TO: The Honorable Members of the PA House of Representatives
FROM: Gene Barr, President and CEO
DATE: March 9, 2018
RE: S.B. 936 mailer

It has come to my attention that some of your constituents have received a dishonest and deceptive mailer regarding S.B. 936. The shadowy organization responsible, which appears to operate out of a PO Box located in a mail facility within a strip mall, shows little interest in the truth:

- They claim doctors oppose this legislation when in fact those from the mainstream medical community have indicated they are fine with it or are actively supporting – like the PA Occupational and Environmental Medical Society, the Hospital & Healthsystem Association of PA, among others.
- They claim “drug corporations” and “pharmaceutical companies” are behind this bill. I’m not aware of a single pharmaceutical company that has even taken a position on the bill.
- Probably the most repugnant claim is that this would “drive patients to highly profitable opioids.” We have led support for this bill since the beginning because the exact opposite has occurred across the country, where this approach has helped workers:
  - Ohio implemented a formulary in 2011 and has reduced the number of injured workers classified as opioid dependent by 59 percent.
  - Washington State has seen declines in opioid prescriptions every year since they implemented a formulary in 2013.
  - California’s State Workers’ Comp Director summed it up: “The adoption of the drug formulary is a step forward for California’s injured workers and should help address the overuse of high-risk medications such as opioids. It is expected to improve patient care and ease approval of appropriate treatment.”

Let’s not forget that opposition to this legislation is directly tied to allegations of questionable practices as detailed in a series of Philadelphia Inquirer articles. Those benefiting from the current lack of oversight in our workers’ compensation system are fighting to keep the status quo.

S.B. 936 simply adopts for injured workers the same approach for prescribing medication that has long been deemed necessary and appropriate for veterans, law enforcement, children, seniors and the public in general. The bill is a top PA Chamber priority, is supported by over 70 local chambers of commerce from throughout Pennsylvania and deserves your vote.