

THOMAS J. SCRIMENTI  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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□ 202 NORTH CENTER STREET  
CORY, PENNSYLVANIA 16407  
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HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120-2020  
PHONE: (717) 787-9475



House of Representatives  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES

AGING AND OLDER ADULT SERVICES  
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE  
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS  
DEMOCRATIC VICE CHAIRMAN

June 2, 2003

Mr. Joe Amoroso  
14<sup>th</sup> & Liberty Street  
P.O. box 1205  
Erie, PA 16512

Dear Mr. Amoroso:

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Joe".

Thank you for your letter regarding Governor Rendell's proposed increase in the malt beverage tax. Your thoughts and concerns on this important issue are greatly appreciated.

As you know, Governor Rendell is proposing to more than triple the excise tax on malt beverages in order to raise \$55 million in state revenue. Specifically, the Governor's proposal would raise the malt beverage tax from 8 cents per gallon to 25 cents per gallon.

Currently, there are two bills under consideration in the General Assembly that focus on this issue. House Bill 1427, which mirrors the Governor's proposal, would increase the excise tax on malt beverages from 8 cents per gallon to 25 cents per gallon. In addition, Senate Bill 678 would require that any increase in the malt beverage tax be applied to the Department of Public Welfare for use in behavior health care programs including, but not limited to, programs that provide drug and alcohol rehabilitation services.

House Bill 1427 and Senate Bill 678 are currently under consideration by the House Finance Committee and Senate Finance Committee, respectively. Please know that I will certainly keep your thoughts and concerns in mind if either of these bills are brought to the full House of Representatives for a vote.

Once again, thank you for your letter. If I may be of further assistance to you on this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Tom".

Thomas J. Scrimenti  
State Representative



COMMITTEES

CHAIRMAN, NORTHEAST DELEGATION  
TRANSPORTATION, DEMOCRATIC SUB-  
COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, TRANSPORTATION  
SAFETY  
APPROPRIATIONS  
CONSUMER AFFAIRS  
MEMBER, LOW EMISSION VEHICLE COMMISSION

KEITH R. McCALL, MEMBER  
MAIN CAPITOL BUILDING  
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FAX: (717) 645-9526

800 MAHONING STREET, SUITE 2  
LEHIGHTON, PENNSYLVANIA 18235-1246  
PHONE: (610) 377-6363  
FAX: (610) 377-5675

House of Representatives  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

October 1, 1996

David M. LeVan, President  
Consolidated Rail Corporation  
2001 Market Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19101

COPY

RE: The Meadville-Corry (Pennsylvania) Rail Matter

Dear Mr. LeVan:

I wish to express my support for the Northwest Pennsylvania Rail Authority's effort to preserve the rail line between Meadville and Corry, Pennsylvania. The Northwest Pennsylvania Rail Authority has been working with PennDOT and the office of Governor Thomas Ridge to identify a method for preserving the line which addresses the concerns of Conrail, preserves existing service routes and options for Pennsylvania shippers, and provides for additional industrial development in the Commonwealth.

We believe that a mutually beneficial partnership must be developed among the Authority, the Commonwealth and Conrail to preserve and restore rail service in northwestern Pennsylvania and to route that rail traffic to Conrail. Existing Pennsylvania jobs and industry can be preserved while providing new opportunities to acquire rail served companies which will create new jobs in northwestern Pennsylvania. Destruction of this rail line when a mutually beneficial alternative for all interested parties is clearly available is simply unreasonable.

I ask for your support for preservation of this line and for the development of a win-win solution in determining the future of this section of rail infrastructure.

Sincerely,

KEITH R. McCALL  
State Representative  
122nd Legislative District

KRMc:dsw

KEITH R. McCALL, MEMBER

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OCT - 1 1996

COMMITTEES

CHAIRMAN, NORTHEAST DELEGATION  
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COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, TRANSPORTATION  
SAFETY  
APPROPRIATIONS  
CONSUMER AFFAIRS

MEMBER, LOW EMISSION VEHICLE COMMISSION

House of Representatives  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

October 1, 1996

The Honorable Thomas Ridge  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
225 Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

COPY

RE: Resolution of Meadville-Corry Rail Matter

Dear Governor Ridge:

I strongly support the efforts of the Northwestern Pennsylvania Rail Authority to preserve the rail line between Meadville and Corry, purchased from Conrail in order to further economic development in the area.

On September 11, 1996, the Authority sent to you a proposal for resolving the issue of the preservation of the line between Meadville and Corry which addresses the concerns of Conrail while preserving existing service routes and options for Pennsylvania shippers. This proposal can result in a partnership between the Authority, its operator, the Commonwealth, and Conrail to preserve and restore rail service in northwestern Pennsylvania and route that rail traffic to Conrail. Existing Pennsylvania jobs and industry can be preserved while providing new opportunities to locate rail served companies here and create new jobs for the region.

I applaud your effective efforts on behalf of this project to date and I encourage your continued strong support for this proposal which can result in a win-win solution for Conrail, the region and the people of our Commonwealth. If I can be of any help to you in your effort to save this essential infrastructure for Pennsylvania, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Keith R. McCall".

