



The Hospital + Healthsystem
Association of Pennsylvania

Leading for Better Health

June 10, 2022

The Honorable Jake Corman
President Pro Tempore
Pennsylvania Senate
Senate Box 203034
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3034

The Honorable Bryan Cutler
Speaker
Pennsylvania House of Representatives
House Box 202100
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2100

The Honorable Kim Ward
Majority Leader
Pennsylvania Senate
Senate Box 203039
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3039

The Honorable Kerry Benninghoff
Majority Leader
Pennsylvania House of Representatives
House Box 202171
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2171

The Honorable Jay Costa
Minority Leader
Pennsylvania Senate
Senate Box 203043
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3043

The Honorable Joanna McClinton
Minority Leader
Pennsylvania House of Representatives
House Box 202191
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2191

Please extend health care waivers beyond June 30, 2022.

Dear Leaders:

On behalf of 235 hospitals statewide, The Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania (HAP) thanks you for your continued support and responsiveness to the hospital community. The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted Pennsylvania's health care system and hospitals' response to the pandemic is continuously evolving. We appreciate your ongoing work to codify a number of regulatory waivers that have provided essential flexibilities to hospitals and health professionals as they continue to provide care to patients with COVID-19 and meet the health care needs of our communities.

Together, the General Assembly and stakeholders have succeeded in making important and lasting changes through legislation and we are very appreciative of this work to support the continuum of care.

But there is still work to be done and there are two key reasons continued flexibility is needed.

First, and most importantly, *COVID isn't over*. As you well know, the commonwealth experienced a substantial uptick in cases as recently as last month. No one can accurately predict or prepare for mutation and virulence variable. As a result, flexible use of space and staff—particularly in light of the importance of rigorous infection control measures—remains critical. In fact, flexibility may be even more essential now, given unpredictable supply chain



Leading for Better Health

disruptions, overwhelming staffing shortages, and the current lack of capacity in Pennsylvania's continuum of care.

Second, several areas of flexibility that have been extremely effective in aiding hospitals' pandemic response—such as telehealth, scope of practice, and alternative space—do not lend themselves to quick legislative solutions. The General Assembly has engaged in and continues its challenging work on telehealth and scope of practice bills, and, for this, we thank you. Similarly, our sense is that the appropriate process to address longer term needs to allow for alternate space use is through ongoing work with the Department of Health.

These are among the reasons that **HAP urgently and respectfully requests that you continue to extend existing health care-related waivers and flexibilities beyond June 30, 2022**, so that hospitals and exhausted health care professionals can continue to prioritize patient care with some level of certainty, even during these uncertain times.

Thank you for your consideration. We know that you are overwhelmed with requests, particularly at this time of year, but we cannot stress enough the importance of the waiver framework for day-to-day hospital operations in Pennsylvania.

If there is any way we can assist you or your colleagues, please call on us.

Sincerely,

Heather Tyler
Vice President, State Legislative Advocacy