Dear Senator Casey or Toomey:

We are pleased to see that there is legislation being introduced, **The Coronavirus Relief for Seniors and People with Disabilities Act**, that would address critical health and financial needs of older adults, people with disabilities, home health workers and family caregivers. We are supportive and respectfully ask for your support of this Senate bill that would:

·         Increase funding for nursing home surveys and promote infection control;

·         Help low-income seniors afford the cost of treatment if diagnosed with COVID-19;

·         Protect home health workers and promote home and community-based services; and

·         Ensure seniors and people with disabilities maintain access to home-based meals and services.

Caring for our seniors will mean prioritizing the availability of Personal Protective Equipment for long-term care and homecare workers to avoid spread of the illness; supporting childcare, testing and transportation so workers can be on the job without worry; identifying and staffing alternative sites for those who are suspected of having COVID-19 so that those who test positive or those recovering do not infect others; and assuring that providers collaborate and communicate across the continuum from emergency services to acute care to long-term and community services.

The stories out of Beaver County, Washington State, New Jersey, Morgantown and other communities should sound the alarm that every community must be ready to assure that that our frailest and most vulnerable citizens are protected from this virus and its devastating effects. This will mean prioritizing the availability of Personal Protective Equipment for long-term care and homecare workers to avoid spread of the illness; supporting childcare, testing and transportation so workers can be on the job without worry; identifying and staffing alternative sites for those who are

suspected of having COVID19 so that those who test positive or those recovering do not infect others; and assuring that providers collaborate and communicate across the continuum from emergency services to acute care to long-term and community services.

It is no longer a question of “if” for our community’s seniors. The facilities that serve them will be infected. Therefore, it is a question of “when” and how prepared we will be to weather the storm. What we do now will matter. The Federal response means everything; it is the critical button you can push.

Please know we support your efforts in this regard.