

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

HARRISBURG

THE SECRETARY

April 30, 1999

The Honorable Guy A. Travaglio
Pennsylvania House of Representatives
Room 4 East Wing
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

Dear Representative Travaglio:

In 1996, the General Assembly passed Act 87 which allowed for a State Health Center privatization demonstration program and required the Department of Health to review the program "to determine the feasibility and effectiveness of entering into contracts with local health care providers for the operation of State Health Centers." I am providing you with the evaluation report required by Act 87, "The Community Health Project," prepared by the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public Health.

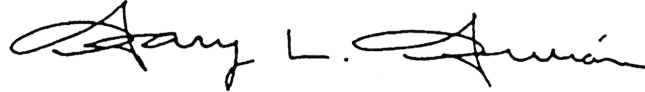
Under Act 87, the Department implemented privatization programs in three different county pilot sites, utilizing three different models for the private sector provision of clinical services. The Community Health Project report found one of the models successful in providing more efficient and effective delivery of services to the public; a model which the Department believes provides a feasible alternative to consider in the operation of the State Health Centers. Additionally, the Department believes that replicating this successful model will require careful and coordinated efforts in the community to best assess the appropriate mechanisms to purchase clinical services.

At the same time, the Department learned through the report that there are functions provided through the State Health Centers which are more appropriately maintained directly by the Department throughout the state. These are the core functions of public health.

As we move forward, the Department will be developing a comprehensive approach to provide clinical services through the private sector. We are also committed to assessing the most appropriate means by which we maintain a departmental presence throughout the state to provide those critical core functions of public health.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding this report and will be available to discuss the Community Health Project and the public health infrastructure here in Pennsylvania.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary L. Gurian". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and a long, sweeping underline.

Gary L. Gurian
Acting Secretary of Health