. Our health systems have been asking us to get this done, we need to get this done because of the issue of reimbursement and payment. This is a time where hospitals are at an all-time crisis on revenue because they have been shut down. Not only are our hospitals in the eastern part of the State being overtaxed through this issue with the virus, but our hospitals in the central and western part of the State have been shut down and so, therefore, they do not have revenue coming in and they have major financial problems. So the need to move forward is imminent. It is something we need to do to help our hospitals. This is why we have chosen this time. I chose this time. I did it. I am responsible to go forward at this time because there was not a compromise we were able to get to to allow all sides to come on board and the need and the crying out of our medical facilities and systems to ask us to get this done. So, I decided it was time to move forward.

When I looked at the language carefully, you know, I understand all of the emotions and all the sides of abortion. Abortion issues, people have different views, and I respect them all. My own family has different views on abortion, and so it is a very

difficult issue to get through emotionally. But if you look at this language, and this is the important part, if you cloud out the noise and let us look at the language, it was not the House Republicans or the House of Representatives, for that matter, who developed the REMS list, and I mentioned this in the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations, it is called the Risk Evaluation Mitigation Strategy. What this list is, it is produced by the FDA, the Food and Drug Administration, not anywhere here in Pennsylvania, the Federal government produced this rulemaking to insure that the benefits of a drug or a biological product outweighs the risk, that you need to have an in-person visit so that the doctor then can offer this medication. Not just this medication, there are 12 different medications on this list. I asked my staff to get me the list and I was going to read them all, but, unfortunately, I cannot pronounce most of them, as it tends to be with medications, but they are for a variety of ailments and medical needs, not just this particular one dealing with abortion.

So this is currently in law. Not in law, necessarily, but rule. Under the guidelines of today, to have access to any of these medications, you need to go in to see your doctor personally. That is what we are operating in this country today. Nothing in this bill, as amended by the House of Representatives, changes that. Let me repeat it. Nothing in this bill changes that. If the Governor does not sign this bill or we do not pass this bill, you will still need to go in to see your doctor before having access to these 12 different medications, and I hope I am saying "medications" as the correct terminology here. If we do not pass this bill, you will need to go in. If we pass this bill, you will need to go in. Nothing changes. And so I understand maybe some do not think there is a need for this language, and I respect that, I really do. I understand the ideological viewpoint and I understand the position of the Governor. He has been very clear.

As I said in the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations, I am trying to get to the bigger picture. The bigger picture, as we have all stated here, is the desire and the need for telemedicine. Our hospitals are crying out for it, our health systems are crying out for it. There is a need, and this language, as difficult as some people think that it is, does not change a thing. Today, it does not change a thing. So I understand the concern, but I think the bigger picture is important here and that is why I have chosen, as a Leader of this Chamber, to go forward with this legislation now. I think that the need for telemedicine is too important. Although maybe this provision is not necessary in some people's minds, it should not stop us from getting to the bigger need and the bigger picture, and I implore the Governor. I respect the Governor, he is very adamant and very clear on his positions dealing with abortion, and I have a lot of respect for his positions. I do not necessarily agree with them, but I respect them because I know he comes by them honestly. His positions on these issues are honest positions and one that he feels deeply about. I would ask him that if he cannot bring himself to sign it, that he allow it to become law, because the greater good here is getting telemedicine into law so our health systems can get reimbursed and we can begin to put back together our hospitals and our health systems in this State that have been under such a difficult time during this pandemic.

Thank you, Mr. President.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVE

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

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I request a legislative leave for Senator Laughlin.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senator Corman requests a legislative leave for Senator Laughlin. Without objection, the leave 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.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS  
ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SECRETARY**

The following announcement was read by the Secretary of the Senate:

SENATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

COMMITTEE MEETING

THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2020

10:00 A.M. COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT and VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS (joint public hearing on Governor Wolf's COVID-19 response and impacts) Senate Chamber (LIVE STREAMED)

TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2020

Off the Floor APPROPRIATIONS (to consider Senate Bills No. 107, 276, 377, 594, 763, 863, 915, 934, 952, 957, 1110, 1119 and 1120; and House Bills No. 422 and 1036) Senate Chamber (LIVE STREAMED)

Off the Floor	HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (to consider Senate Bills No. 1123 and 1126; and House Bill No. 943)	Senate Chamber (LIVE STREAMED)
Off the Floor	RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS (to consider Senate Bill No. 413; and certain Executive Nominations)	Senate Chamber (LIVE STREAMED)
Off the Floor	TRANSPORTATION (to consider Senate Bill No. 1128; and House Bill No. 632)	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 5,035 days since the Pennsylvania legislature last raised the minimum wage. That is more than 13 1/2 years, and it is far too long. A lot has changed in the Commonwealth since the last time we raised our minimum wage, but one thing has not changed. The forces who oppose raising the minimum wage are driven by one prevailing mantra - profits over people. That has always been the case, and it continues to be the case.