KEITH R. McCALL  
State Representative  
122nd Legislative District

KRMc:dsw

SEP 27 1996

# NORTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA RAIL AUTHORITY

984 WATER STREET  
MEADVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA 16335

RICHARD M. NOVOTNY, CHAIR  
TELEPHONE: 814.664.3884  
TELEFAX: 814.664.3885

September 23, 1996

The Honorable Thomas J. Scrimenti  
Pennsylvania House of Representatives  
Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

Re: Meadville to Corry Rail Line

Dear Representative Scrimenti:

I write to respectfully request your support for the preservation of the rail line between Meadville and Corry in Crawford and Erie Counties. As you are aware, the Northwest Pennsylvania Rail Authority was formed by the cities of Meadville and Corry to promote industrial development by acquiring and preserving this line. Meadville and Corry committed substantial time and resources to preserving the line. They were assisted by the Commonwealth and by a coalition of municipalities and other interested entities which, at times, included groups in New York as well as Pennsylvania. The line was only acquired after extensive litigation in the Interstate Commerce Commission. Our Authority obtained the line in October of 1995 and has operated it since that date.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania invested \$1,000,000 of state funds and extraordinary effort by the offices of Governor Ridge and PennDOT Secretary Mallory in support of this project. The Commonwealth's monetary support provided an essential component of the \$2.9 million paid to Conrail for the line. The Commonwealth's political, administrative and legal support was essential in making the acquisition possible.

Unfortunately, Conrail recently succeeded in overturning the decision of the Interstate Commerce Commission which required Conrail to sell the line to the Authority. We understand that Conrail is insistent upon tearing up this line once the property is reconveyed pursuant to the new court order.

We strongly believe that Conrail must be persuaded to abandon its effort to tear up this track. In the year the Authority has operated the line, we have serviced existing customers, we have restored economical service to a major prior customer, we have constructed a new rail loading facility at Corry, PA, and we are developing plans for a truck-rail trans load facility at Meadville. Our efforts have been made possible by substantial additional support from the Commonwealth. Based on current traffic levels, the traffic now interchanged with Conrail from our line will produce approximately \$500,000 in revenue to Conrail during the first year.

We understand that there are issues for Conrail involving routes east of Corry which go beyond the revenue generated by the continued operation of this section of line. It must be remembered, however, that Conrail controls the lines east and west of our short-line. Conrail can certainly address its larger issues by action other than the destruction of the rail infrastructure which is so important to our region.

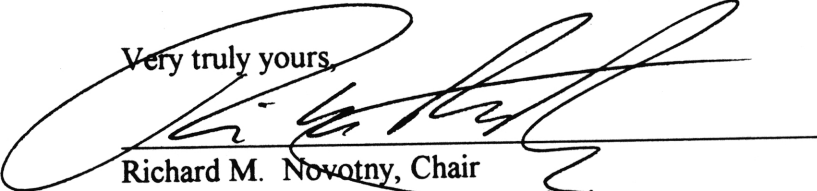
On September 11, 1996, the Authority sent to Governor Ridge a proposal for resolving the issue of the preservation of the line between Meadville and Corry. Our proposal addresses the concerns of Conrail while preserving existing service routes and options for Pennsylvania shippers. It provides for rational future development of service on the line which will enhance service to all communities serviced by our Authority. A copy of that proposal is enclosed for your reference. We believe that this proposal can result in a partnership among the Authority, its operator, the Commonwealth and Conrail to preserve and to restore rail service in northwestern Pennsylvania and to route that rail traffic to Conrail. Existing Pennsylvania jobs and industry can be preserved while providing new opportunities to locate rail served companies here, thereby creating new jobs for our region.

We ask for your support for this proposal. While development of a final plan will obviously require refinement and the resolution of various details, the Authority believes that we all have a small but critical window of opportunity in which to develop a reasonable way to preserve this essential industrial support system for our region. The key to this will be Conrail's willingness to delay removal of the track and to participate in the process of arriving at a solution for the mutual benefit of all.

The Authority is requesting your cooperation in its effort to preserve the line by mailing letters of support to Governor Ridge and Mr. LeVan, Chairman of Conrail. We have taken the liberty of enclosing a format for your consideration.

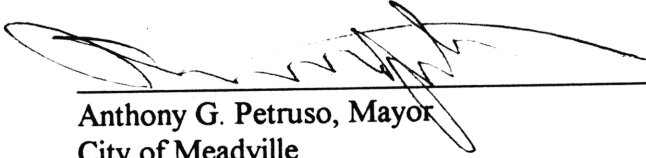
Thank you very much for your assistance in this critical and urgent matter.

Very truly yours,

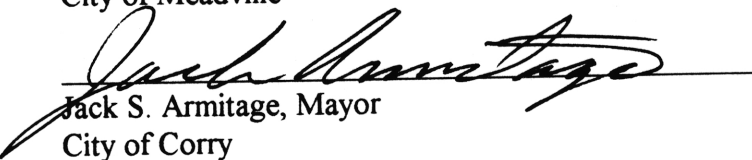


Richard M. Novotny, Chair  
Northwest Pennsylvania Rail Authority

We join in the foregoing request for your assistance in the preservation of rail service to our communities and to all communities served by the Northwest Pennsylvania Rail Authority.



