

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
Legislative Journal

MONDAY, MAY 11, 2020

SESSION OF 2020 204TH OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

No. 18

SENATE

MONDAY, May 11, 2020

The Senate met at 2:09 p.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time.

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

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Today, I am offering one of my favorite prayers, the prayer of St. Francis. Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy. O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; and in pardoning that we are pardoned; and in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

GENERAL COMMUNICATION

RECALL OF REGULAR SESSION

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

SENATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

May 10, 2020

TO: President and All Members of the Senate
FROM: Senator JOE SCARNATI
President Pro Tempore
RE: Recall to Session
Monday, May 11, 2020, 2:00 p.m.

Consistent with the recess motion made on May 6, 2020, the Senate is recalled for voting session on Monday, May 11, 2020, at 2:00 p.m.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE GOVERNOR

**RECALL COMMUNICATION
REFERRED TO COMMITTEE**

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

**MEMBER OF THE PENNSYLVANIA
TURNPIKE COMMISSION**

May 11, 2020

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

In accordance with the power and authority vested in me as Governor of the Commonwealth, I do hereby recall my nomination dated March 13, 2020, of Rebecca Dombrowsky, 669 Rockwood Drive, Elizabethtown 17022, Lancaster County, Thirty-sixth Senatorial District, for appointment as a member of the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, to serve for a term of four years, and until the successor is appointed and qualified, vice Barry T. Drew, Mechanicsburg, deceased.

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

TOM WOLF
Governor

NOMINATION REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

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

**MEMBER OF THE PENNSYLVANIA
TURNPIKE COMMISSION**

May 11, 2020

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

In conformity with law, I have the honor hereby to nominate for the advice and consent of the Senate, Wadud Ahmad, 227 West Apsley Street, Philadelphia 19144, Philadelphia County, Third Senatorial District, for appointment as a member of the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, to serve for a term of four years, and until the successor is appointed and qualified, vice Barry Drew, Mechanicsburg, deceased.

TOM WOLF
Governor

BILLS INTRODUCED AND REFERRED

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

May 8, 2020

Senators PHILLIPS-HILL, BREWSTER, ARGALL, MASTRIANO, SCHWANK, PITTMAN, MARTIN, J. WARD, REGAN, BAKER and STEFANO presented to the Chair **SB 1136**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175), known as The Administrative Code of 1929, providing for emergency COVID-19 provisions.

Which was committed to the Committee on COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, May 8, 2020.

Senators PHILLIPS-HILL, MASTRIANO, MENSCH, ARGALL, PITTMAN, J. WARD and STEFANO presented to the Chair **SB 1137**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of December 5, 1936 (2nd Sp.Sess., 1937 P.L.2897, No.1), known as the Unemployment Compensation Law, in emergency provisions related to COVID-19, providing for daily application reporting.

Which was committed to the Committee on LABOR AND INDUSTRY, May 8, 2020.

Senators MASTRIANO, ARGALL, ARNOLD, BAKER, DiSANTO, MARTIN, PHILLIPS-HILL, PITTMAN, STEFANO and YAW presented to the Chair **SB 1141**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175), known as The Administrative Code of 1929, providing for emergency COVID-19 provisions.

Which was committed to the Committee on COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, May 8, 2020.

Senators KEARNEY, IOVINO, FONTANA, KILLION, SANTARSIERO, BREWSTER, DINNIMAN, COSTA and MUTH presented to the Chair **SB 1142**, entitled:

An Act amending Title 35 (Health and Safety) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in volunteer firefighters, further providing for funds.

Which was committed to the Committee on VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, May 8, 2020.

Senators ARGALL, STEFANO, TARTAGLIONE, ARNOLD, COSTA and PHILLIPS-HILL presented to the Chair **SB 1144**, entitled:

An Act amending Title 3 (Agriculture) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in retail food facility safety, prohibiting return of groceries and other foodstuffs during COVID-19 disaster emergency.

Which was committed to the Committee on AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS, May 8, 2020.

Senator BROWNE presented to the Chair **SB 1148**, 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.

Which was committed to the Committee on APPROPRIATIONS May 8, 2020.

May 11, 2020

Senators HUGHES, FONTANA, FARNESE, KEARNEY, COSTA, BREWSTER, TARTAGLIONE, HAYWOOD, STREET and MUTH presented to the Chair **SB 960**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of February 9, 1999 (P.L.1, No.1), known as the Capital Facilities Debt Enabling Act, in capital facilities, further providing for definitions and for appropriation for and limitation on redevelopment assistance capital projects.

Which was committed to the Committee on APPROPRIATIONS, May 11, 2020.

Senators HUGHES, FONTANA, FARNESE, KEARNEY, COSTA, BREWSTER, TARTAGLIONE, HAYWOOD, STREET and MUTH presented to the Chair **SB 961**, entitled:

An Act establishing a program to provide closing costs and down payment assistance to individuals in certain areas of this Commonwealth to encourage and increase homeownership; establishing the Step UP PA Fund; and making an appropriation.

Which was committed to the Committee on URBAN AFFAIRS AND HOUSING, May 11, 2020.

Senators HUGHES, FONTANA, FARNESE, KEARNEY, COSTA, BREWSTER, HAYWOOD, STREET and MUTH presented to the Chair **SB 962**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, providing for Pennsylvania Housing Tax Credit.

Which was committed to the Committee on FINANCE, May 11, 2020.

Senators HUGHES, FONTANA, FARNESE, KEARNEY, COSTA, BREWSTER, HAYWOOD, STREET and MUTH presented to the Chair **SB 963**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, in realty transfer tax, further providing for transfer of tax.

Which was committed to the Committee on FINANCE, May 11, 2020.

Senators BROWNE and MARTIN presented to the Chair **SB 1138**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of March 28, 2000 (P.L.23, No.7), known as the Fair Credit Extension Uniformity Act, further providing for definitions.

Which was committed to the Committee on BANKING AND INSURANCE, May 11, 2020.

Senators MASTRIANO, ARGALL, BAKER, BREWSTER, MARTIN, PITTMAN, STEFANO and PHILLIPS-HILL presented to the Chair **SB 1143**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of December 19, 1988 (P.L.1262, No.156), known as the Local Option Small Games of Chance Act, in club licensees, further providing for distribution of proceeds.

Which was committed to the Committee on COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, May 11, 2020.

Senators KEARNEY, KILLION, BREWSTER, SCHWANK and COSTA presented to the Chair **SB 1145**, entitled:

An Act amending Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in consolidated county assessment, further providing for special provisions relating to countywide revisions of assessments.

Which was committed to the Committee on LOCAL GOVERNMENT, May 11, 2020.

Senators MASTRIANO, COSTA, MENSCH, PHILLIPS-HILL and STEFANO presented to the Chair **SB 1149**, entitled:

An Act amending Title 30 (Fish) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in fishing licenses, further providing for disabled veterans and former prisoners of war.

Which was committed to the Committee on GAME AND FISHERIES, May 11, 2020.

Senator BOSCOLA and A. WILLIAMS presented to the Chair **SB 1150**, entitled:

An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, in personal income tax, further providing for time for filing withholding returns.

Which was committed to the Committee on FINANCE, May 11, 2020.

RESOLUTIONS INTRODUCED AND REFERRED

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

May 8, 2020

Senators DINNIMAN, FONTANA, COLLETT, KILLION, LANGERHOLC, PHILLIPS-HILL, MARTIN, REGAN, J. WARD and BAKER presented to the Chair **SR 324**, entitled:

A Resolution designating the month of May 2020 as "Lyme and Tick-borne Disease Awareness Month" in Pennsylvania.

Which was committed to the Committee on RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, May 8, 2020.

Senators YAW, PITTMAN and ARGALL presented to the Chair **SR 325**, entitled:

A Resolution urging the Department of Environmental Protection to cease all action on its "cap and invest" regulation.

Which was committed to the Committee on ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY, May 8, 2020.

Senators SANTARSIERO, MUTH and DINNIMAN presented to the Chair **SR 326**, entitled:

A Resolution urging the President of the United States, White House staff and Federal public health officials to use the Federal Government's power to order the manufacturing of essential testing supplies,

procure supplies for widespread testing and direct needed resources to states, including Pennsylvania, to mitigate additional exposure to COVID-19 due to widespread business reopenings.

Which was committed to the Committee on HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, May 8, 2020.

May 11, 2020

Senators BROOKS, J. WARD, AUMENT, FONTANA, DINNIMAN, KILLION, K. WARD, MENSCH, STREET, YAW, PHILLIPS-HILL, PITTMAN, HUTCHINSON, LANGERHOLC, COSTA, BAKER, GORDNER and STEFANO presented to the Chair **SR 327**, entitled:

A Resolution recognizing the week of May 10 through May 16, 2020, as "National Hospital Week" in Pennsylvania.