Yesterday, outside the Capitol, we saw another very disturbing example of profits over people. We saw hundreds of individuals gather in total defiance of the protective measures we have in place to mitigate the rapid spread of a fatal virus. Before I elaborate, let me make one point perfectly clear. I am 100 percent supportive of the First Amendment right of the people to peaceably assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances. Constitutionally, that is exactly what happened here yesterday. But morally and ethically, the protests demonstrated conscious disregard for our collective well-being and a level of callousness that not even our Founding Fathers would have dared to pursue. It is not a matter of opinion, ideology, or religious belief that large gatherings, like we saw yesterday, amid a public health emergency exacerbate the spread of the virus. It is a matter of science. It is a fact. It is also true that the coronavirus has been a factor in the deaths of 1,204 Pennsylvanians at latest count, and it has infected at least 33,232 Pennsylvanians since we began tracking the virus 35 days ago. These statistics are real. They are documented and are reflective of an immediate threat to all of us. Pennsylvania's numbers are not an anomaly. States across the country and nations around the world are dealing with similar challenges and suffering major casualties.

It would be easy for me to place the blame for yesterday's foolhardy exercise on the individuals in attendance: the people who chanted, cheered, and jeered about individual freedom and authoritarianism; the people who demanded the reopening of businesses; the people who brandished rifles; those who portrayed their fellow citizens as mindless sheep; those who waved homophobic signs; those who brought their children and exposed them to the virus; and even those who treated it as if it were a Trump rally. I empathize with many of the demonstrators. I am sorry for those who have lost work due to the pandemic. We have tried to provide you with the resources you need to sustain you until the threat subsides. I am sorry for those who acted sincerely, yet on a faulty premise - those who honestly and mistakenly believe that we are in the clear from COVID-19. Yet, the demonstration was not a spontaneous event. It did not grow organically. It was orchestrated and announced. So the people who did the organizing are the ones who will provide us all with the explanation we need about the "why." Fundamentally, the demonstration was planned and coordinated by the same networks and institutions that oppose raising our minimum wage. These are individuals who have suggested that loss of life is a reasonable sacrifice for protecting business interests - individuals who value profits over people.

Mr. President, it is time that Pennsylvania finally puts its people over profits. It is time that we raise the minimum wage. Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senator Muth 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 Montgomery, Senator MUTH:)*

Mr. President, in the past 2 days, the Senate has not fully kept its promise of focusing our efforts on COVID-19 legislation.

I am proud that we passed House Bill No. 1869, which creates provisions to support active National Guard members who are stepping up across the Commonwealth to work on the front lines in veterans homes, testing centers, food distribution networks, and in many other capacities. I am hopeful that my colleagues in the House will vote "yes" on this important piece of legislation.

However, the Senate also passed Senate Bill No. 462, which repealed, amongst other programs, a currently unfunded loan forgiveness program for frontline nurses. That program was never funded, even though the legislation passed during a nursing shortage. That program would have been extremely helpful now as we come upon another nursing shortage, exacerbated by COVID-19. That is why I voted "no" on Senate Bill No. 462, because I believe that program could have been helpful for our frontline nurses today. The Senate also passed House Bill No. 752, a bill that allows the Game Commission to buy land from Allegheny County for more than \$400 per acre. I ask you, Mr. President, what does this have to do with COVID-19?

The Senate Majority Leader, last week during a meeting of the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations, asked for a negative vote on an amendment that would have laid the foundation for a data-driven reopening of the economy, one that included hazard pay for workers and mandated personal protection equipment for those on the front line. It would have also provided for additional worker protections and emergency leave. He asked for a negative vote because he said we would be addressing these issues imminently. Instead, we passed a bill that helped few frontline workers and other bills that did nothing for those risking their lives during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, today in the Committee on Rules and Executive Nominations, an amendment to Senate Bill No. 857 was voted down. Senate Bill No. 857 is a telemedicine bill that originally would have done a great deal of good and could have been extremely helpful during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the amendment that failed would have expanded telemedicine coverage to the Children's Health Insurance Program, as well as the Medical Assistance Program, and that would have required pay parity for reimbursements. By not adding in that amendment, we failed, as legislators, to help our fellow Pennsylvanians whom we are sworn to represent.

Instead, the Senate voted on Senate Bill No. 857 with language that dangerously tied our telemedicine limitations to the FDA Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategies list as of July 1, 2019. This is dangerous because even if a drug or treatment program is removed from the list in the future, it would not be usable in telemedicine since it would be tied to that specific date. It also means that if a new drug or treatment is added to the list on the Federal level, our State law would not prohibit that new drug or treatment from being used in telemedicine. As this list changes frequently, this is an inherent problem with Senate Bill No. 857. We must not sacrifice future advancements in health, science, and medicine, and yet, that is what this bill does.

That July 1, 2019, list also includes a medicine that healthcare providers use for abortion. Any limitation on the ability for women and the doctors who provide their care to access medications and procedures is an inherent flaw in this legislation. Creating a static list serves no purpose other than to impact women's access to healthcare options that they are entitled to receive.