Anthony G. Petruso, Mayor  
City of Meadville



Jack S. Armitage, Mayor  
City of Corry

THOMAS J. SCRIMENTI  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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House of Representatives  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

October 9, 1996

COMMITTEES

AGING AND YOUTH  
DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN OF THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AGING  
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE  
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Northwest Pennsylvania Rail Authority  
Richard M. Novotny, Chair  
984 Water Street  
Meadville, PA 16335

Dear Mr. Novotny:

I would like to thank you for your most recent letter to my office bringing me up-to-date on the current situation of the Meadville to Corry Rail Line. I always value the opportunity to be of assistance to you in any capacity and I appreciate you keeping me apprised of this vital matter.

I have attached for your perusal two letters that I have written on your behalf. One letter is addressed to Governor Ridge, and the other to Mr. David LeVan, President of the Consolidated Rail Corporation. As you read the letters you will see that I have been very candid and straightforward about the Erie region's need for the preservation of this rail line. I firmly believe, as you do, that with the Northwest Pennsylvania Rail Authority's proposal, Conrail, the region and the people of the Commonwealth will greatly benefit from one of our most valued resources, the Meadville to Corry Rail Line.

Our valiant efforts and desired hopes are best recognized when we join together and work as a team. Together, I believe that we can see to it that one of Erie's most valued resources is preserved and remain in operation so that the Erie community can continue to benefit from jobs, industry and new opportunities for economic growth.

Once again, I would like to thank you for your letter and please continue to keep me apprised of your progress with this situation. Your efficiency and attention to your community and to the Commonwealth are to be commended. If I can ever help you with this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Scrimenti  
State Representative

**THOMAS J. SCRIMENTI**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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**House of Representatives**  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

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AGING AND YOUTH  
DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN OF THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AGING  
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE  
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

October 9, 1996

Mr. David M. LeVan, President  
Consolidated Rail Corporation  
2001 Market Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19101

Dear Mr. LeVan:

I write to you today to express my support of the efforts of the Northwest Pennsylvania Rail Authority to preserve the rail line between Meadville and Corry. The Northwest Pennsylvania Rail Authority has been working with PennDOT and the office of Governor Thomas Ridge to identify a method for preserving the line which addresses the concerns of Conrail, preserves existing service routes and options for Pennsylvania shippers, and provides for additional industrial development in the Commonwealth. The Northwest Pennsylvania Rail Authority has sent a copy of this proposal for Governor Ridge's perusal.

We have been trying to retain and replenish the Northwest Pennsylvania rail line between Meadville and Corry for some time now. Your added support will help us to maintain this line and, in turn, create extra revenue for the Northwest Pennsylvania Rail Authority.

Although many of us within the Commonwealth are doing everything within our power to support the continued existence of this line, Conrail is still pursuing destruction of the line.

If Conrail would succeed in its plan to destroy the railroad line, the effects on our community would be detrimental and all of the Authority's efforts towards economic growth will have gone in vain. With the Authority's proposal, existing Pennsylvania jobs and industry can be preserved while providing new opportunities to acquire rail served companies, which in turn, will create new jobs in northwestern Pennsylvania.

That being said, it seems unlikely that Conrail has considered looking into other options up to this point and it is inconceivable to me that it would not consider this proposal. Destruction of this rail line when a mutually beneficial alternative(proposal) for all interested parties is available is simply unreasonable.

This is why I implore you to support this proposal which can result in a win-win solution for Conrail, the region and the people of our Commonwealth.

I ask you to do everything within your power to support and see that the Northwest Pennsylvania rail line from Meadville and Corry is preserved and remains in operation. This rail line is a treasured and invaluable resource for our region. I thank you for your time and consideration to this very vital matter.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Scrimenti  
State Representative



THOMAS J. SCRIMENTI  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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House of Representatives  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES

AGING AND YOUTH  
DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN OF THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AGING  
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE  
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

October 9, 1996

The Honorable Tom Ridge  
Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Main Capitol Building Room 225  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Ridge:

I write to you today to ask that you support the efforts of the Northwest Pennsylvania Rail Authority to preserve the rail line between Meadville and Corry. The Authority recently sent you a proposal for resolving the issue of the preservation of the line. I ask that you please give every consideration in supporting this proposal and implementing its guidelines.

As you know we have been trying to retain and replenish the Northwest Pennsylvania rail line between Meadville and Corry for some time now. Your support, for one, has helped us to maintain this line and, in turn, create extra revenue for the Northwest Pennsylvania Rail Authority.

Although many of us within the Commonwealth are doing everything within our power to support the continued existence of this line, Conrail is still pursuing destruction of the line.

Conrail cannot, in good conscience, destroy this line, which continues to service existing customers, while restoring economical service to a major prior customer and while working on developing plans for a truck-rail trans load facility at Meadville.

If Conrail would succeed in its plan to destroy the railroad line, the effects on our community would be detrimental and all of the Authority's efforts towards economic growth will have gone in vain. With the Authority's proposal, existing Pennsylvania jobs and industry can be preserved while providing new opportunities to acquire rail served companies, which in turn, will create new jobs in northwestern Pennsylvania.

That being said, it seems unlikely that Conrail has considered looking into other options up to this point and it is inconceivable to me that it would not consider this proposal. Destruction of this rail line when a mutually beneficial alternative for all interested parties is available is simply unreasonable.

Many of the recent developments of this rail line have been made possible by substantial additional support from the Commonwealth. I have certainly appreciated and valued your efforts on behalf of this project to date and I implore your continued strong support for this proposal which can result in a win-win solution for Conrail, the region and the people of our Commonwealth.

