



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
HARRISBURG

September 21, 2020

THE GOVERNOR

TO THE HONORABLE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 15 of the Pennsylvania Constitution, I am returning herewith, without my approval, House Bill 2787, Printer's Number 4334.

We have been confronting extraordinary challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic. As we continue the fight against COVID-19, we need to continue to prioritize the health and welfare of Pennsylvanians and minimize public health risks. However, this bill does nothing to promote public health or ensure that our children have a safe learning environment. As we reopen our schools, we need to continue to be vigilant and take precautions to keep ourselves, our communities, and our children healthy. These mitigation efforts not only help keep our children, teachers, and staff healthy, they also help keep our schools open.

This bill is entirely unnecessary. While I recommended against holding school sports before January 2021, it was a recommendation and neither an order nor a mandate. Local school governing bodies have maintained the authority to decide how extracurricular activities, including school sports, proceed at the local level. Furthermore, to the extent COVID-19 cases may rise and spread during the fall and through the upcoming cold and flu season, the Department of Health must maintain the critical authority to limit exposure to COVID-19. Minimizing this exposure is paramount.

This bill also has constitutional infirmities as it attempts to take away executive authority during the 2020-2021 school year. Instead of unnecessary legislation, we need to focus on providing schools the tools and resources they need to be successful in educating our children and we need to help people impacted by the pandemic with legislation such as funding for small businesses and child care, and paid sick leave for employees.

For the reasons set forth above, I must withhold my signature from House Bill 2787, Printer's Number 4334.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Wolf".

TOM WOLF
Governor