Which was committed to the Committee on RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, May 11, 2020.

HOUSE MESSAGES

HOUSE BILLS FOR CONCURRENCE

The Clerk of the House of Representatives presented to the Senate the following bills for concurrence, which were referred to the committees indicated:

May 7, 2020

HB 881, 1983 and 2435 -- Committee on Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

HB 1439, 1696 and 2206 -- Committee on Banking and Insurance.

HB 1984 -- Committee on Judiciary.

HB 2045 and 2370 -- Committee on State Government.

HB 2065 -- Committee on Transportation.

HB 2251, 2408 and 2418 -- Committee on Finance.

HB 2392 -- Committee on Appropriations.

HB 2415 -- Committee on Intergovernmental Operations.

May 9, 2020

HB 2433 -- Committee on Community, Economic and Recreational Development.

May 11, 2020

HB 2044 -- Committee on Local Government.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVES

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

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I request legislative leaves for Senator Yaw, Senator Brooks, and Senator Kim Ward.

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

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I request legislative leaves for Senator Leach, Senator Tartaglione, and Senator Brewster.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senator Corman requests legislative leaves for Senator Yaw, Senator Brooks, and Senator Kim Ward.

Senator Costa requests legislative leaves for Senator Leach, Senator Tartaglione, and Senator Brewster.

Without objection, the leaves will be granted.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Senator COSTA asked and obtained a leave of absence for Senator Hughes, for today's Session, for personal reasons.

JOURNAL APPROVED

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Journal of the Session of April 6, 2020, is now in print.

The Clerk proceeded to read the Journal of the Session of April 6, 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-49

Argall	Dinniman	Martin	Street
Arnold	DiSanto	Mastriano	Tartaglione
Aument	Farnese	Mensch	Tomlinson
Baker	Fontana	Muth	Vogel
Bartolotta	Gordner	Phillips-Hill	Ward, Judy
Blake	Haywood	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-0

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

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Journal is approved.

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 series of off-the-floor committee meetings to be held here on the Senate floor, beginning with the Committee on Community, Economic and Recreational Development, followed by the Committee on Law and Justice, followed by the Committee on Finance, and then followed by the Committee on Appropriations.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. For purposes of off-the-floor committee meetings, beginning with the Committee on Community, Economic and Recreational Development, followed by the Committee on Law and Justice, followed by the Committee on Finance, and then followed by the Committee on Appropriations, 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.

LEGISLATIVE LEAVES CANCELLED

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Senator Yaw and Senator Kim Ward have returned, and their legislative leaves are cancelled.

CALENDAR

THIRD CONSIDERATION CALENDAR

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

HB 64, HB 102, SB 107, SB 276, HB 280, SB 331, HB 355, SB 377, HB 422, SB 494, SB 530, SB 532, SB 594, SB 606, SB 679, SB 693, HB 716, SB 763, SB 798, SB 915, SB 927, SB 952 and SB 957 -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

BILL ON THIRD CONSIDERATION AND FINAL PASSAGE

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 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 Washington, Senator Bartolotta.

Senator BARTOLOTTA. Mr. President, today I rise and ask my colleagues to support Senate Bill No. 959, which would provide additional dedicated Medicaid funding to nursing facilities that serve a substantial number of patients who require ventilator or tracheostomy care. The Medicaid funding shortfall for nursing facilities that specialize in providing this care has existed for over a decade. Senator Laughlin and I introduced this important legislation before anyone knew about COVID-19, but these concerns and the need to insure continued access to these providers is only heightened by the global health pandemic. We hear every day about the need for ventilator equipment and the services provided by just a handful of facilities in Pennsylvania. We cannot allow these facilities to close. Currently, just 13 facilities in the Commonwealth treat more than 300 of the State's 700 patients who require these services. If we lose any of these key providers, we lose regional access to this care for families. These patients lose the places they call home and risk their lives relocating to hospitals where the care is not only four times more expensive, but extremely dangerous for their already compromised, highly vulnerable immune systems. If we lose these pro-

viders, we lose these Pennsylvanians. It is that simple. The lives of these patients could be threatened if they are forced into hospitals, especially now with the risk of COVID-19. The time to act and finally help insure these few providers are able to continue providing lifesaving care is now. We cannot protect ventilator and tracheostomy-dependent patients' lives without these nursing facilities that already have the specialized equipment, supplies, and trained staff in place, all which require extensive expenses from these facilities.

Thank you to Senator Laughlin for cosponsoring this legislation with me, and many of our colleagues who have aided in providing strong bipartisan support for this measure. I urge an affirmative vote on Senate Bill No. 959 today for the hundreds of patients who rely on this care and the thousands of us who may need this care one day.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Erie, Senator Laughlin.

Senator LAUGHLIN. Mr. President, thank you to Senator Bartolotta for introducing this bill with me. Her leadership meant a lot in this. Some people say that timing is everything, and what a difference a few months can make. When Senate Bill No. 959 was first introduced back in November, I am rather sure that the issue of ventilator care certainly was not one that appeared on the radar screen of many people in the General Assembly or the people of Pennsylvania. However, it was an issue for Senator Bartolotta and myself. It definitely was a major concern for me after touring LECOM at Presque Isle in my senatorial district and they had informed me that they might have to limit or even eliminate ventilation care if the Medicaid reimbursement issue was not addressed. That was back then, and times have definitely changed. The new reality of Pennsylvania engaged in a war against COVID-19 has only amplified the need to maintain, if not increase, the availability of ventilator care within the Commonwealth. Each day, the Department of Health COVID-19 update includes a running tally of the percentage of ventilators available to care for those who are stricken by this deadly virus. No one ever imagined that would be the case this last fall when Senate Bill No. 959 was introduced. However, this pandemic has put an exclamation point on the need to insure adequate funding is available for ventilator and tracheostomy services within the Commonwealth, and I encourage a "yes" vote on Senate Bill No. 959.

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 echo my colleagues in supporting Senate Bill No. 959. Even prior to the current crisis, nursing homes and rehabilitation facilities across the Commonwealth have faced a shortage of ventilator beds. Last year, the largest provider of ventilator and tracheostomy care in the State filed for bankruptcy protection due to the chronic underfunding of these services for Medicaid patients. The coronavirus outbreak has brought to light the critical nature of ventilator care and the dire consequences when that care is not readily available. In fact, it is among the top concerns consistently identified by healthcare providers and advocates. Before the outbreak upended our daily lives, I had the opportunity to visit the Fox Subacute Skilled Nursing facility in my district and met with Zafir Borroughs, or "Z," as he likes to be called, who

has been a ventilator patient at Fox since 2008. Z, who has muscular dystrophy, chose to make Fox his home for a very relatable reason: He was sick of living at home with his parents and wanted some independence. The idea of being moved from his chosen home terrifies him, because like his fellow ventilator patients across the Commonwealth, Z could be forced to find care and housing elsewhere since Fox has filed for bankruptcy due to decreased rate reimbursement. Z was so determined and excited to visit Harrisburg and share his story with you personally in March at a press conference planned by Senator Bartolotta. Unfortunately, the current crisis struck, and he is stuck having to rely on me to convey how much his home means to him.

Z is a wonderful ambassador for the many patients at these facilities who cannot speak for themselves. While many are short-term patients recovering from an illness or surgical procedure, others are long-term residents, victims of car accidents, and other traumatic brain injuries. So, many of their families have reached out to me. They want their family members to be nearby where they can visit, where they know and trust the staff. Without this legislation, these patients could be moved to any open ventilator bed. Before the COVID-19 crisis, this meant the possibility of being hundreds of miles away from family and known caregivers or returning to a hospital where the costs are higher and the outcomes for this type of patient are worse. All of that was before our hospital ventilator beds were in such high demand with COVID-19 and regular ICU surgical patients. Now, more than ever, facilities like Fox Subacute in Warrington, in my district, are vital to maintaining our fragile healthcare system. Z and vent/trach patients all across the Commonwealth are relying on us to insure that their care and their home remain intact.