I ask you to do everything within your power to support and see that the Northwest Pennsylvania rail line from Meadville and Corry remain in operation. This rail line is a treasured and invaluable resource for our region. I thank you for your time and consideration to this very vital matter.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Scrimenti  
State Representative

NOV 25 1996



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120

OFFICE OF  
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

November 20, 1996

Honorable Thomas J. Scrimenti, Member  
PA House of Representatives  
25B East Wing, Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2020

Dear Mr. Scrimenti:

Governor Ridge has asked me to respond to your letter of October 23, 1996, concerning the Meadville to Corry Rail Line in which you expressed support for the proposal of the Northwest Pennsylvania Rail Authority (NRPA). This proposal involves the use of the line to connect a through route to Buffalo, New York, and includes a proposed retention of the Authority's current operator, the Oil Creek and Titusville Railroad.

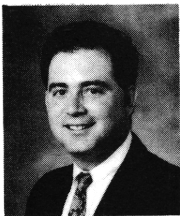
Several discussions took place within the past two months as a result of contacts by Conrail and NRPA with the Governor's Office and the Department. These discussions yielded no firm amicable resolution to the issue. However, last week Conrail informed the Department they would continue discussing the Meadville to Corry Rail Line with NRPA and placed a moratorium on efforts to abandon the line while these discussions continue. As you may be aware, NRPA is currently operating the line and will continue to do so pending results of the discussions.

We are continuing to analyze the proposed Conrail merger and what impacts it may have on the Pennsylvania rail freight system. Please be assured that the Commonwealth's interest remains on maintaining rail freight service to shippers on the Meadville to Corry line. If you have any questions regarding this issue, please feel free to call me or Elizabeth Sarge Voras at 783-2026.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bradley L. Mallory".

Bradley L. Mallory  
Secretary of Transportation



From: **Rep. Keith R. McCall**  
Pennsylvania House of Representatives  
122nd District



Date: 10/24/96

**LANSFORD**  
**(717) 645-7585**

**LEHIGHTON**  
**(215) 377-6363**

**HARRISBURG**  
**(717) 783-1375**

- For Your Information**  
 **As Per Your Request**  
 **Other:** \_\_\_\_\_



OCT 25 1996

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120

OFFICE OF  
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

October 22, 1996

Honorable Keith R. McCall, Member  
PA House of Representatives  
313 South Office Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Mr. McCall:

Governor Ridge has asked me to respond to your letter of October 1, 1996, concerning the Meadville to Corry Rail Line in which you expressed support for the proposal of the Northwest Pennsylvania Rail Authority. This proposal involves the use of the line to connect a through route to Buffalo, New York, and includes a proposed retention of the Authority's current operator, the Oil Creek and Titusville Railroad.

Several discussions took place within the past month as a result of contacts by Conrail and the Authority to the Governor's Office and the Department. However, these discussions yielded no amicable resolution to the issue.

Both Governor Ridge and I are disappointed that the issue between the Authority and Conrail apparently cannot be resolved to both parties satisfaction. Department officials recently met with Chairman Richard Novotny and others from the Northwest Rail Authority. At that time, we expressed our regret in the apparent impossibility of an amicable resolution. We informed the Authority that the Commonwealth supports the Authority's efforts to maintain the line intact. We stressed, however, that due to the negative statewide impact an adversarial relationship between the Commonwealth and Conrail would precipitate, the Authority itself must take the lead in any further action regarding this specific line.

Please be assured that the Commonwealth's interest remains on the maintenance and expansion of rail freight service to shippers on the Meadville to Corry line. If you have any questions regarding this issue, please feel free to call me or Elizabeth Sarge Voras at 783-2026.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bradley L. Mallory".

Bradley L. Mallory  
Secretary of Transportation

THOMAS J. SCRIMENTI  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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House of Representatives  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES

AGING AND YOUTH  
DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN OF THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AGING  
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE  
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

July 7, 1995

Judith M. Lynch  
Office of the County Executive  
Erie County Court House  
140 West Sixth Street  
Erie, Pa 16501-1081

Dear Ms. Lynch: - *Judy*

I have received and read your letter regarding the cuts in Medicaid that are now being considered. I certainly understand your concerns about the effects the proposed cuts will have on the children as well as the disabled and elderly, who are the main recipients of Medicaid funds. Thank you for writing.

Currently, the House of Representatives' is considering House Bill 1682, legislation that would try to contain the costs of the medical assistance program without hurting the recipients. To do this, the bill proposes a managed care system instead of a fee-for-service delivery system. House Bill 1682 was referred to the House of Representatives' Committee on Health and Human Services in May.

As this legislation is discussed and debated, I will be sure to remember your concerns about making Medicaid services more efficient and cost-effective without cutting coverage to its recipients. If I can be of further assistance on this or any other issue, please feel free to contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom Scrimenti".

Thomas J. Scrimenti  
State Representative

THOMAS J. SCRIMENTI  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN OF THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CARE AND SERVICES  
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE  
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

May 21, 2001

Mr. Mark Suprock, M.D.  
Lake Erie Orthopaedics  
300 State Street  
Suite 301H  
Erie, PA 16507

Dear Dr. Suprock:

I recently received your letter concerning the current state of malpractice, and related matters. Thank you for offering your professional perspective on medical malpractice in the Commonwealth.

