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Wolf Administration Continues Push for \$2,000 Direct Payments to Pennsylvanians as Prices Soar

Coatesville, PA – Today, Governor Tom Wolf’s cabinet member Department of Human Services Acting Secretary Meg Snead was joined by Representative Dan Williams at Coatesville City Hall to call on Pennsylvania’s Republican-led General Assembly to finally act to support Pennsylvanians by passing legislation for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)-funded \$500 million PA Opportunity Program, which would send \$2,000 checks to Pennsylvanians.

“The cost of everything from gas to groceries is a little higher right now than it was just a few weeks ago and for Pennsylvanians living paycheck to paycheck even a small increase in expenses can mean painful decisions like paying for food or rent,” said Acting Secretary Snead. “In the Department of Human Services, I see the disadvantages in communities across Pennsylvania and these \$2,000 checks would make a great impact as prices around us soar.”

In February, Gov. Wolf unveiled a [\\$1.7 billion proposal](#) for Pennsylvania’s \$2 billion in federal ARPA dollars. While Democratic leaders in the Senate and House have introduced legislation, [Senate Bill 1204](#) and [House Bill 2531](#), to support Gov. Wolf’s PA Opportunity Program, Pennsylvania’s Republican-led General Assembly have been slow to act on committing the federal funding or introduce a plan for the dollars. With continued inaction by the legislature, the money will be sent back to the federal government by December 31, 2024.

“Pennsylvanians shouldn’t have to wait any longer,” said Snead. “Let’s get this money into the hands of our neighbors who need it the most.”

In Gov. Wolf’s proposed PA Opportunity Program, \$500 million in ARPA dollars would provide direct payments of up to \$2,000 for Pennsylvania households with an income of \$80,000 or less. The program aims to help families still recovering economically from the COVID-19 pandemic or support them with covering pandemic-related costs and managing the current, every day increasing cost of living.

“Pennsylvanians are feeling the pinch of rising prices on everything from gas to groceries,” said Rep. Williams. “While we still need to address the corporate greed and price gouging occurring, we’re seeing far too much of, our friends and neighbors need assistance right now. With a record state surplus this

year and American Relief Plan funds that haven't been used, let's not delay and put this money to work for everyday Pennsylvanians. The Pennsylvania Opportunity Program would provide relief payments to help working families address their greatest needs."

In addition to Rep. Kinkead, Acting Secretary Snead was joined by Senator Carolyn Comitta, and stakeholders in the Coatesville community.

"We are all eager to put COVID-19 behind us, but the fact is many Pennsylvania families are still recovering from the economic fallout of the pandemic and rising consumer costs," said Senator Comitta. "The Pa Opportunity Program puts relief where it belongs – in the pockets of Pennsylvanians who need it the most. This one-time payment can make a big difference for families struggling to pay for necessities like utilities, groceries, childcare, or gas."

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