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March 20, 2026

The Honorable Josh Shapiro
Governor of Pennsylvania
508 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Shapiro,

I write to urge you to direct Pennsylvania's \$193 million in federal Rural Health Transformation funding toward rural communities with the most limited health care access. Nowhere is this need more clear than in the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania. In McKean County, after years of service reductions, we are facing the planned closure of Bradford Regional Medical Center in the City of Bradford in May. This rightfully has caused a great deal of panic in the community with the impending loss of local access to life-saving emergency department services. This potential loss is exacerbated by an already strained emergency medical services system struggling to keep their doors open.

Rural community leaders also have ongoing concerns with the growing eight-county maternity care desert. Access to labor and delivery services in this rural region are at a critical level of concern. There are numerous examples of babies being delivered on the side of the road, in ambulances and other locations outside of hospitals. The lives of women and their babies are at risk due to limited access to care.

Targeted investment of the federal funding can make a real difference in the lives of people in rural Pennsylvania by stabilizing and strengthening rural health care. This would include:

- **Maintaining emergency departments** like Bradford's, ensuring timely access to life-saving care.
- **Restoring maternal services** in labor-and-delivery deserts through provider recruitment, telehealth expansion, and facility investment.
- **Providing financial stability** to rural hospitals heavily reliant on Medicaid and federal reimbursements.
- **Preserving local economies**, as hospitals are often among the largest employers in rural communities. Access to health care is also a significant consideration for businesses looking to relocate or expand operations.

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Governor Shapiro, your administration's support of targeted investment of the Rural Health Transformation Plan funding in areas with limited access to services is a pivotal opportunity to show what rural health equity looks like. By working with rural legislators and community leaders to prioritize these funds for areas with the most significant health care deficits, you can assist in safeguarding the lives and futures of rural Pennsylvanians.

I welcome any further discussion of this matter. Thank you for your attention to this critically important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin T. Causer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "M".

Martin T. Causer
State Representative
67th Legislative District