The intent of the Health Care Services Malpractice Act (Act 111) was to assist both patients and medical professionals. The first purpose was to assist persons who sustained injury or death, as a result of medical malpractice, to obtain fair and reasonable compensation. Secondly, it was to make certain that doctors would be able to pay for liability insurance at a fair cost.

The Medical Professional Liability Insurance Catastrophe Loss Fund (CAT Fund) provided a mechanism for annually distributing the costs of medical malpractice through a complex system of surcharges on providers. While this procedure worked well at first, in time as costs increased, surcharges increased and the system weakened.

Since its inception, the system has been amended, tweaked, and reworked. Settlement procedures have been changed to expedite cases, litigation procedures have been affected, and in the end, providers had to purchase higher basic coverage. It has, in fact, been in a constant state of evolution.

Page 2

During the 2001/2002 Legislative Session, the House Insurance Committee held several public hearings on this issue. The complexity of the issue and proposed remedies of those testifying present a unique challenge to lawmakers. The debate is not over whether or not victims should be compensated. Everyone agrees that they should. However, different constituencies offer different solutions. As you asserted, the medical community maintains that the high cost of medical malpractice insurance is causing medical professionals to leave the state. Therefore, the medical community would like to see changes in tort law enacted, including caps on awards and limitations on frivolous lawsuits as just two examples.

While the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled against the implementation of certain tort law provisions of Act 135, other provisions remain unchallenged, including changes in the definition of *informed consent*, punitive damage standards, physician authority to file an affidavit of non-involvement, and periodic payment provisions. Others suggest the CAT Fund should be replaced with a system of private insurance coverage. As a side note, this very week, these issues are being put forth at hearings held in Pittsburgh.

Attorneys representing victims of malpractice maintain that reducing legitimate verdicts on behalf of the injured unfairly shifts the cost of malpractice from practitioners and institutions to their victims. Inadequate reimbursements from managed care plans and a shortage of nurses in many hospitals are contributing factors in the incidence of malpractice in the Commonwealth. The legal community suggests that mandatory reporting of medical errors, disciplining medical professionals by the appropriate professional licensing boards, and increasing medical malpractice premiums based on loss experience would reduce the incidence of malpractice.

Obviously, there are many forces at hand. To resolve this in an equitable, yet functional means, input from all involved parties will be paramount to the progress of success. I would very much like to see this issue addressed, and resolved, in short order. However, I know that a quick

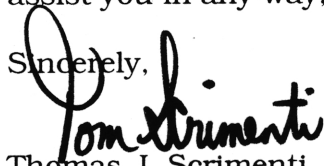


Page 3

fix to such a matter chockfull of complex and systemic inadequacies is not likely to occur. It is my hope that you will have patience and perseverance as we work in concert to address this important matter.

Again, your concerns have been heard and are being addressed. I appreciate your interest and thank you for your participation and contribution in resolving such a difficult matter. If there is anything else that I may do to assist you in any way, please contact my office at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Scrimenti". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Thomas J. Scrimenti  
State Representative



APR 24 2001

MARK D. SUPROCK, M.D.  
JOHN J. KASTRUP, M.D.

300 STATE STREET  
SUITE 301H  
ERIE, PA 16507

PHONE (814) 453-5049  
FAX (814) 461-1209

April 17, 2001

Representative Thomas J. Scrimenti  
House Box 202020  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2020

Dear Representative Scrimenti:

I wanted to bring to light and share my concerns with you about the current state of malpractice in the state of Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, this state is not good. Pennsylvania, unfortunately, has a very dismal outlook for malpractice for the medical community. This is both well known in Pennsylvania medicine as well as it is well known outside of Pennsylvania, in our neighboring states and also throughout the medical community. Every time I go to a national meeting and talk to my colleagues they can't believe how much money we are paying for medical malpractice. The classic comment I get is "How can you make expenses if you're paying twice as much as we are?" This high rate of malpractice, and more importantly the instability in the malpractice insurance arena lends some serious problems.

The first problem this lends is I am unable to make any business plans for the following year. As I hope you are aware we are only told how much we have to pay in December for January. For example, in December, 2000 we were informed how much we would have to pay, \$52,000.00, in the month of January. Previously, it had been \$30,000.00. I am sure you can see how that would dramatically affect a business plan. Specifically, if you are dealing with a large practice, five or more physicians, all of a sudden there is an extra \$100,000.00 you have to come up with that you weren't planning on coming up with. Unfortunately, the prospects for the future from the way the CAT fund is structured, there is going to be an astronomical increase over the next few years to somewhere in the neighborhood of maybe \$50,000.00 or more in addition to what we are already paying. This, unfortunately, leads to the second point.

The second problem is with the high rates that are being paid for malpractice, specifically the CAT fund portion of the equation for our bills every year, this leads us to a situation where it's very difficult to recruit other physicians to this state, specifically up in Erie. As you are well aware, Ohio is relatively close to Erie and they pay much less in Ohio and have a very stable market. Therefore, if a physician wants to relocate to the Lake Erie area and would prefer for example Erie, Pennsylvania, they are more likely in this case to relocate to Ashtabula, which as you know is quite close, or Conneaut and pay much less in malpractice insurance, approximately \$25,000.00 at this writing. They still will be close enough to Erie,

Page 2  
April 17, 2001  
Representative Thomas J. Scrimenti

but not practice in this state, nor help out with our patients and probably draw income out of the state, as well as patient care out of the state. None of this bodes well for Pennsylvania medicine.

