



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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THE GOVERNOR

TO THE HONORABLE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 15 of the Pennsylvania Constitution, I am returning herewith, without my approval, House Bill 979, Printer's Number 1706.

This legislation is an attack on local governments who take action to find commonsense solutions to gun violence and is yet another bill that shows indifference to the safety of Pennsylvanians.

During a time when injuries and deaths from gun violence are spiking, House Bill 979 would discourage local jurisdictions from attempting to regulate firearms. In addition, it provides an opportunity for individuals to challenge local ordinances and sue a county, municipality, or township that violates the prohibition on stricter firearms laws. Under House Bill 979, Philadelphia, which saw more gun violence-related deaths than days in January, may have difficulty enforcing local laws that were created to curb the violence and save families and communities from continued heartache.

When I vetoed Senate Bill 565 of 2021, a bill that would have allowed unvetted gun owners to carry concealed weapons through our streets, I stated that these victims and communities deserve to have meaningful legislation passed to address the scourge of gun violence. I stand by that. I have offered many ideas that would help keep Pennsylvanians safe while respecting the rights of responsible gun owners, including legislation to require safe storage, authorize extreme risk protection orders, enhance reporting requirements for lost or stolen guns and close gaps in the background check system - and yet, I have not received a bill from the General Assembly that seeks to address this issue in a meaningful way. Instead, I have received a bill that seeks to attack local governments who wish to find solutions for those that they serve. I urge the Republican-controlled General Assembly to stop enabling the problem and step up to be a part of the solution.

For the reasons set forth above, I must withhold my signature from House Bill 979, Printer's Number 1706.

Sincerely,

TOM WOLF
Governor