By voting in favor of Senate Bill No. 959, we can support patients in need of care, insure skilled nurses and staff in need of family-sustaining wages have jobs, prevent local businesses from closing, alleviate hospitals of increased risks, and insure open beds are used for additional patients. I thank Senator Bartolotta for working to bring this bill to a vote, and again, encourage all of my colleagues to vote "yes" on Senate Bill No. 959.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator DINNIMAN. Mr. President, the effect of the closing of units, not hospitals, but centers that use these ventilators, has impacted each and every county. In our county, the company that declared bankruptcy that had this facility for ventilator patients, and it was an excellent facility, left the county last summer. The firm also left a facility in Allegheny County. I, too, congratulate the makers of this bill. I, too, want to testify that the lack of ventilator facilities is affecting patients throughout our Commonwealth. I begged Penn Medicine at the time, which took over Chester County Hospital, to reopen the facility, because now anyone who needs those ventilators has to go to the Penn facility in the city of Philadelphia, but Penn Medicine said it was too expensive to reopen. So, the issue of increasing the reimbursements at these facilities is a necessary one. It also allows hospitals to have patients, who do not really need to be in a hospital, moved to these facilities and save significant costs for the healthcare system. So, I join with my colleagues who have spoken. I join in this bipartisan effort to urge the approval of this bill. We need to increase the reimbursements so that, once again,

all of our citizens in locations close to where they live and close to family will have these ventilator units. I, too, will vote "yes."

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator STREET. Mr. President, I rise to support this bill as well. I thank my colleagues with whom we worked on this bill. The availability of ventilators during this crisis is critical to maintaining life, and adequate compensation abilities that are providing ventilator care is critically important in making sure that those facilities are able to maintain access to ventilators and that there are enough facilities that have ventilators available. Overtaxing facilities that are already trying to preserve human life under the most fragile of conditions is something we must be very diligent to avoid, and I think this bill makes very proven steps in making sure that some of Pennsylvania's most vulnerable and fragile citizens, in a most precarious of times, are able to receive the quality of care that they need and that those facilities are able to do it in a more sustainable way. Mr. President, I thank the maker of the bill and thank my colleagues who worked along with me on this bill, and I urge a "yes" vote so that we can take valuable steps in preserving and maintaining life during this crisis in the Commonwealth.

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	Haywood	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-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.

BILLS OVER IN ORDER

SB 968, SB 969, SB 976, HB 1036, HB 1045, HB 1050, HB 1210, HB 1379 and HB 1405 -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

BILL LAID ON THE TABLE

HB 1522 (Pr. No. 1917) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of October 24, 2012 (P.L.1209, No.151), known as the Child Labor Act, further providing for minors serving in volunteer emergency service organizations.

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

HB 1522 TAKEN FROM THE TABLE

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, I move that House Bill No. 1522, Printer's No. 1917, 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 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, SB 258, SB 284, HB 342, 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

HB 1076 (Pr. No. 3594) -- The Senate proceeded to consideration of the bill, entitled:

An Act amending the act of June 27, 2006 (1st Sp.Sess., P.L.1873 No.1), known as the Taxpayer Relief Act, in senior citizens property tax and rent rebate assistance, further providing for filing of claim; and authorizing public school districts to implement a senior tax reduction incentive volunteer exchange 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 1123, HB 1174 and HB 1538 -- Without objection, the bills were passed over in their order at the request of Senator CORMAN.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS
BILLS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEES**

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

SB 1128 (Pr. No. 1657) (Rereported)

An Act amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in licensing of drivers, providing for declaration of judicial emergencies.

SB 1148 (Pr. No. 1685)

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.

Senator KILLION, from the Committee on Community Economic and Recreational Development, reported the following bills:

HB 2388 (Pr. No. 3719) (Amended)

An Act amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175), known as The Administrative Code of 1929, providing for emergency COVID-19 provisions.

HB 2412 (Pr. No. 3720) (Amended)

An Act amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177, No.175), known as The Administrative Code of 1929, providing for emergency COVID-19 provisions.

Senator HUTCHINSON, from the Committee on Finance, reported the following bills:

SB 1041 (Pr. No. 1696) (Amended)

An Act amending the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6, No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971, in sales and use tax, further providing for exclusions from tax.

SB 1100 (Pr. No. 1697) (Amended)

An Act amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.343, No.176), known as The Fiscal Code, in emergency finance and tax provisions, providing for exemption from income.

HB 2408 (Pr. No. 3676)

An Act amending the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.343, No.176), known as The Fiscal Code, in emergency finance and tax provisions, providing for exemption from taxation and for nonprofit corporations and charitable trusts.

Senator STEFANO, from the Committee on Law and Justice, reported the following bills:

HB 327 (Pr. No. 3678)

An Act amending the act of April 12, 1951 (P.L.90, No.21), known as the Liquor Code, in preliminary provisions, further providing for definitions; and, in licenses and regulations, liquor, alcohol and malt and brewed beverages, providing for prepared beverages and mixed drinks for off-premises consumption during disaster emergency and reenacting provisions relating to local option.

HB 1048 (Pr. No. 3721) (Amended)

An Act amending the act of April 12, 1951 (P.L.90, No.21), known as the Liquor Code, in licenses and regulations for liquor, alcohol and malt and brewed beverages, further providing for renewal of licenses and temporary provisions for licensees in armed service.

BILLS ON FIRST CONSIDERATION

Senator YUDICHAK. Mr. President, I move that the Senate do now proceed to consideration of all bills reported from committees for the first time at today's Session.

The motion was agreed to by voice vote.
The bills were as follows:

SB 1041, SB 1100, SB 1148, HB 327, HB 1048, HB 2388, HB 2408 and HB 2412.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE SECRETARY

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

SENATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2020

11:00 A.M.	TRANSPORTATION (public hearing to discuss COVID-19 impacts to Pennsylvania's transportation system; testifiers will include senior officials from PennDOT & the PA Turnpike)	Senate Chamber (LIVE STREAMED)
Off the Floor	APPROPRIATIONS (to consider Senate Bills No. 932, 958 and 1122; and House Bills No. 327, 1048 and 1076)	Senate Chamber (LIVE STREAMED)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2020

10:00 A.M.	JUDICIARY (public hearing to consider the confirmation of Khadija Diggs, Esquire, Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole and Charles James Fox, Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole)	Senate Chamber (LIVE STREAMED)
10:30 A.M.	AGING AND YOUTH and LOCAL GOVERNMENT (joint public hearing on COVID-19: safety of vulnerable populations and counties' ability to open safely)	Senate Chamber (LIVE STREAMED)

PETITIONS AND REMONSTRANCES

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair wishes to acknowledge that 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 5,055 days since the Pennsylvania legislature last raised the minimum wage. That is more than 13 1/2 years, and it is far too long.

Mr. President, now is a very difficult time to talk about raising the minimum wage. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a tragic impact on the health of the people in our Commonwealth. More than 55,000 Penn-

sylvanians have tested positive for the virus, and more than 3,600 people have died from the virus.

COVID-19 has also had a devastating effect on businesses and employment, as shown by economic indicators such as the high unemployment rate and declines in projected revenues. These outcomes have been unavoidable considering the infectious nature of the virus and the need to minimize its proliferation. Indeed, our top priority now and for the immediate future must continue to be protecting the public health. I would like nothing better than to be able to flip a switch and reopen Pennsylvania, but science tells us that we must take a careful, measured approach to reopening the State, lest we reverse all the progress we have made in flattening the curve.

Yet, Pennsylvania's archaic minimum wage must remain high on our agenda. This pandemic and the hearty response to it by our frontline workforce demonstrates how vital all jobs are to our long-term prosperity. We have seen how the dedicated employees who stock the shelves and ring the cash registers at supermarkets are indispensable, as are the hardworking folks who stand shoulder-to-shoulder at our food processing and packaging plants. These workers, and many others like them across a multitude of industries, make business possible in Pennsylvania. They deserve our recognition and our respect, and they deserve to know that they will be rewarded for their labors with fair, family-sustaining wages. They deserve this guarantee, this peace of mind, when the economy is strong, and at times like now when we all are making hard sacrifices for the greater good.

Mr. President, let me repeat: it has been more than 13 1/2 years since the General Assembly last raised the minimum wage. That is far too long.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator DINNIMAN. Mr. President, allow me to rise for a brief remonstrance. I hope all of us think about a fundamental question here. When World War II occurred, we all united, did we not? When 9/11 happened in 2001, we also all came together as a people, despite any party registration. What has happened to us in the last 19 years? That is the question that is worthy for all of us, no matter what our party is, to think about, that we cannot have the same unity today. I believe that one of the problems right now is we are doing politics as usual, rather than understanding in a crisis that we all must come together. I do not blame either party, and I do not blame the Governor or the President. All I am saying is, it is time to stop politics as usual. It is time to understand the crisis that we are in.

