

KERRY A. BENNINGHOFF
171ST LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

110 MAIN CAPITOL
PO BOX 202171
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-2171
PHONE: (717) 783-1918
FAX: (717) 782-2913

140 W. HIGH STREET
BELLEFONTE, PA 16823
PHONE: (814) 355-1300
FAX: (814) 355-3523

77 N. MAIN STREET
PO BOX 592
HARRISBURG, PA 17004
PHONE: (717) 667-1175
FAX: (717) 667-6925



House of Representatives
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg

Majority Leader

E-MAIL: kbenning@pahouse.gov
WEB: kerrybenninghoff.com

August 3, 2020

The Honorable Tom Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
508 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Wolf:

We write today to ask that you modify your unilaterally-imposed crowd size limitations to allow spectators at Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA)-sanctioned events during the fall athletic season.

As you know, interscholastic sports provide a unique opportunity for students to socialize, learn the importance of teamwork, and gain worldly experience outside of the classroom. In this regard, we are glad to see the PIAA pave the way for sports to open this fall.

However, without spectators—especially parents—able to watch their children and community members succeed on the field, something of the experience is lost. It should come as no surprise to you that parents in all of our districts are irate and disheartened by your recent crowd size limitation changes that led PIAA to adopt a policy that precludes parents from watching their children in-person during the fall athletic period.

The parents of these students have supported their children and, often times, the school sports team in various ways during the student's journey and there is a deep satisfaction from the ability to watch their loved ones compete in something they value.

At a time when folks have had the five-month long experience of social distancing and protecting themselves and others from a contagious virus, it makes no sense that people might be less safe sitting in the football stands or around the high school track at a soccer match, with appropriate modifications, than in the aisles of their local mega retailer.

On July 31, 2020, you reminded Pennsylvanians that you are looking to keep decisions as to school reopening local, saying, "School governing boards and administrators will determine if school buildings reopen and if classes resume in person, remotely, or a combination of the two."

Should not similar allowances be made for whether spectators should be allowed at a local school's sporting events?

We would hope that if no accommodation can be made for the public at large to attend PIAA events, then at least some modification be made for parents of students.

Keep in mind, these parents pay property taxes to fund their local school districts, which allows these teams to function and their athletic facilities to operate. It is inconceivable that you would deprive these hardworking taxpayers of something they have helped finance.

In addition, allowing parents to attend these sporting events just makes common sense. Parents might be needed should an injury occur to give consent to provide treatment or otherwise interact with their child during an event.

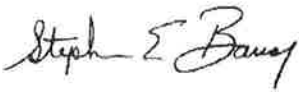
Precluding their attendance impinges upon the ability of both parents and those involved with conducting these sporting events from carrying out their proper administration.

PIAA said it remains open to changing its current no spectator policy at its August 26, 2020, meeting should you change your guidance. We would hope any change in your policy would be communicated prior to PIAA's August 26, 2020, meeting so the proper policy changes can be implemented.


Sincerely,



KERRY A. BENNINGHOFF
Majority Leader
171st Legislative District



Stephen Barrar
160th Legislative District



Timothy Bonner
8th Legislative District



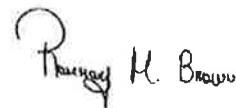
Robert Brooks
54th Legislative District



Aaron Bernstine
10th Legislative District



Stephanie Borowicz
76th Legislative District



Rosemary Brown
189th Legislative District

Martin Causer
Majority Policy Chair
67th Legislative District

Mindy Fee
37th Legislative District

Marcia Hahn
138th Legislative District

Bud Cook
49th Legislative District

Jonathan Fritz
111th Legislative District

Doyle Heffley
122nd Legislative District

Jim Cox
129th Legislative District

Valerie Gaydos
44th Legislative District

Susan Helm
104th Legislative District

Lynda Culver
108th Legislative District

Mark Gillen
128th Legislative District

Tim Hennessey
26th Legislative District

Eric Davanzo
58th Legislative District

Barbara Gleim
199th Legislative District

David Hickernell
98th Legislative District

Gary Day
187th Legislative District

James Gregory
80th Legislative District

Rich Irvin
81st Legislative District

Torren Ecker
193rd Legislative District

Keith Greiner
43rd Legislative District

R. Lee James
64th Legislative District

Joe Emrick
137th Legislative District

Seth Grove
196th Legislative District

Mike Jones
93rd Legislative District

Rob Kauffman
89th Legislative District

Brett Miller
41st Legislative District

Tina Pickett
110th Legislative District

Mark Keller
86th Legislative District

Lori Mizgorski
30th Legislative District

Todd Polinchock
144th Legislative District

Kate Klunk
169th Legislative District

Marci Mustello
11th Legislative District

Jack Rader
176th Legislative District

Jerry Knowles
124th Legislative District

Eric Nelson
57th Legislative District

James Rigby
71st Legislative District

Ryan Mackenzie
134th Legislative District

Timothy O'Neal
48th Legislative District

Brad Roae
6th Legislative District

Kurt Masser
Majority Caucus
Administrator
107th Legislative District

Donna Oberlander
Majority Policy Chair
63rd Legislative District

Greg Rothman
87th Legislative District

Daryl Metcalfe
12th Legislative District

Jason Ortitay
46th Legislative District

David Rowe
85th Legislative District

Natalie Mihalek
40th Legislative District

Clinton Owlett
68th Legislative District

Francis X. Ryan
101st Legislative District



Tommy Sankey
73rd Legislative District



Craig Staats
145th Legislative District



Tarah Toohil
116th Legislative District



Paul Schemmel
90th Legislative District



James Struzzi II
62nd Legislative District



Jeff Wheeland
83rd Legislative District



Louis Schmitt, Jr.
79th Legislative District



Kathleen Tomlinson
18th Legislative District



David Zimmerman
99th Legislative District

cc: Dr. Robert A. Lombardi, PIAA Executive Director
Dr. Rachel Levine, Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Health