

**SENATOR
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June 2, 2020



Senate of Pennsylvania

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URBAN AFFAIRS & HOUSING

The Honorable Tom Wolf
Governor of Pennsylvania
225 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

Dear Governor Wolf:

We are writing to ask your immediate consideration to move Erie County from the "yellow" to "green" phase of reopening rather than delaying until June 12th.

We agree that the health and welfare of our citizens is most important. However, statistics recently shared with you by the Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership, sourcing our local Department of Health, indicate our Covid-19 infection positive case per population was 0.0917% on May 29th. That is a lower per population rate than 15 of the counties moving to "green" on June 5th. Erie also has over 100 available medical/surgical hospital beds including ICU and Airborne Isolation. The headline of the "Erie Times News" quotes all three of our hospital leaders as agreeing the area is ready for the "green" phase. <https://www.goerie.com/news/20200601/erie-hospital-leaders-say-its-time-to-go-green>

Governor, we are hearing from too many local businesses fearing they will not recover from this shutdown. Every day they remain shuttered brings them closer to the realization they may never open their doors again.

We believe moving Erie to "green" is actually in the best interest of the safety and security of our citizens. Keeping Erie County businesses on an island of "yellow" while all surrounding counties and the two adjacent states are open is dealing yet another blow to our local economy. This singles out our local businesses for a further economic hit. Customers can now obtain the services and resources they desire by driving a short distance to a neighboring county or even Ohio or New York. Not only does that take business away from an already crippled community economy, it will increase the potential of virus spread to and from our area.

The Erie Regional Chamber & Growth Partnership is working in close partnership with the Erie County Department of Health to assist local businesses with their plans for safe reopening. Many of our businesses initiatives have significantly increased their expenses at a time when they are receiving little or no revenue. But the result is that our local economy is prepared to reopen NOW with all of the recommended safety guidelines in place.

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In complete agreement about safety regulations and requirements, and speaking as a unified delegation, we ask simply that you re-evaluate Erie's statistics today and move Erie to "green" as soon as those statistics indicate, rather than waiting for your usual Friday to Friday timetable.


Sincerely,



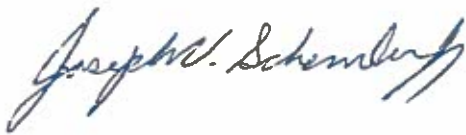
Senator Dan Laughlin (PA-49)



Senator Michele Brooks (PA-50)



Kathy Dahlkemper, Erie County Executive



Joseph Schember, Mayor of Erie



David Mitchell, Mayor of Corry

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Representative Ryan Bizzarro (PA-3)



Representative Pat Harkins (PA-1)



Representative Robert Merski (PA-2)



Representative Brad Roae (PA-6)



Representative Curtis Sonney (PA-4)