



Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association

DAVID N. TAYLOR STATEMENT ON GOVERNOR TOM WOLF'S VETO OF SENATE BILL 936

HARRISBURG, PA – **April 27, 2018** – The following statement can be attributed to David N. Taylor, Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association President & CEO:

We at the Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association are appalled by Governor Wolf's veto of Senate Bill 936, which would have protected injured workers from quack medicine and opioid addiction by establishing a prescription formulary for the state's workers' compensation system.

Similar common-sense reforms have been supported by governors in other states, including Gov. Jerry Brown (D-California) and Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D-New York). A study of the period 2012-2014 found that Pennsylvanians receiving treatment under the workers' compensation system ranked third highest in opioid use in the nation, 78 percent above the median.

Pennsylvania's workers' compensation system is ripe for abuse because it lacks the safeguard of a prescription formulary. Medicaid, Medicare, CHIP, and every private health insurance plan in Pennsylvania use a prescription formulary, yet the Pennsylvania workers' compensation system does not, and with this veto, still won't.

Yesterday, just one day before Governor Wolf needed to act on Senate Bill 936, he announced an executive order to "curb overprescribing opioids in workers' compensation." This begs the question, could Governor Wolf have established this policy earlier? If so, why didn't he?

When Governor Wolf told legislative leaders to expect an executive session on the opioid epidemic on **June 23, 2016**, he made no mention of this issue or executive order. On **September 16, 2016**, when the Governor and legislative leaders announced a Joint Session of the General Assembly to address the opioid epidemic, he made no mention of this issue or executive order. Governor Wolf then declared a "State of Emergency" against the opioid epidemic on **January 10, 2018** with no mention of this issue or executive order. He then provided an update on **February 7, 2018** with no mention of this issue or executive order. On **April 4, 2018** the Governor renewed that same state of emergency with no mention of this issue or executive order.

Most importantly, do we trust Governor Wolf to protect the health of injured workers and the integrity of the workers' compensation system above the financial interests of Pennsylvania's litigation industry? Based on recent political behavior, we do not.

Two weeks ago, business leaders including the Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association called upon Governor Wolf to return \$1,100,000.00 in campaign contributions given to him by a Political Action Committee funded by law firms defrauding the workers' compensation system. Governor Wolf has not responded to these requests. The day after Senate Bill 936 passed the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, the governor's public calendar revealed he held a private "political meeting" with the contributors of this Political Action Committee at their offices in Philadelphia.

Governor Wolf's shameful action today will allow the litigation industry to continue to exploit injured workers for their own profit, and, in turn, the litigation industry will continue to bankroll Governor Wolf's re-election campaign.

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