I rise with this question because I was shaken when I read the story in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* about what is happening in the nursing homes across Pennsylvania. I was shaken when I realized that 68 percent of the deaths in this Commonwealth are occurring in nursing homes. I know in my own county, it is 73 percent. Yet, they did not seem to be prepared. You know, nothing is going to happen in terms of us coming up with a solution unless all of us put party aside. Let us, all of us, come to understand that we need to be transparent; that we need to share information; that we need to not just look at things through the eyes of Rs and Ds; that when it is appropriate, we criticize the President; when it is appropriate, we take the Governor to task; and, at the same time, when it is appropriate, we defend the President and defend the Governor. What has happened now and what has happened to us as people is--capable of doing what we did during 9/11, only 19 years ago. We prided ourselves as being able to come together. We prided the unity that we had as Americans. I am trying to figure out why we cannot do it today. What has happened to our political system? If we are going to solve things in Pennsylvania, then we have to stop business and politics as

usual. We have to say that all Members of the legislature should have information from both the Federal level and the State level. We have to ask for total transparency.

Now, what surprised me on the nursing homes was that, 2 weeks earlier, I had written an article that was in many of the papers across Pennsylvania based on what Maryland was doing. In Maryland, there are universal tests for every nursing home patient and for every staff member. In Maryland, there is a system called a strike force that immediately goes into a facility if they begin to be in a state of crisis. In Maryland, there is a corps of nurses who will come in and are capable of taking care of 100 patients, with three shifts, if a nursing home is in crisis. What happens has happened. Now we need to come together, all of us, and solve this crisis in the nursing homes. It is devastating to not only the residents who live there, but it is also devastating to those who are the sons and daughters, no matter how old you are. You love and you care about your parents, but you cannot get information, it seems.

In our own county, we had over 35 deaths, as Senator Muth and others have brought to our attention, and that is a State-run facility. We have to come together, despite party, to save lives. We need to understand that it should not be politics as usual. We, as Democrats and Republicans, need to do this, whether it is the Governor and legislature, or it is the President and the governors, but we can only do it if we stop politics as usual. We can only do it if we are willing to share information. Maybe someone can answer this question: I really do not know how many tests Pennsylvania has available, do you? I do not know, based on how many tests Pennsylvania has available, why there was not universal testing in our nursing homes. I do not know how much protective equipment we have available, so, I do not know when nurses call and ask us and need protective equipment.

My friends, what woke me up, secondly, was not only the story in the *Inquirer*; but the night before, I got an urgent call from an operator of a care facility in our county saying, we have had cases of COVID-19. We do not want it to spread. How do I get the State test? I assumed there was something already in place. I was surprised there was not. So what I did is, we went to the county. Because our counties are not getting what they need, our county, on its own, ordered about 30,000 swab tests and paid for it. So, that is how they got the test. Our county, on its own, has ordered thousands and thousands of antibody tests. We started that testing for all first responders, and we will expand it to the nurses and all those on the front line. This started this Saturday. Our county, because we do not know, has purchased, with its own money, over 3.5 million pieces of protective equipment. What I am saying to you is, if our county can do it, then the State can do it, then the Federal government can do it, and then we can save lives. It is not too late yet to go into these nursing homes. Is it not just common sense, if you know that 73 percent, or statewide 68 percent, of the deaths are occurring in a particular place, that becomes your priority? That is what State after State have done.

So, what I am trying to say is, we need to forget the politics as usual. We do not need to think that if we raise a question or criticize the President, then the Republicans have to come to that defense, or if we raise a question about the Governor, the Democrats have to come to that defense. There are good things that have been done, and there are bad--not bad, but unfortunate--things that have been done, both by President Trump. If there is

a situation in Pennsylvania, let us ask some questions. The Governor, I know, is trying as hard as he can, but we do need to ask questions when life-and-death issues are at hand.

Finally, in relationship to this matter, is it possible for us to work together? Yes, and we saw that in the Committee on Education today, and I thank Senator Langerholc for allowing this to take place. Both he and I said that we need to have unity within the education community. I said that we have to stop the education wars between all of the groups in the education community, because we are now faced with a stark choice. Will we lose a whole generation of students who will not be properly educated and will slide deeper and deeper into poverty, or will we unite as one? We asked the Department of Education for information. We were provided that information. We asked and we got agreement that, for example, there will be no testing in the fall; that the local control will predominate as we go forward, understanding the differences in Pennsylvania; that the General Assembly will be contacted and there will be a full discussion based on adequate information and data from the department. If this is possible in education, it is possible in nursing homes, and it is possible when we talk about waivers and unemployment.

My friends, all I am trying to do is rise here and say that, listen, there is no Republican and no Democrat when it comes to the virus. When individuals of either party make good suggestions, if a Democrat makes a suggestion, instead of being criticized or being eliminated by our Republican colleagues, take it, use it, run with it, because we all have to be together. Finally, my friends, if we really believe the phrase, "we are all in it together," then it is incumbent upon us in the legislature, in a bipartisan way, it is incumbent in our work with the Federal government and their response, our work with the Governor in his response, for all of us to work as one. If we are all in it together, then our actions, behaviors, and what we do needs to reflect this unity of thought, this unity of purpose. So, my friends, end politics as usual. Let us work together, because we cannot afford to see any more deaths in the nursing homes. We have to act as one. We showed today in the Committee on Education that we can do that and that we can save those students, many who are having great difficulties, from being a generation of underperformers and the results thereof. So I call upon each of us to forget that it is about party, to forget it is politics as usual, and to unite for the citizens of our Commonwealth.

Thank you, Mr. President, for allowing me to do this remonstrance, and I hope and pray that we can all work together as colleagues and that we will come together with total transparency, total purpose, so that we can work and effectively meet the threats of this vicious virus, just as we met the threat of terrorism in 2001, and just as we met the threat of the Nazis and fascists in World War II. We can do it today, and we must.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Monroe, Senator Scavello.

Senator SCAVELLO. Mr. President, I was not going to speak, but I feel that it is important that I talk about being transparent. I have been a supporter, you can look back, I have been a supporter of the Governor. I have never criticized him until what we are going through now, because I just do not think that--you know, he is getting his information from somewhere, but we find out about it in front of a press conference. We do not know where the information comes from, he does not give you that

information. We do not know about waivers and who he is giving waivers to or not. I can tell you that my area is hurting badly right now. There are some small businesses that are not going to come back. So when we ask people to work together, let us think of those small businesses across our Commonwealth that are not going to be able to get back the longer we stay out. I feel that it is falling on deaf ears.

We moved a couple of bills today in the Committee on Community, Economic and Recreational Development, and we had negative votes, and I just cannot believe it. I cannot believe that a car dealer cannot sell a vehicle when he has 8 or 9 vehicles a day he might sell, if he is fortunate, and probably about 9 to 10 people an hour. Social distancing, put a mask on their employees. It is not like you will have 100 or 200 people coming in at one time like you have at a supermarket, or at Lowe's, or at Home Depot. Why can they not sell a car when they can sell it elsewhere? Why can a realtor not take someone into an empty home, and if they have to have masks and gloves on, go ahead? Why can they not sell that vehicle? Somebody will say to me, it is about money. No, it is not about money. It is about livelihoods, and we have a tremendous amount of people out there who are holding on to a home now, they have already purchased another home, and they have got expenses on both sides. Do you know what that is doing to families? How about all the domestic issues across our State right now where husbands and wives are fighting about dollars and where they are going to spend their money. Just check with your police departments, check on the domestic issues, check on the terroristic threats. Check all of those things out and tell me where those numbers are.

I am begging people to get together. Governor, let us look at some of these things. Do not stand up there on your high--I am sorry, I am going to say--high horse, because all you do is you go in front of the mic and after you speak, people do not know what you said. My constituents call me and ask me, hey, what did he just say? They are confused as all hell, and we cannot continue to go on in this manner. We want to work together as a team, but we also need to be understanding.

I spoke to the Governor's office 5 weeks ago and warned them about the nursing homes. I have connections in Italy, I am from Italy. In 1 day, we lost 400 people, average age 80. Why did we not lock down the nursing homes 5 weeks ago? We go after small businesses and we leave the nursing homes alone. Better yet, we put COVID people back into the nursing homes to spread it even more. Now we look back and say, why? But we are going to take a business's license away today if they try to sell a car, or if they try to sell a piece of property, or if they want to cut someone's hair, we are going to take their licenses away. That is what the Governor said today. My gosh, what are you thinking here? This is not September 11. We are taking people's liberties away. Let them make that decision. Let businesses make that decision. You know they will make the right decision. You know they are going to want to protect their people coming in, but give them that opportunity, and we are not.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, it was not my intention to speak this afternoon, but I feel compelled to rise and talk a little bit about the previous speaker's comments with respect to the openness and transparency that seems to be in question here. I

am sure that as I do, all the Members of this General Assembly receive day after day, week after week, volume after volume, regulations from the various agencies and departments about how folks need to conduct operating businesses. Day after day, we see a whole variety of different messages from not only the Secretary of Health about the situations in the Commonwealth, but also the various agencies and how they have been rolling along with different ideas about adapting to the practice of the situation we find ourselves in. Let us be clear, the Governor, last week, released the names of all the people who have received waivers, as requested. More importantly, the Governor, as requested, allowed for and recommended that the Department of Community and Economic Development, with respect to the waiver program, subject itself to the audit process. That is being done.

