

June 18, 2025

The Honorable Michele Brooks
Chair
Senate Committee on Health & Human Services
168 Main Capitol
Harrisburg, PA 17120

The Honorable Art Haywood
Minority Chair
Senate Committee on Health & Human Services
10 East Wing
Harrisburg, PA 17120

RE: HB79, An Act establishing requirements for hospital-based financial assistance; providing for hospital-based financial assistance forms, for information about hospital-based financial assistance programs and for reporting of hospital-based financial assistance policies; and imposing duties on the Department of Health.

Dear Chair Brooks, Minority Chair Haywood and Members of the Committee:

As a representative of the 2,200 Pennsylvania small businesses in our network, we urge you to pass HB79, legislation that would help to prevent medical debt by reducing red tape, increasing transparency and awareness and creating a streamlined process for accessing health coverage and free or discounted care.

Small Business Majority is a small business organization that empowers diverse entrepreneurs to build a thriving and equitable economy. We engage our network of more than 85,000 small businesses and 1,500 business and community organizations to advocate for public policy solutions and deliver resources to entrepreneurs that promote equitable small business growth.

Rising healthcare costs have negatively impacted small businesses' bottom line and they [believe](#) that insurers (56%), hospitals (54%) and drug companies (47%) are responsible for the recent healthcare cost increases. Additionally, most entrepreneurs (58%) say they have been charged a hospital "facility fee" in addition to other charges on their hospital bill.

Medical debt impacts businesses and their employees and ensuring transparency in costs will better support employers across the state. The vast majority (91%) of Pennsylvania hospitals are tax-exempt, and all hospitals in Pennsylvania are required by law to create and publicize financial assistance programs that provide free or discounted care to eligible patients in order to receive state funds. Yet, many patients are unaware of these programs and their medical bills do not reflect the discounts they should be receiving.

That's why it is critical that you pass House Bill 79, which would enact measures to offset rising healthcare by addressing medical debt. The legislation would create uniform application for financial assistance, streamline the process for individuals who are applying for support, require clear notices on bills that assistance is available, and much more. We urge you to pass HB77 to ensure that individuals have access to healthcare financial assistance that will better support small businesses and their employees.

Sincerely,

Awesta Sarkash
Senior Public Policy Director, Small Business Majority