

Eric R. Nelson, Member
57th Legislative District

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House of Representatives
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg

August 28, 2024

Committees:
Aging and Older Adult Services
Appropriations
Insurance
Policy, Deputy Chair
Caucus:
Gas & Oil, Chair

Valerie A. Arkoosh, MD, Secretary
Department of Human Services, Office of Administration
625 Forster Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Secretary Arkoosh:

We write to you today to address concerns with respect to the Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) waiver for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients. The waiver in question exempts individuals designated as ABAWD from meeting the federal twenty-hour work week requirement to receive SNAP benefits. It is our understanding that the current waiver will expire at the end of this month, and the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) has submitted a request for a new waiver. It is also our understanding that two different waiver options were submitted to the Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture for review.

Under the current waiver, only three counties must comply with the federal weekly work requirements: Adams, Chester and Centre counties. Although the new waiver will slightly increase the number of counties that will be subject to the requirements, we still have concerns.

Every day we hear from Pennsylvania businesses that are experiencing a workforce shortage despite going to great lengths to hire and retain employees. Businesses are struggling and reducing their hours of operations which has a negative impact on our Commonwealth's economy and citizens. Now is the ideal opportunity to re-engage thousands of working age adults and revitalize Pennsylvania's economy. Helping those who cannot help themselves is a vital responsibility of government. However, exempting the ABAWD population from meeting productive weekly work requirements only removes their opportunity to learn self-reliance and prolongs government dependency.

Understanding these truths, we hope that you will stand with the millions of Pennsylvanians who routinely go to work and NOT implement another year-long waiver of federal work requirements for these capable ABAWD's. We would also respectfully request that the information pertaining to the waivers be updated on the DHS website.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments and please do not hesitate to contact us to discuss these topics in further detail.

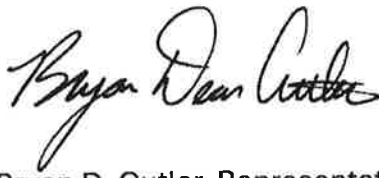
Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Eric Nelson in blue ink.

Eric Nelson, MS, CSP
State Representative
57th Legislative District

Handwritten signature of Doyle M. Heffley in blue ink.

Doyle Heffley, Minority Chairman, Human Service Committee
State Representative
122nd District



Bryan D. Cutler, Representative
100th Legislative District



Joshua Kail, Representative
15th Legislative District



George Dunbar, Representative
56th Legislative District



Kerry Benninghoff, Representative
171st Legislative District



Mark Gillen, Representative
128th Legislative District



Joe Hogan, Representative
142nd Legislative District



Donna Scheuren
147th Legislative District



Seth Grove, Representative
196th Legislative District



Sheryl Delozier, Representative
88th Legislative District



Dane Watro, Representative
116th Legislative District



Jason Ortitay, Representative
46th Legislative District



Michael Armanini, Representative
75th Legislative District



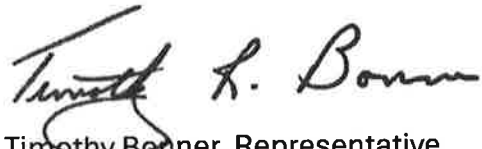
Rich Irvin, Representative
81st Legislative District




Milou Mackenzie, Representative
131st Legislative District



Charity Grimm Krupa, Representative
51st Legislative District



Timothy Bonner, Representative
17th Legislative District



Perry Stambaugh, Representative
86th Legislative District



Barbara Gleim, Representative
199th Legislative District



Dan Moul, Representative
91st Legislative District



Tim Twardzik, Representative
123rd Legislative District



R. Lee James, Representative
64th Legislative District



Ryan Warner, Representative
52nd Legislative District



Jim Marshall, Representative
14th Legislative District



Michael Cabell, Representative
117th Legislative District



Bud Cook, Representative
50th Legislative District



Brian Smith, Representative
66th Legislative District



Torren Ecker, Representative
193rd Legislative District



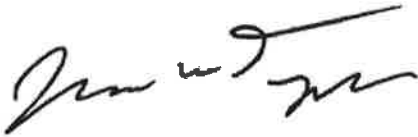
Alec Ryncavage, Representative
119th Legislative District



Jim Struzzi, Representative
62nd Legislative District



Eric Davanzo, Representative
58th Legislative District



Jesse Topper, Representative
78th Legislative District



Jill Cooper, Representative
55th Legislative District



David Zimmerman, Representative
99th Legislative District



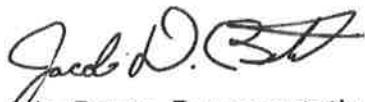
James Barton, Representative
124th Legislative District



Carl Metzgar, Representative
69th Legislative District



Kate Klunk, Representative
169th Legislative District



Jake Banta, Representative
4th Legislative District