More importantly, we know this past Friday the Governor announced, I believe, 13 or 14 other new counties, primarily in southwestern Pennsylvania, which will now be moving into the yellow phase, which has clear, articulated things that people can and cannot do. It opens up our economy with limitations, along the lines of maintaining the mitigation practices that we heard about 6 or 7 weeks ago and how important they were, but, more importantly, how effective they have been in many places across this Commonwealth. Those counties that were well prepared to be able to deal with their issues with regard to the spread of this virus, they took steps to be able to do that, and their numbers reflect it, the threshold number being under 50 new cases per 100,000 population. Those are the counties that are moving forward, but they also had to show that they had the ability to do the appropriate level of testing, they had the people available to do the testing, and the nature of the work that was being done in those communities was conducive to being able to not spread the virus unnecessarily. Those counties are now moving forward to get us to, I believe, 37 counties, if I am not mistaken. They are now able to conduct opening up their businesses with some limitations, as I mentioned the social distancing and the like, except for a few. Today, in the Committee on Law and Justice, we advanced a couple of measures that will additionally allow our bars and restaurants to be able to evolve in terms of what they will be able to do at this time during this crisis.

Let us be real about where this comes from. Everyone wants to take shots at Governor Wolf and Dr. Rachel Levine. I learned today that one of our colleagues has asked for Dr. Levine to resign. Are you kidding me? This is the person who has been leading this effort for us and doing an outstanding job of making sure they maintain, as best we can, keeping Pennsylvania safe. The process has been a thoughtful, well-thought-out process by which we have looked at county by county at the beginning, and then, as we move counties into the yellow phase and going forward, have been thoughtful, methodical, data-driven, and based upon the health experts. That is what has been going on. Now we want people to retreat, retreat from the virus, cave in to the virus, disregard what the virus is doing to our Commonwealth, the number of people it is killing. Yes, it is killing folks, unfortunately, in our nursing homes, and we need to do a better job of getting our arms around that, and we will as we go forward. We are not unique in Pennsylvania, that is a problem all around this country.

Let us go back to what is trying to be done here. You guys, in most instances, are trying to open up sectors of our economy disregarding the seriousness of this virus and what it is going to

do to people in this Commonwealth as we go forward. We need to be thoughtful. We should not retreat away from the virus. That is what is happening. Our Commander-in-Chief in Washington, D.C., who, in my view, is a big reason we are in this situation: denying the fact that we have this situation going on and it is going to be gone; we are going to be down to 15 people, and saying before you know it, it is going to be gone; or not disclosing information or covering up information. All the things that are taking place in Washington, D.C., yet, we want to attack Tom Wolf, we want to attack Dr. Rachel Levine, and we want to attack unemployment compensation. That is the method, that is what we are dealing with here on the Senate floor, and the people of Pennsylvania need to hear that and understand that. This is the message that is being driven by that side of the aisle, not by us.

Let me remind everyone what we are talking about. We are talking about making sure we do what is right to protect the people of Pennsylvania. Poll after poll has shown the people in Pennsylvania believe that Governor Wolf and Dr. Rachel Levine are approaching this in the right way, the right way that needs to be done. Less than one-eighth of the Commonwealth says it is too much, the other one-eighth says it needs to be more. The bottom line is, more than three-quarters of the people in Pennsylvania believe that this process that we are undertaking, the red, yellow, and green phases, and the steps that we have taken, both moving people into the process and moving people out, in terms of our economy, those are the right processes as we go forward. But to cave in to the virus, retreat, and walk back from the virus, because we do not want to acknowledge how serious it is. We want to wave the white flag and say, we are done, we give up, virus, we are going to take our risk and consequences. Despite the fact that people believe that folks are going to do the right thing, they are not going to do the right thing. It is evidenced by what people are saying in Beaver County, locally here in central Pennsylvania, and even one county in southeast Pennsylvania are saying, we are going to defy the Governor's order because we know better than the health experts. We know better than the people who are making these decisions based on data and looking at calculations that tell us what the spread is going to look like, what testing is available. Those are the decisions that are being made by the people who we want to be making those decisions, not the people in Washington who, in my view, are the reason why we find ourselves in this situation.

Governor Tom Wolf did not cause this virus, he is not causing it to spread. In fact, he and Dr. Levine are taking great lengths to prevent it from being spread, but what is taking place is, we have folks who want to undermine what he and his administration are doing to make it more difficult for people to prevent the spread from happening in our Commonwealth. I am not going to stand on that side of the aisle. I am going to stand on the side of the aisle that is going to fight for people, and make sure we have appropriate levels of testing done, appropriate levels of PPE for our workers, protecting our frontline workers, making sure we put the resources into healthcare and folks in nursing homes to provide them with the opportunity to do what needs to be done. But, at the end of the day, we should not retreat and give in to the virus and say we are going to disregard it because we cannot beat it. We cannot beat it in our own districts. Look at the districts that are disregarding the county numbers, the numbers that the Governor has laid out that have been systematically thought through as the appropriate level, but yet, we have counties that

have twice the number and want to disregard the orders. That, to me, is giving in to the disease, that is retreating, that is walking away from being able to fight what needs to be done. We are in a war, our President tells us we are in this war against this silent virus, and we are, but our remedy is to fight back and push hard and be thoughtful, be systematic, and be methodical in terms of how we approach and how we reintroduce business into our communities. That is not the approach that we see on the other side of the aisle, and I am disappointed that those are the steps we are taking along those lines.

Let us be thoughtful, let us be considerate in terms of what is taking place, let us follow the rule of law that the Governor has put down, and let us continue to be able to move forward and stop trying to undermine what is taking place in this Commonwealth.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator FARNESE. Mr. President, earlier today I heard the meeting of the Committee on Community, Economic and Recreational Development and the comments that were made, and I think it is important, at this time, that we put some of the reasoning that I have heard over the last several weeks on the record. Specifically, today there was a discussion about trying to pass legislation that would essentially do an end-around around the Governor's guidelines simply because, as I believe, the maker of the bill argued that local officials, our local folks at the county levels, wherever it might be, are the ones who understand the needs and the importance of what everyday life is for their constituents. They know better, they know best, the local municipalities, the local elected officials. Yet, time and time again in this Chamber when we have argued, our side of the aisle has argued, for instance, on safe gun laws, responsible gun laws, we have used the exact same arguments, Mr. President. Numerous times, the same exact arguments that I have heard over the last 4 weeks in this Chamber, that we have to disregard the guidelines, the science, and the data put forth by our own Secretary of Health and those folks who we are listening to because the people at the local level, they understand the needs and the wants of their constituents better than anyone else. But why the hell, when we want to try to make that argument, do we get shot down?

The hypocrisy with regard to the way we want to govern under this pandemic is a disgrace. There is no reason why we should begin to substitute the advice of Dr. Levine, our own Secretary of Health, because now everybody, it seems like, on the other side of the aisle is an expert in one of the most unprecedented pandemics that ever hit this world. Yet, a few short years ago, Mr. President, under the previous administration's Secretary of Health, when he was getting into fights with local businesses about the way they made his eggs, nobody said a damn thing, everybody kept quiet, and he would go on and on. But, amazingly, when Dr. Levine, the Governor, and the experts who they have put forth, when they speak about an unprecedented way to handle this virus, this pandemic, all of a sudden everybody seems to be an expert in medicine, everybody seems to be an expert in pandemics, and everybody seems to know more than the Secretary of Health and the people who are in place. That is not leadership, Mr. President. That is hypocrisy, and that is not the way to save people.

What I heard during that meeting of the Committee on Community, Economic and Recreational Development today was a disgrace, and it was a disgrace because for years in this Chamber we have followed advice and we have made decisions about policy in a certain way. Yet, when it comes time now to score political points against the Governor, who is probably doing one of the best, if not the best, jobs in the country in handling it--that is not my thought, that is what people are saying, that is what polling is showing, that he has acted with forethought and in a reasoned and measured way to keep people safe. Yes, Mr. President, it is working, and all of a sudden we are going to dump that, we are going to dump the advice of Dr. Levine because, well, people at the local level, they know better. I am sorry, Mr. President, we need, in this Chamber, to document and go on the record with these hypocrisies, because at some point in the future when we move forward and talk about responsible gun laws or responsible laws at the local level, giving local officials, local municipalities, the ability to make those decisions for their own constituents, and you try to shoot it down, we will come back again and again with the arguments that are made like this, that we are hearing today. Everybody on the other side of the aisle seems to be an expert in medicine. That is not the way you save lives, Mr. President.