One of the specific problems that I have noticed is that we do not have any malpractice reform in our state. As a matter of fact, I think we are near the bottom of the pile for malpractice reform. Translation, no malpractice reform. I clearly understand that the reason for malpractice insurance and malpractice litigation is that there is medical malpractice. It does occur and patients do need to be compensated. However, they need to be compensated fairly. Right now it seems that a situation seems to exist in Pennsylvania which is somewhat akin to a hog trough. By this I mean the slop is placed in the trough and the pigs just seem to go at it until the food is gone. Unfortunately, in Pennsylvania we don't seem to have any end in site and the trough just seems to keep getting filled. Unfortunately, the people who tend to fill the trough in this case are the physicians.

The bottom line is basically this, Representative Scrimenti, if the malpractice rates keep increasing, Pennsylvania residents are going to have a significant access problem. They are already having an access problem in Erie, Pennsylvania. I am sure you can just ask around and see how long it takes to get in to see an Orthopaedic specialist in our city. In particular, as of 4/1/01 my first new patient appointment was the middle to end of May. I am trying to add a new physician and have been unable to do so. If the rates keep increasing and it becomes financially not reasonable for me to continue in this state, then I am going to leave this state, as I am sure many of my colleagues will. However, at this juncture I am still very committed in trying to reform the system I am in. I think Pennsylvania medicine has a very strong future. We need to preserve the access for our patients and provide high quality compassionate care. Unfortunately, we can only do that if we are running a business and the business does make a profit. Once the expenses get very high, as I am sure you have noted in other industries, people relocate. This is really no different in medicine than for example the steel industry.

I think an important barometer on the current situation of medicine in Pennsylvania would be to check the licensures of all of the active practicing physicians, not just the physicians, but the active practicing physicians, I think you will note if you look at the trend over the past 5-10 years is that the actual age of the practice physician is getting older and older. My concerns are, as these older physicians retire, who is going to replace them. When I relocated to Erie in 1992 there were 17 practicing orthopaedic surgeons. Right now there are 14 and there are no plans for any new ones to come. I am afraid the crisis is just beginning now and, unfortunately, will only get worse and sometimes I am afraid that in the near future it may get precipitously worse unless something is done in the very near future to correct this.

Page 3  
April 17, 2001  
Representative Thomas J. Scrimenti

Again, Representative Scrimenti, I am very concerned about medicine in Pennsylvania, patient access and I don't want the people of our Commonwealth to suffer. If you have any questions, you can call me when you are in town or I will be happy to sit down and talk with you at any time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mark D. Suprock".

Mark D. Suprock, M.D.

MDS/mek

THOMAS J. SCRIMENTI  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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## COMMITTEES

AGING AND OLDER ADULT SERVICES  
DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN OF THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CARE AND SERVICES  
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE  
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

# House of Representatives

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

December 6, 2001

Louis M. Condrasky  
CEO, HealthSouth of Erie  
President, Erie Hospital Council  
143 E. Second Street  
Erie, PA 16507

Dear Mr. Condrasky:

Thank you for your letter regarding the issue of medical malpractice insurance reform. Your thoughts and concerns are greatly appreciated.

As I am sure you are aware, the issue of medical malpractice insurance reform has been heavily debated over the past year. Physicians argue that rising malpractice insurance premiums are driving them out of business and out of the state. Attorneys and consumer groups counter that consumers need to be protected against mistakes that far too often occur in the medical community and that the number of physicians practicing in Pennsylvania has actually increased over the past five years.

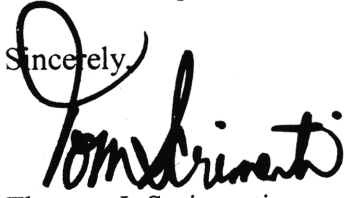
To address these concerns, several bills (including House Bill 1802) have been introduced in the General Assembly in an effort to privatize the state's Medical Professional Liability Catastrophe Loss Fund (CAT Fund), which was established in 1975 to ensure that victims of malpractice would obtain fair and reasonable compensation for their losses. Generally speaking, these bills would place the CAT Fund under an independent authority, provide for the payoff of the CAT Fund's estimated \$2.8 billion unfunded liability, cap future CAT Fund surcharges to physicians, and gradually phase out the CAT Fund in six years.

I support the concept of reforming the CAT Fund in order to lower the costs of medical malpractice insurance, as long as reasonable consumer protection measures are included to ensure the safety and rights of patients. Please know that I will keep your thoughts and concerns in mind if any measures on this issue are brought to a vote in the House of Representatives.

Louis M. Condrasky  
Page 2

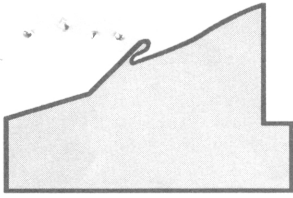
Again, thank you for your letter. If I may be of further assistance to you on this or any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Scrimenti". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "T" and "S".

Thomas J. Scrimenti  
State Representative

NOV 28 2001



HOSPITAL COUNCIL OF ERIE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

November 19, 2001

The Honorable Tom Scrimenti  
225B East Wing  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2020

Dear Representative Scrimenti:

We personally want to thank you for your participation in the Erie Hospital Council meeting on medical liability issues in our region. As you know, the Hospital and Health System of Pennsylvania, the Erie Hospital Council and the Hospital Council of Western Pennsylvania have all identified this issue as a top priority for this year.

