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June 14, 2021

Honorable Members of the House
Pennsylvania House of Representatives

Re: PAMED position on HB 1420

Dear Representative:

On behalf of our physician members, I am writing to you to request your support for House Bill 1420 sponsored by Representative Wendi Thomas. The Healthcare Heroes Act (HB1420) establishes a public awareness campaign to provide information regarding the programs and services available for first responders, healthcare workers, and other workers suffering from mental health issues related to COVID-19.

More specifically, HB1420 directs the Secretary of the Human Services to establish a public awareness campaign to provide information to the general public concerning the programs and services available for first responders, health care workers, other frontline workers and their families experiencing mental health issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic, including, but not limited to, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, and substance use disorder. Additionally, the Secretary, in establishing this public awareness campaign, shall develop outreach efforts and provide information to the general public on the link between the stated mental health issues and the COVID-19 pandemic. This legislation directs the Secretary to provide information to the public on the programs provided by the Department of Human Services and other Federal, State, and local social services and mental health agencies during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The legislation directs the manner by which the Secretary must make this information available by listing multiple forms of radio and print media to reach the broadest possible audiences.

This bill was unanimously voted out of the Pennsylvania House Human Services Committee and after receiving second consideration from the full House, is now awaiting an affirmative vote from the House Appropriations Committee. We anticipate the House will quickly pass this legislation and send it over to the Senate.



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Please urge your state Representative to vote yes and help advance this key legislation that seeks to assist those that have given the most during the COVID-19 pandemic. We applaud Representative Thomas for this effort and urge your support in helping to advance this important legislation.

We respectfully ask for an affirmative vote on House Bill 1420 when brought up before the House for final consideration in the near future.

Thank you for your consideration and please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael A. DellaVecchia MD PhD".

Michael A. DellaVecchia, MD PhD FACS FICS
President, Pennsylvania Medical Society