I join with the comments of the Minority Leader in echoing what was said and the way he said it. What we are doing right now, we do not need to run from this virus. We need to do exactly what we are doing right now, the measured approach, science and data, and that is what we should be listening to. Stop with this idea that we know better, we are not going to listen to the Governor, we are going to do this and we are going to do that. You know what, in 30 days we are all going to wind up with the second wave of this thing, and then whose fault is it going to be - Dr. Levine's, or the idiot in the White House?

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator K. WARD. Mr. President, I also was not intending to speak today, but as I listened to my colleagues and the back and forth, I just need to say, how are we suppose to--how is the public suppose to trust what is happening? Do not wear a mask, maybe wear a mask, absolutely wear a mask. We are requiring a mask, but now we are just strongly wanting you to wear a mask. The messages have been mixed, they have not been clear.

I am so happy that we got the waiver list, but it was not everything that we needed, and it took 7 weeks to get that waiver list. So, while we are waiting for the waiver list, and some businesses are seeing their neighbors who do the same thing they do, their neighbors are operating, but they are not allowed to operate, while they are seeing that going on, there is nothing we can tell them. We do not know because they would not release the list. We do not know who applied, and they would say, we are looking at them, 45 people are looking at them. We still do not know who those 45 people are. So it is very difficult when there are so many inconsistencies for the public to trust what is happening.

Listen, we did what we needed to do. I believe the Governor did what he needed to do when this started. We flattened the curve, we wore our masks, we stayed away from people, and it helped. It no doubt helped. But as time goes on and we see that the apocalypse actually did not happen, because that is what we were looking at, apocalyptic numbers that did not happen, and

why one county is allowed to operate and another one is not. Here, in the southwest, we border Ohio and West Virginia. I can drive 45 minutes and get my hair cut this week. You know, when you look at just the inconsistencies all over, it does not make sense to the public. When you look at the Department of Health requiring nursing homes to take COVID patients, how is the public supposed to trust that?

So I resent anyone saying that these people, who have been struggling, who have not had a paycheck in 7 weeks, are bad or somehow they are not patriotic, they are bad players. They have not had a paycheck in 7 weeks. We closed them down and we said, you are going to have unemployment, this is going to happen, and then we find out the contract for the Department of Labor and Industry's computers is 2 years late. This is not acceptable to people. It is easy for people who are collecting pensions and still working, it is easy for us, we are still working, we are still getting our paychecks. We are still working. It might be easy for us to say, those people are bad, they are not patriotic, shame on them, they are going to cause the virus to spread. They do not have any money for food, and to have a government official say, go get in line at the food bank. Yeah, these are independent people who have built a life, they have built a business, they take care of their families, and now we leave them with nothing. All of that is not acceptable to me, that people are waiting 7 weeks for a check, they are supposed to pay their bills; they are told to go to the food bank; they are told do not wear a mask, wear a mask; they are told, yeah, your neighbor can open, they do the exact same thing you do, but you cannot open.

The other thing that has really been displayed in this whole crisis is, why have a legislature? We have had no input, we have not been able to get many more answers than the thousands of people who have contacted our office. This is like a one-arm government. You know, you never know what you do not know until it happens. I see so many things that we need to work together on, collaborate on, to fix and remedy so that if this ever happens again, we are not in this position and we can do things moving forward that the public will trust. We will have a voice.

Thank you.

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

Senator SANTARSIERO. Mr. President, like the previous speakers, I had not intended to speak this afternoon, but my friend, the gentleman from the 40th Senatorial District, kind of got me thinking and, so, I wanted to share my thoughts. I might add, I have known the gentleman since back when we both served in the House and I know my ears pricked up when he said he does not attack the Governor. I hope I never find that he is attacking me, because if that was complimentary toward the Governor, I do not know what would be an attack.

Mr. President, we are in a very difficult spot today, and we talk about the people who are struggling. Each and every one of us has those folks in our districts, and each and every one of us has spent the better part of the last 2 months, I am sure, working every day to try to help those families in every way that we can, because I know we all care about those folks. But let us step back and understand why it is we are where we are today. We are where we are today because of a pandemic that required an unprecedented closing of our society in order to prevent its spread and, ultimately, to prevent people from dying, because we know that if the spread had gone on unchecked, that is exactly what

would have happened. A far greater number of people would have succumbed to this, and all of our first-line responders would have been put at risk. Today, people are talking about how the boogeyman never materialized, the catastrophe never happened. Well, that is because the mitigation efforts have been successful.

But consider, for a moment, what would have happened if, back in January, our Federal government and the Trump administration had actually worked to contain the virus, back when that was still possible, back when experts were telling the President of the United States that this was going to be a pandemic and something that the United States government needed to immobilize immediately. The failure to act then, the failure to contain the virus then and do everything that had to be done at the national level then, make no mistake, resulted in jobs lost in March, jobs lost in April, and jobs lost today, in May, and it is ongoing. That incompetency, that lack of coordination, left States like Pennsylvania in an almost untenable position. Governor Wolf, since then, has done everything he can to try to mitigate the spread of the virus while, at the same time, doing what he can to help Pennsylvanians cope through this very difficult period. He has worked regionally with the other States in the northeast to try to come up with a plan, regionally, that makes sense so that we can slowly begin to open our economy as informed by medical experts and by science to make sure we are not stepping back. That is a critical point to remember here, because what we are seeing already in some of the States that have done a wholesale reopening, that cases are starting to spike back up again. The danger is, obviously, in putting people's lives at risk, but the danger, too, is the possibility of having to go into a second closure that would only hurt the economy more, that would put working families in greater straits for a longer period of time and put further strain on all of the resources of government at every level. That is not what we want to do.

Now, the other problem we have, of course, is that when we actually do open up, and we have begun that here in Pennsylvania, there have to be protocols in place to make sure that we can do it in a responsible and in the safest manner possible, but that effort is severely undermined by an administration in Washington that is suppressing the work that the CDC itself is doing to aid in that protocol and to allow people to get back into the workplace in the safest way possible. Why are they doing that? Why? If we, here in Pennsylvania, are about making sure that people are going to be safe even when we get to the yellow phase in every part of the State, then every one of us, on both sides of the aisle, should be asking that question. We need to have a system in place that is absolutely the safest we can come up with to protect people when we go back out in the yellow phase.

Mr. President, this is an unprecedented time, and the challenge that Governor Wolf, and every other governor of every other State in the country, has had to face in these last 2 months has been like nothing before. We have had to learn as we go along, in many ways. But a policy here in this legislature where one day we are considering car dealers, the next day we are considering lawn and garden centers, and maybe the next day after that we are considering stores that sell greeting cards, that is not a policy designed to actually open up our economy in a way that makes sense and in a way that is going to preserve the safety and health of the people of Pennsylvania. That is a smorgasbord of different interest groups. It is not an informed, rational policy. If we want to have that discussion, then we should start that discus-

sion. We should make sure that all voices are heard in that discussion and we should make sure, at the end of the day, the decisions we make as policymakers are informed first and foremost by the science so that we can continue to protect the health and safety of everyone in Pennsylvania, rather than engaging in this organized effort to take shots at the Governor and the Governor's plan to reopen the State. If we want to be partners, if we want to work together, then let us do that, in all seriousness. But that means being real about each and every one of these issues, not taking a different business today and having no plan as to how that is going to work as we move forward.

We know the Governor is going to veto these bills. We know that. So why are we spending time on it? Why are we spending time on this when we, instead, could be working with the administration on coming up with a good plan for how we protect every Pennsylvanian as we slowly begin to reopen our economy? We have challenges now, we are going to have them in June, and, yes, we are going to have them in the fall. If we are not ready to meet those challenges in a way that is guided by the science and is protecting public health, then we are in for a much more difficult time than we have experienced even so far.

Mr. President, I want to thank the Governor for what he has been doing, I want to thank Dr. Levine for her leadership, and I want to make sure that this legislature, every one of us, does what we need to be doing to make sure that we are helping Pennsylvanians and not just playing this game, because at the end of the day, that is not advancing the interests of this Commonwealth, and it is not advancing the interests of our constituents in our communities. Thank you.

