

June 27, 2011

TO: MEMBERS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

RE: SENATE BILL 1131, PRINTER'S NUMBER 1389

I am writing you on behalf of two clients, the Manufacturers Association of South Central PA (MASCPA) and the Pennsylvania Association of Health Underwriters (PAHU), to urge passage of joint and several liability reform, a measure which the General Assembly passed twice before. MASCPA represents manufacturers in a multi-county area of South Central PA while PAHU is a statewide organization representing insurance agents and brokers who specialize in health insurance and employee benefits.

MASCPA and PAHU ask that Senate Bill 1131 be considered without amendment. Changing the legislation now would mean additional delay until well into the fall for this important legislation to be acted upon.

The core issue is to make sure that those negligent for something leading to a lawsuit are held responsible and those which were not at fault can be left alone. A weakness in the present joint and several liability is that other parties are dragged into a lawsuit even if they are absolutely marginal with no real liability. Extricating themselves from the lawsuit takes time and legal money that would be otherwise used to buy equipment, hire new people or sustain employee benefits. Thank you for considering our position on SB 1131.

Best wishes,

Vince Phillips
Contract Lobbyist
Manufacturers Association of South Central PA
and
Pennsylvania Association of Health Underwriters

CC: Shelly Bloom, PAHU President
Mike Smeltzer, MASCPA Executive Director