

12TH DISTRICT
STATE SENATOR
MARIA COLLETT
SENATE BOX 203012
THE STATE CAPITOL
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-3012
717-787-6599
FAX: 717-783-7328
GWYNEDD CORPORATE CENTER
1180 WELSH ROAD
SUITE 130
NORTH WALES, PA 19454
717-576-5983



Senate of Pennsylvania

COMMITTEES
AGING & YOUTH,
MINORITY CHAIR
APPROPRIATIONS
CONSUMER PROTECTION &
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE
STATE GOVERNMENT
VETERANS AFFAIRS &
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
EMAIL: senatorcollett@pasenate.com
WEBSITE: www.senatorcollett.com
FACEBOOK: [facebook.com/senatorcollett](https://www.facebook.com/senatorcollett)
TWITTER: @senatorcollett
INSTAGRAM: @senatorcollett

April 27, 2020

Governor Tom Wolf
Office of the Governor
508 Main Capital Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Wolf:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your measured approach throughout this pandemic and extend my heartfelt appreciation to the many members of your administration who have gone above and beyond over these last weeks to ensure that our communities are informed and safe. Additionally, I applaud your efforts to begin reopening our Commonwealth's businesses and industry based on a plan that is data driven, reliant on quantifiable criteria and focused on the health and safety of all in our Commonwealth.

As you know, the 12th Senatorial District includes parts of Montgomery and Bucks Counties, two of the earliest and hardest hit counties in our Commonwealth. Indeed, Montgomery County has been following stay-at-home guidance since March 16th and Bucks has been following it since March 23rd, with our citizens and businesses working diligently to practice social distancing and flatten the curve, at great personal and professional cost. As of today, more than 30 days since those stay-at-home orders were initially issued, Montgomery County has reported 3733 positive COVID19 cases and Bucks has reported 2504. These numbers are staggering. Through steady leadership and the herculean efforts by our citizenry, I believe we have flattened the curve here, but new cases are still being diagnosed in worrying numbers. Bucks and Montgomery Counties remain committed to continuing our efforts to beat COVID 19 and save lives. And we are also looking ahead to consider how we can best protect and save livelihoods.

To that end, the recent guidance unveiled for counties moving from a restricted red phase to a more lenient yellow phase instructs that counties will have to show “an average of less than 50 cases per 100,000 individuals over the course of 14 days.” I know it is not lost on you and your administration just how tremendously difficult this will be for Montgomery, Bucks, and the rest of the Southeastern Counties. Recent data shows that at present, Montgomery County has an average of 401 cases per 100,000 residents and Bucks County has an average of 340 per 100,000 residents. I cannot imagine how difficult it will be for these densely-populated urban and suburban counties to meet and sustain the threshold for reopening. I know that my constituents will continue the practices necessary for Pennsylvania to beat the pandemic – but this will come at a significant cost to the Southeast.

I am certain the devastating economic impact that extended closures will have on businesses across this region that was first to shut down and will likely be last to reopen has not gone unnoticed by you and your administration. While I am committed to making sure that Montgomery and Bucks County residents are able to maintain the strict protocols that are keeping our healthcare systems from being overwhelmed as we have seen in neighboring states, I am concerned about the permanent physical, emotional and financial toll such efforts will take on my constituents -- citizenry and businesses alike. They must know that there exists a light at the end of the tunnel, a clear, achievable, and well thought out plan that prioritizes economic relief for the hardest hit counties in the Commonwealth.

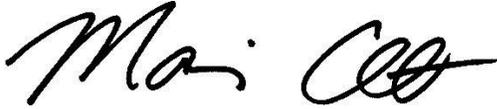
I applaud your multi-phase approach and want assurances that it will be quickly followed by an equally data driven and targeted economic “Marshall Plan” that gives consideration to the fact that counties in the Southeastern part of our Commonwealth will undoubtedly be closed for business much longer than in other parts of the Commonwealth. I am proud to say that my district and the adjoining Southeastern districts are a *huge* economic driver for the Commonwealth. This region typically accounts for approximately 37% of total General Fund revenues. It is in the interest of all Pennsylvanians to ensure that the Southeast continues to be the major driver of prosperity and opportunity for the Commonwealth.

While the Southeast remains in the red phase, I call on and wish to be an active partner with your administration to develop and implement:

1. A comprehensive plan to prioritize funding and loan opportunities to help sustain businesses with an eye towards whether they are:
 - a. in the hardest hit regions;
 - b. have suffered actual losses; and
 - c. have not received assistance yet.
2. Pennsylvania’s strategy to partner with the federal government to address the need to financially support the Commonwealth in order to keep Pennsylvania solvent, including how that support will address the economic damage caused by COVID19.
3. Private and public partnerships re economic development.
4. Development of a comprehensive plan for Pennsylvania’s future – lessons learned. Weaknesses exposed – comprehensive healthcare, insurance, education reform?

I appreciate your and the administration's leadership through this crisis and look forward to partnering with you on every effort to get the residents and businesses of the Commonwealth, the Southeast, and the 12th Senatorial District back on their feet. I hope we can work together to create a vision for a stronger Pennsylvania that will emerge from this crisis in better condition than before. I know you and I will remain dedicated to that effort for as long as we have the privilege of serving the people of Pennsylvania.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maria Collett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "M" and a distinct "C" at the end.

Senator Maria Collett

cc: Secretary Dennis Davin, Dept. of Community & Economic Dev.