TO: The Honorable Members of the PA House Commerce Committee

FROM: Alex Halper, Director, Government Affairs

DATE: April 21, 2020

RE: Thoughts on Bills Scheduled for Consideration

I write on behalf of the PA Chamber to express thoughts on several bills before the Committee:

**H.B. 2369:** We support this legislation authorizing the Commonwealth to make low-interest loans available to small employers impacted by the pandemic. Employers are facing historic challenges from the mandatory closure and pause in commercial activity. Despite strong response measures passed by the federal government and state, the need for support has already far surpassed available resources. This program, as part of a broad strategy of support, will help struggling employers.

**H.B. 2370:** We support this legislation to allow notaries to conduct their duties remotely. The recent Act 15 of 2020 included similar legislation effective during the emergency declaration and feedback from employers has been positive. Allowing for remote notarization going forward would be similarly welcomed and might help avoid potential confusion if this option were suddenly revoked.

**H.B. 2386:** This legislation would create a state program to provide grants to employers who have been adversely impacted by the pandemic and filed a business interruption insurance claim that was subsequently denied. We understand an amendment may be offered that would prohibit nonprofits from applying for grants. We oppose this amendment, on behalf of nonprofits who:

- Are dealing with many of the same challenges as the broader business community;
- Could just as easily be rejected for a business interruption claim;
- Unfortunately may struggle even more to rebound since, in many cases, they are dependent on public and philanthropic funding sources that may also take time to replenish; and
- Provide essential services in our communities and will be increasingly called on during this difficult time and into the recovery.

Thank you for considering our views on these important matters. Please contact Alex Halper at ahalper@pachamber.org or 717-645-8730 with any questions or to discuss.