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**STATE SENATOR  
LISA BAKER**  
20TH SENATORIAL DISTRICT



**Senate of Pennsylvania**

March 10, 2021

**COMMITTEES**

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The Honorable Tom Wolf  
225 Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Wolf:

As COVID-19 vaccines become more available, decisions are being made about crucial assistance for small businesses, and the weather warms, there is growing agreement within our communities on the needed areas of focus for state government. These priorities include kids returning to school for in-class instruction, people of all ages going outdoors and exercising more, businesses getting the help they need to recover and restore from the economic impact of the pandemic, and regional attractions and destinations making a comeback.

All these goals come together in the Poconos, through the traditional and substantial summer camp industry. Recreation, education, socialization, skills development, and creating lasting memories are part and parcel of the summer camp experience.

Obviously, reopening these camps rides on clear and sensible guidance from state government on health and safety measures that will mitigate the risk of COVID-19 and its variants. The industry has put considerable effort into identifying what they believe to be already sound precautions. It is encouraging that half a dozen states from Maine to Virginia have announced their plans for reopening camps.

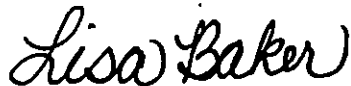
As you are undoubtedly hearing from people in many parts of the commonwealth, the complicating concern is that forthcoming guidelines might prove so unduly strict or encompassing as to render operations financially unfeasible. In respect to summer camps, such an outcome would be harmful to the interests of families, workers, and the host communities.

Camp owners are prepared to reopen with full safety accommodations utilizing an enhanced mitigation approach developed in consultation with the American Camp Association, Pennsylvania Camp Association and CDC guidelines. They have indicated that final state guidance must be issued no later than April 1<sup>st</sup>, in order to allow appropriate time to prepare operationally for the 2021 summer season.

While we can never recoup the experiences and benefits that were lost last year due to the pandemic, it seems that we have acquired the knowledge and developed the protocols to prevent another devastating shutdown this year.

Thank you for taking these concerns into consideration as the guidelines for summer camps are being finalized. We would welcome an opportunity to collaborate with you in announcing a reopening strategy to resume Pennsylvania's camping tradition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Baker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lisa Baker

cc: Alison Beam, Acting Secretary of Health  
Pennsylvania Camp Association Board of Directors