Your support of HB 1802, which allows for the privatization of the CAT fund, is imperative for hospitals and physicians to ensure ongoing access to care in Erie and the surrounding areas. During our meeting, you heard first-hand how the rising costs of liability insurance are impacting our ability to recruit and retain physicians. This, in turn, leads to the lack of access to care in our community in some specific specialty care needs.

In addition, the Hospital and Health System of Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Medical Society and the Trial Attorneys all agree that privatizing the CAT fund is one major step needed to bring resolution to this issue. Besides privatization of the CAT fund, we need to work toward tort reform and reducing frivolous lawsuits. Finally, we need you to support further patient safety initiatives to reduce medical errors.

Please feel free to call either of us with additional questions or for more information. You can also contact Tim Ohrum, of HAP, at 724-778-3401 or Patricia Jurczak, of Hospital Council at 724-772-7202. We look forward to an ongoing exchange of information and ideas with you on the issue, as well as on others relating to health care.

Thanks again for your interest in this issue.

Sincerely,

Louis M. Condrasky  
CEO, HealthSouth of Erie  
President, Erie Hospital Council

143 E. 2nd St  
Erie 16507

Ian G. Rawson, Ph.D.  
President  
Hospital Council of Western Pennsylvania

500 Commonwealth Dr.,  
Warrendale Pa

15086

*This is a very important issue for Pennsylvania hospitals!*

MEMBERS

Corry Memorial Hospital • Hamot Medical Center • HEALTHSOUTH Great Lakes Rehabilitation Hospital  
HEALTHSOUTH Lake Erie Institute of Rehabilitation • Metro Health Center • Millcreek Community Hospital • Pleasant Ridge Manor West  
Saint Vincent Health Center • Shriners Hospitals for Crippled Children • Union City Memorial Hospital • Veterans Affairs Medical Center

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PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE  
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

# House of Representatives

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

October 25, 2002

Mr. William C. Klaphor  
P.O. Box 223  
Corry, PA 16407

Dear Mr. Klaphor: - *Bill*

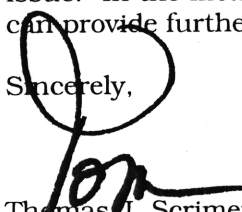
Thank you for contacting my office to share your thoughts with regard to this issue of medical malpractice. I appreciate the time you have taken to include me in your thoughts and share your insight.

In understanding the need for a multi-faceted solution to this serious problem, I supported the General Assembly's efforts to enact a legislative remedy to the malpractice problem. Specifically, I voted in favor of House Bill 1802 when it reached a vote on the floor of the House of Representatives for final concurrence. In its amended version, the legislative compromise shared the combined support of the hospital association, the medical society and the trial lawyers. On March 20, Governor Schweiker signed the bill and enacted Act 13 of 2002. While I consider this measure a significant step toward meaningful malpractice reform, I still believe that there is more that needs to be done to best address this critical issue. As such, I remain hopeful the on-going debate over this issue will focus more attention to increasing patient safety and reducing medical errors. Moreover, I believe it is of critical importance that current and future restructuring of the medical liability system should correspond with reduced malpractice premiums for doctors.

As the dialogue continues with regard to malpractice, your comments and concerns will be remembered and respected. I will also keep you in mind on retirement issues since you are thinking of retiring from Corry Area High School.

Again, I want to thank you for your letter and for keeping me apprised of your concerns. Please remain assured that I remain committed to monitoring this issue. In the meantime, if there are any additional questions or concerns, or if I can provide further assistance, please do not hesitate in contacting my office.

Sincerely,

  
Thomas J. Scrimenti  
State Representative  
4<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



THOMAS J. SCRIMENTI  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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House of Representatives

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

November 13, 2002

Ms. Donna Mindek

████████████████████  
Erie, PA 16510-3314

Dear Ms. Mindek: - *Donna*

Thank you for taking the time to contact me and share your concerns and thoughts regarding the issue of medical malpractice reform. As you know, this topic is currently receiving a great deal of attention in the legislature.

For the past year, the Democratic Caucus has publicly advocated for a special session to dedicate even more time and attention to the issue of malpractice. While some progress on medical malpractice reform has occurred, unfortunately the Republican controlled legislature has failed to move forward with this proposal. Instead, last spring House Bill 1802, which is a multi-faceted and bi-partisan bill that includes some solutions to this serious problem, was signed into law on March 20, 2002.

I supported the General Assembly's efforts to enact a legislative remedy to the malpractice problem by voting in favor of House Bill 1802 when it reached a vote on the floor of the House of Representatives for final concurrence. In its amended version, the legislation compromise shared the combined support of the hospital association, the medical society, and the trial lawyers.

But we didn't stop there, in October, House Democrats offered a plan that would mandate an automatic 20 percent rate rollback to bring immediate relief to doctors facing rising malpractice insurance premiums as an amendment. The Republican majority, however, did not allow the amendment to reach the chamber of the House for a vote.

While I consider the steps the General Assembly is taking toward meaningful malpractice reform, I still believe that there is more to be done to best address this critical issue. As such, I remain hopeful the on-going debate over this issue will focus more attention to patient safety and reducing medical errors. Moreover, I believe it is of critical importance that current and future restructuring of the medical liability system should correspond with reduced malpractice premiums for doctors.