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

Senator MUTH. Mr. President, to echo all of my colleagues' sentiments on the floor on both sides of the aisle, I want to say that, of course, I acknowledge the frustration that I am sure all of us are feeling as elected officials who serve the public, we are really out of resources at moments and solutions that are in the immediate moment to give to our constituents who are struggling with this economic devastation caused by COVID-19, and I think that is a known thing. We do not need to dwell on that. We are well aware of the struggle across all households in all 50 senatorial districts. That is agreed to. What is not agreed to is what we are defining as a safe reopening, and I take this moment to remind everyone, because this has been a long couple of months here, that nothing about this virus has changed. Not one thing. We have no idea when a vaccine is going to come, we have no idea who is carrying it, and we have no idea how long you carry it. For all of these reasons, to suggest that suddenly, poof, there is no way that this could cause another massive spread than already has occurred across the Commonwealth, and while I understand that some districts have not experienced the same amount of spread as a district like mine in southeast PA, I will tell you this, this virus does not discriminate. It is not just killing seniors in nursing homes. It is not just impacting people who are vulnerable with underlying conditions. It has impacted all age demographics, all socioeconomic classes. It does not care. So what is our response to this? It is to just suddenly say we have had enough, we are just going to reopen, we will see what happens.

Nothing about this virus has changed. We should assume that every person around us has been exposed. We should behave in

a way that we look around, we are protecting ourselves, we are 6 feet apart, we are wearing PPE, we are going out only when necessary, and assume that when we are, every single person around us is exposed and could give this to you, and then you can give it to your family member, pass it on to someone else. This is not just about an individual who is frustrated. It is not about us. It is about the fact that we cannot contain this virus. You cannot put a seatbelt on after the car has crashed. You cannot have a mechanism to pick up the pieces of people's lives after this virus wrecks through households, steals family members.

I spent the last 2 weeks of my life, literally, on the phone talking to workers, nurses, CNAs, and janitors in long-term care facilities, specifically one in my district. I have talked to family members who lost their loved one who had no idea that this virus had even impacted their loved one. This is the reality, and if you are so lucky that it has not touched your family personally, that is something to be grateful for, but that does not give you permission to then proceed as if this virus is not going to impact you or anyone else. I am disappointed that, as public officials, people who advocate for the public, the greater good, which I would assume we all could have agreed on that was for the greater health and well-being of all of our constituencies, is that if there is a plan to reopen, it is safe. I am baffled by the amount of time spent on a waiver process that, sure, it was flawed, we have established that. We spent more time talking about the waiver process than you have spent any time talking about a testing plan, allocating PPE, making sure that businesses have a supply chain that is reliable to reopen safely. I have not heard a moment on that from some of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. Not a moment. Not only have I not heard that conversation, you voted down an amendment today, you took out a piece of a bill, you passed an amendment that gutted worker protections. If you are so adamant and swear up and down that everyone is following CDC guidelines in all of these entities that you are trying to reopen or that are reopened, then why would it matter if we are trying to put those things into law, right?

No, that is not what is happening. There is no effort to protect workers, there is no effort to allow small business to have access to a supply chain of sanitation and PPE products. There is nothing. It is a free-for-all. You, answering constituent letters mad about something not being open and not giving them a resource to safely reopen, makes you negligent. Let us not be negligent. It has already cost more than enough lives in this Commonwealth. No one here is expendable. You, being frustrated, does not give anybody the right to go out and expend other people's lives because you cannot acknowledge that nothing about this virus has changed since day one, the first life it took. Not one damn thing has changed. But, suddenly, we are a free-for-all and we are going to reopen. I do not know how you advocate for a safe reopen when there is no plan. That is not a thing. Do not stand here and act like you are doing all of these amazing things to help people who are in economic hardship and complain about a 2-year process for some Web site to be updated when who has had the votes to fund these things? Who has had the votes to put up a paid sick leave policy? Who has had the votes to put up business insurance for small businesses for this time so they could be a part of a policy that actually covers them during a pandemic? But, we sit here and talk about economic devastation. The stage for it was set well ahead of COVID-19. Let us not let

that go. Let that be a part of our message here. Let us be clear, everyone wants transparency, let us have that conversation.

So, I hope that when we come back here tomorrow, we have an idea of how we actually are going to put a safe plan in place to reopen. Otherwise, as Senator Farnese mentioned, in 3 weeks, this Commonwealth will be in a whole new level of COVID-19 and we will have no way to contain it. It will be spread in all 67 counties, more than 100 cases, it will be everywhere.

Let us actually take a pause here and advocate for real safe reopening. Act responsibly. Do the right thing. There are hospital workers who are sacrificing their safety and health and their families' by going into work every day and, instead, we have people who will not practice the CDC guidelines. Do not make them guidelines; make them the new way you are living life, because this is not going away anytime soon, and every single one of us in this Senate Chamber should be advocating for that. That is it, plain and simple.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator MARTIN. Mr. President, I was not going to rise today to speak, but after listening to a lot of the comments that have come before, I think it is important, especially on the heels of some local folks who are trying their best to protect their communities, have been exposed to words like being called cowards, deserters, and I think I heard on TV, somebody actually wanted to refer to us as a disgrace. Now, as someone who has actually sat on the head of emergency management before, it would be interesting to know, as you challenge this out-of-this-world idea that somehow counties cannot make responsible decisions on behalf of the safety and welfare of their constituents, that in every type of emergency in history county governments and their emergency management centers are the frontline decision makers. I have been there. As much as TV wants to talk about FEMA and PEMA, their historic role is to provide backup, to provide resources, to move equipment around, to support the local efforts. Why is it that way? It is that way because these emergency operation centers are built as a team, and around that table through an emergency you are sitting there with the business community, law enforcement, nursing homes, and whole other segments of our economy with health systems to make decisions that are in the best interests of their communities.

Now, as people want to look back and see the different aspects of what we are going through, in terms of the State's reaction to this, we do not need to rip the scabs off the unemployment compensation debacles, we certainly hear about it every day. And for those of us who are trying to find PPE every day for our nursing homes and respond to the huge gap and failure that has occurred with our nursing homes, lawsuits, death—but, you know, those locals do not know what they are doing. It is insulting. People wonder why we are fighting piecemeal to open up different industries, it is absolutely reprehensible to see a late-night data dump finally listing the over 6,100 types of businesses that we will decide that we trust them to be responsible and implement CDC guidelines, use protective equipment, and encourage social distancing.

You know, the example that everyone talks about, like driving up to a Walmart or a Lowe's and seeing 100 people out the door, 6 feet apart, but somehow my mom-and-pop businesses' social distancing ability down in southern Lancaster County, they can-

not be trusted to do that. What is more disturbing is, in the last 36 hours, waivers that were revoked at the last minute, you want to hear some of the topics? One of them was a garden center. The Governor said he was going to veto that bill we are working on. I thought that was bad. Those people could not be responsible. One of them was a photographer. I do not know how that is even possible. One of them was a real estate agent. I thought we just wanted to wear the mantle of being the only State in the country that thought real estate could not be done in a safe way.

So when you add all those things together, and I am sorry, I love working with so many of my colleagues, but I hear work together, let us partner, let us collaborate, let us be a team, when has that been occurring? We have been saying that for the last 7 or 8 weeks in the legislature, wanting the Governor to want to participate with us. You know who else has been saying it? The nursing homes for the last 7 or 8 weeks, as they were begging for help and support, or maybe even some inspections. Now you have these pesky local governments who think they may have a clue as to how to handle emergencies in their local communities.

No, it did not have to be this way. There could have been more collaboration, more consistency. But I know this, on behalf of the people in my community, and I do not care if they are Republican or Democrat, they vote or do not vote, it does not matter to me, because they are faced with the same problems of not having received an unemployment check in 7 or 8 weeks, had a loved one trapped in a nursing home and could not get out, a struggling business that will never recover from this and they wonder why their competitor has been allowed to continue to operate. If I were to implore anything, I would implore that we start working in partnership, that we start trusting. The legislature's intents are not bad. Our local governments are on the front lines of every other type of emergency, they are not bad. As a matter of fact, in my community, as I believe a speaker brought up, our local Chamber, our economic development company, our health system, and our county, since this began, have been working on a collaborative plan, and it is there, and, hopefully, we are going to fund it with CARES Act funding, to open up safely, to provide resources to the community.