Instead of debating what should be a right to healthcare, the Senate should be considering legislation that would:

- Institute hazard pay for those frontline workers risking their lives every day to help save the lives of so many others.
- Expand access and resources for emergency paid sick leave, paid family leave, and paid medical leave for all workers.
- Guarantee health access and financial support for all Pennsylvanians suffering through no fault of their own.
- Provide more funding for personal protection and safety equipment.
- Create clear standards for the implementation of containment control plans in healthcare facilities, including emergency standards and accountability.
- Mandate a presumption that all workers are eligible for workers compensation benefits if they contract COVID-19 in the workplace.
- Ensure workers cannot be fired for reasons related to COVID-19 issues and that contract employees of public agencies are compensated for time off during an emergency.

I will continue to work with my colleagues and advocate for legislation that works to protect Pennsylvanian lives.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator DINNIMAN. Mr. President, I make a remonstrance to the Department of Health and to the Republican Majority to allow Chester County, who also covers the health needs of Delaware County, our health department, to get permission to do the antibody testing for first responders. We just went through a lengthy and rather disagreeable debate. Can we at least agree on something? Can we agree that a county which is willing to spend its own money to support its first responders can be given the right and the option to do these antibody tests? We do not have a vaccine. We are talking about the fact that we do not have enough testing, and we do not have enough tests, and this Commonwealth cannot open without an adequate testing program. What we tried to do first, through a Democratic amendment, which was rejected by the Majority, and now I have separated that amendment and put it into a bill, Senate Bill No. 1123. I am doing so at the request of first responders in my county and of the county commissioners. This bill is very simple. It simply says that the Department of Health shall support the efforts of counties to initiate antibody point-of-contact tests, including the State health laboratory waiving or covering the needed clinical laboratory improvement amendments, called CLIA protocol.

Mr. President, we are already doing these tests in Chester County for our nursing homes, in our hospitals, in our prisons, in our county home, and in nursing homes throughout our county. These tests are successful. There is a good validity rate. We are not asking that these tests be used to identify this virus, because they will not do so in the first 5 or 6 days. However, these tests tell us whether someone currently still has the virus after 6 days, and they also tell us when someone no longer has the virus but has the antibodies to protect himself or herself.

Senator Corman talked today about a bigger need and how we have to put partisanship aside. I beg and ask the Republican Majority, if you do not want to accept the whole Democratic amendment, at least on behalf of the citizens of Chester County and Delaware County, which are represented by both Democratic and Republican legislators, to at least help the county override the barriers which the Department of Health has put in our way. What makes this especially troublesome is that on March 27, the Department of Health had given us permission to use these tests for our first responders, and almost 2 weeks later it put a barrier

up by not allowing the State laboratory to be our partner. You know, we in the county who are trying to save lives are caught in a whiplash, are caught between partisan politics, where there should be none. The Republican Majority has spoken about the importance of giving authority to the counties. We simply ask you to help us. Let us get this bill through the State-county kinds of conflict.

So, my friends, I rise today and I ask you when we meet again next time to allow Senate Bill No. 1123, that will give Chester County the ability to provide protection and help to its first responders, to be passed. By the way, let me say, I will not stop asking this and I will not stop urging this vote because it is my job as a legislator to speak on behalf of the first responders, and to speak on behalf of the commissioners, and the residents of my county. Can we forget these politics? Can we forget the kind of conflicts between levels of governments? Please help us simply get Senate Bill No. 1123 through this Senate and into the House so that we can protect our first responders. I urge that.

I will speak on every remonstrance until we get Senate Bill No. 1123 through. I purposely took it away from the larger amendments so there is no argument about anything else now. It is simply supporting a county's effort. We do not have a vaccine. We do not have enough testing materials. What are we to do? In the same way that our county, which is developing a regional approach, has purchased over 300,000 pieces of protective equipment, when the Federal government does not act, when the State is unable to get what it needs in terms of testing and protective equipment, does not a county have a right, does not a region have a right to protect itself? That is all we ask. Please help us, and next time we meet allow Senate Bill No. 1123 to go through this legislature.

Thank you, Mr. President.

## HOUSE MESSAGE HOUSE CONCURS IN HOUSE BILL

The Clerk of the House of Representatives returned to the Senate **HB 752**, with the information the House has passed the same without amendments.

## BILLS SIGNED

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

**SB 857** and **HB 752**.

## HOUSE MESSAGES

### HOUSE CONCURS IN SENATE AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE AMENDMENTS BY AMENDING SAID 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 by further amending said amendments to **SB 327**, in which concurrence of the Senate is requested.

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

**HOUSE CONCURS IN SENATE AMENDMENTS  
TO HOUSE BILL**

The Clerk of the House of Representatives informed the Senate that the House has concurred in amendments made by the Senate to **HB 1869**.

**BILL SIGNED**

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

**HB 1869.**

**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 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 Tuesday, April 28, 2020, at 1:09 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.