Page 2

Again, I want to thank you for your letter sharing your questions. Please remain assured that I am committed to monitoring this important issue. If I may be of additional assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom', written over the closing 'yours,'.

Thomas J. Scrimenti  
State Representative  
4<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

THOMAS J. SCRIMENTI  
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House of Representatives  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES

AGING AND YOUTH  
DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN OF THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AGING  
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE  
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

October 23, 1998

Mr. & Mrs. James Wills

████████████████████  
North East, PA 16428-1015

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Wills:

Thank you for contacting me in support of legislation that implements mental health parity specifications in insurance policies. Ending mental health insurance discrimination is an important issue that the Pennsylvania legislature must address.

I believe denying medical coverage to those afflicted with mental illnesses is a tragedy. In many diagnoses, mental illnesses are the result of chemical imbalances in the brain. As such, schizophrenia and clinical depression are no different than chronic illnesses, such as diabetes, and should be covered by insurance companies.

As you may know, House Bill 1286 is currently before the House Insurance Committee. This proposed law would prohibit health insurance discrimination on the basis of mental illness. I am a cosponsor of this important legislation. Please know that I fully support legislation that requires insurance companies to put mental health treatments and diagnoses on the same level as physical health care.

Again, thank you for taking the time to alert me of your interest in this important issue. If I may be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Scrimenti  
State Representative

/dje

THOMAS J. SCRIMENTI  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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House of Representatives  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

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DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN OF THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AGING  
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE  
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

October 8, 1998

**TO:** Kate Conrey, Legislative Research  
**FROM:** Donna J. Ehrhart, Legislative Assistant  
**RE:** Constituent Letters

Rep. Scrimenti has been receiving paper towels with the following message: Wipe out Mental Health Insurance Discrimination – Parity Now! from his constituents.

Please prepare a response that can be sent to these individuals. Thank you.

THOMAS J. SCRIMENTI  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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House of Representatives  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES

AGING AND YOUTH  
DEMOCRATIC CHAIRMAN OF THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AGING  
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE  
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

June 29, 1999

Mr. Thomas H. DeWall, CAE  
Executive Officer  
Pennsylvania Psychological Association  
416 Forster Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17102-1714

Dear Mr. DeWall: *Tom*

Thank you for contacting my office and expressing your views on House Bill 1276. I welcome your thoughts and opinions. This is indeed a very important piece of legislation and the more input I receive from experienced professionals, such as yourself, the better able I am to serve my constituents.

I certainly understand and respect your position on any legislation which could significantly affect the Mental Health Procedures Act of 1976. I also concur with your thoughts about the necessity to proceed with caution on any policy or legislative changes which attempt to remedy the recent and tragic school shootings. Fast action does not necessarily yield positive results.

While this bill has been amended (in Committee) it appears that the original intent and integrity of this bill is secure and that only the details of certain tenets have been altered. For example, the provisions by which a student under 18 years of age could be subjected to involuntary commitment of not less than 72 hours (court order) has been amended to committing the subject for up to a maximum of 120 hours. While this is a noteworthy change, the "intent" has not been discarded.

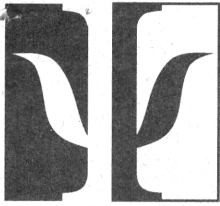
At this time, House Bill 1276 has been re-committed to the House Appropriations Committee. Whether this bill comes before the full House for a vote in the coming session remains to be seen. Please know that I will most assuredly keep your thoughts and insights in mind should this bill come before me for a vote. Should there be anything else that I may do for you with this or any other matter, please feel free to contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tom".

Thomas J. Scrimenti  
State Representative

*Mailed 7-6-99 N.E.*



# PENNSYLVANIA PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

416 Forster Street • Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17102-1714 • Telephone 717-232-3817 • Fax 717-232-7294

*An affiliate of the  
American Psychological  
Association*

June 4, 1999

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Richard F. Small, Ph.D.

### *Executive Officer*

Thomas H. DeWall, CAE

### *Professional Affairs Officer & Deputy Executive Officer*

Samuel J. Knapp, Ed.D.

### *Government Relations Consultant*

Susan M. Shanaman, J.D.

Hon. Thomas J. Scrimenti  
Pennsylvania House of Representatives  
25B East Wing  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0028

Dear Representative Scrimenti:

On behalf of the Pennsylvania Psychological Association, I am writing to urge you to oppose all amendments to House Bill 1276. As you know, that bill was designed to expedite the transition of mentally ill students into psychiatric facilities.

However, the bill is an amendment to the Mental Health Procedures Act of 1976, which is the comprehensive law that governs all inpatient and publicly funded outpatient treatment services. Amendments to this law need to be made very carefully and with great deliberation. It would not be prudent to vote on additional amendments to this law without the benefit of full hearings before the appropriate committee of the General Assembly and the full participation of the associations representing the patients, families and professionals who would be affected by these amendments.

The tragedy of school shootings is a matter of great concern to all Pennsylvanians. However, we need to be careful that our attempted solutions do not create additional problems themselves. Consequently, we respectfully urge you to vote against any amendments to House Bill 1276.

Sincerely,

Thomas H. DeWall, CAE  
Executive Officer