The last thing I want to say in terms of trusting them and working collaboratively with them, because they know their communities better than anyone sitting up here trying to manage this emergency from Harrisburg, is the assumption that we somehow cannot trust the people of Pennsylvania to operate safely if they reopen their business or go back to work, just like all the life-sustaining businesses that were granted by the Governor and the 6,100 of them of different types and assortments of industry that were given the ability and trust to do what is right in their community. I have said it a billion times since this all occurred, they do not have to be mutually exclusive goals. We know where we need to focus our resources to protect the most vulnerable, we know that people have to put different social distancing and CDC guidelines in place if they are going to be operating a business or providing resources and PPE to employees, or having the flexibility so employees do not have to choose between a job and their health.

Let us discuss it, but that takes discussion. That takes collaboration. We will all get through this together, and the more we pull together, the quicker the Commonwealth will have better health outcomes, and better economic outcomes as well.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator COSTA. Mr. President, I will be brief. A couple of things were raised by the previous speaker, and I respect the service he has provided at his local county level in the emergency management position and other positions he has held, but, at the end of the day, as the Supreme Court has told us, the Governor has the executive authority and has these executive powers to do what needs to be done as he has been laying out. He has been very clear with respect to what is required of Pennsylvania in these particular phases and what needs to be done. That is something, I think, that is important for folks to recognize. If that is not acceptable, change the PA Code, change the statutes, change whatever needs to be changed to diminish or dilute the powers of the Governor, any Governor, at that point in time going forward.

With respect to the argument about our counties, and I can respect our county emergency personnel, I know we have a good one in Allegheny County, and we have great leadership by our county executive, but I cannot get past the contradiction that we see here today when it has been stated time and time again on this floor that county officials know what is best for them. Local officials, they know what is best for them. They should be making decisions about what is best for their county or their city. That is funny, because when I contrast that with gun safety measures that we tried to put into place in our county, and my city probably experienced--my neighborhood where I grew up as a young boy--the most horrific crime against one ethnic group ever in the country, when we tried to make changes with respect to our gun rights and our gun laws, we get shut down saying, you cannot do that. You do not know what you are talking about, Pittsburgh. People on the House side and other Republicans are saying, we are not going to allow you to do that. I thought we knew what was best for us. We felt, in Pittsburgh, that it was best for us to move forward with gun safety measures - reasonable, responsible, thoughtful gun safety measures that we cannot move in this Chamber. That is incredible to me. The city of Philadelphia, same way, has experienced horrific gun violence crimes for many, many years. They, as a city, said, we want to do this, we want reasonable, responsible, thoughtful gun safety measures. We are a local level, we know what is best for our people. Harrisburg, do not tell us. They are not able to do that. Why is that? Why do we have contradictions along those lines? That is what is amazing to me at this point.

I can understand. I have the frustration, and I have folks, like everyone in this room, I get hundreds of calls. I will be doing a telephone town hall this evening, and I know people will be telling me about the problems with the unemployment process. I agree, they have had challenges, and they are working through those challenges the best they can and trying to get things done as best as they can. But, again, another contradiction to me is that while we are on the Senate floor having compassion, which we do, for those people who are not getting their unemployment checks, where was the compassion last June when we cut over 12,000 to 13,000 people off the cash assistance program and we said to them, go to the food banks. Go to the other county services and try to find some other services to replace the \$200 that you are losing every month. We did not care about them. We were not compassionate enough to worry about them. And they were not getting any unemployment checks down the road, by

the way. They were cut off, \$200 a month for disabled and partially disabled folks who were in the middle of trying to get resources. We said to them, you will not be able to go buy the couple of things that you need, your toiletries that you need, whatever the case might have been that they were able to use those resources for, we said to them, too bad, you are out of luck. We do not have compassion for you. By the way, there is no money coming down the road from unemployment.

Mr. President, the contradictions that are taking place here in terms of what we do and what we say are troubling to me. We do have to move forward, and we have moved forward in a bipartisan way on many issues in this Chamber, more so than our colleagues on the other side of the building, and we want to continue to be able to do that. The bottom line is, we have a Governor and a Secretary of Health who have been advancing these measures to make our Pennsylvanians safe and have taken thoughtful, methodical steps to get on that process. He is not the problem and she is not the problem. If you want to point fingers, point fingers to Washington, D.C., where the President is not doing the things that need to be done and has not disclosed some of the things that needed to be disclosed at the right time. That is where the issue lies. We do not need to be finding fault with anybody. Let us move forward and address these issues and do the best we can to do it in a thoughtful and reasonable way.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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

Senator CORMAN. Mr. President, just briefly, it is an emotional time for all of us. No matter where we live, it is an emotional time, a frustrating time, a difficult time, a scary time, and I am not looking to point fingers at anybody. I am certainly not looking to point fingers at Washington, D.C., or in Harrisburg. I certainly believe the Governor and the Secretary of Health and everyone else in the administration are doing their very best. I do not necessarily agree with all of their decisions, but I think they are making them in the good spirit of which they are intended, to try to keep the Commonwealth safe, but our job as a legislature, as an equal branch of government, when we think the administration is failing, it is our job to try to fix those failings. That is what we are trying to accomplish through this process. Just today, we voted two bills out of the Committee on Community, Economic and Recreational Development where we went against the Governor's edict and opened up some businesses that he did not open up, as of yet, and we did it in a bipartisan fashion. I believe one of the votes was 11-2 and the other was 10-3. So there are times it is bipartisan. We just do not think the Governor is correct in his management of this process, this emergency. So I am not looking to point fingers, I am looking to allow people to self-determine their future.

As we looked at some of the failures of this administration during this emergency, we voted bipartisan here today, we talked about the waiver, what a failure it was and what a disappointment it was, and we are still trying to get information, but it certainly did not go nearly as well as intended. The unemployment compensation -- I had a neighbor today, as I was coming to Harrisburg, stop me and say, you know, I filed for unemployment in early April. I got my rejection letter in early May, which was posted late April, April 28, and my rejection said I had a chance to appeal up until April 21. So he got the rejection letter, it was mailed out a week after his appeal ended. So, clearly, as we saw

in our hearings, there are many problems with unemployment compensation, and that is our job as a legislature, to point those out and to work with the administration to try to make them better.

Dealing with the nursing homes, which was so eloquently talked about before and what a real problem and disastrous event that has been for our elderly and most vulnerable, and hopefully, tomorrow we are going to act in a bipartisan way to send lots of resources to those nursing homes and long-term care facilities to improve that situation. Of course, everyone's favorite, the LCB, which we still have not figured out who ordered the stores closed. No one has taken ownership of that. The Governor decided that beer distributors were life-essential and could be open, but our liquor stores could not be, but we cannot figure out who in the LCB was in charge and making any of these decisions. They all claimed no one made the decision.

So these are areas that, obviously, no one is perfect, and this administration is not perfect, and our job is to try to point out where they are failing and work with them to try to improve things, and that is what we are trying to do. We are going to try to do it again this week, again, not by pointing fingers, but by allowing people to self-determine their future. Allowing people the respect to say, you know what, we can do this. We are Americans. We are Pennsylvanians. We can do this. We have the power, we have the knowledge, we have the ability to begin to come out of our homes, to begin to come into our communities to create jobs and to employ people so that they can take care of their families. We have that ability. We are Americans. We can take on every challenge. We do not stay at home. We take on challenges, and that is what we want to allow people to do is take on this challenge, and we believe they can do it in a smart way following guidelines by the CDC and the Pennsylvania Department of Health. We believe in these people. We believe they can do it. We trust these individuals, these communities.

To be called today and threatened, a bunch of politicians, I think that word was used 18 times, they are a bunch of politicians making these decisions. They are local elected officials who have the responsibility of the health and welfare of their community. They are not politicians. Do you think someone as a local elected official is getting paid a ton of money? They are doing the best they can and they see the carnage on the other side of this.

So, again, the Governor and the Secretary of Health and everyone in the administration--no one thought this was going to happen, they did not sign up for this, there is no manual, and they are doing the best they can. They are working hard, and I believe every decision they have made they believe is in the best interest of the Commonwealth. No matter what the administration is, there would be things that we could point out that did not go as well as we would have hoped, and our job as a legislature, because we are not really getting a lot of input, is to try to point that out and try to figure out better ways to move forward. We are going to vote on this bill on Wednesday, and we believe that empowering our local people is the best way to move forward. That is what we believe. We trust them. We trust them that they have the character, interest, and ability to determine their own destiny to move forward in this crisis.

So, hopefully, we can all get together on that bill as we did today in the Committee on Community, Economic and Recreational Development, where we voted a couple of times in a

bipartisan way to move some things in a different direction as the Governor, and, hopefully, the Governor will come onboard and sign the bill. That would be great so that we can move these decisions locally and move forward in the most safe way possible. That is my hope, that is my desire, and I look forward to the debate over the next couple of days.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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, May 12, 2020, at 2 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 6:28 p.m., Eastern Daylight Saving Time.