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Gov. Wolf Continues Push to Send Cash Support to Pennsylvanians through \$500 Million American Rescue Plan Program

Stroudsburg, PA – At the Pocono Family YMCA today, Governor Tom Wolf was joined by Representative Maureen Madden to call on Pennsylvania’s Republican-led General Assembly to finally act to support the success of Pennsylvania families by passing legislation for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)-funded \$500 million PA Opportunity Program, which would send \$2,000 checks to Pennsylvanians.

“Pennsylvanians should not have to choose between paying for utilities or groceries, childcare or gas. We have the opportunity and the means to ensure they’re not struggling, to ensure their success,” said Gov. Wolf. “I’m asking the General Assembly to unite across aisles on this for the sake of every Pennsylvanian – for when they succeed, our commonwealth succeeds. Let’s get this money out of our coffers and into the pockets of Pennsylvanians.”

Despite a [\\$1.7 billion proposal by Gov. Wolf](#), Pennsylvania is sitting on more than \$2 billion in federal ARPA dollars that remain without a plan and uncommitted. With continued inaction by the legislature, the money will be sent back to the federal government by December 31, 2024.

Last week, [Democratic leaders in the Senate and House committed to introducing bills](#) to support Gov. Wolf’s PA Opportunity Program. The program uses \$500 million in ARPA dollars to provide direct payments of up to \$2,000 for Pennsylvania households with an income of \$80,000 or less. The program aims to help families still recovering economically from the COVID-19 pandemic or support them with covering pandemic-related costs and managing the current, every day increasing cost of living.

“For people who faced the most severe economic hardships during the COVID-19 pandemic, the governor’s PA Opportunity Program would provide such a boost. Even as the economy recovers in record fashion and unemployment numbers continue to drop, we’re still facing worldwide inflation, and the higher cost of living is impeding the recovery of working-class families who are the lifeblood of our communities,” said Rep. Madden. “Here in the Poconos, Gov. Wolf’s proposal would help the people who run our local businesses and who make this region so special. These are people who work hard, who endured the last couple of years, and

who deserve the opportunities this program would present. The funding is there, let's use it for the right reasons."

The PA Opportunity Program will undeniably help families inch closer to stability by giving them the freedom to use this one-time payment to fill in the gaps where they need it most," said Kristina Valdez, executive director of Along the Way. "This money will help the hardworking people our agency serves keep their lights and heat on so they can get ready for work and pay their car maintenance so it passes inspection. It will enable them to continue to show up to work at the businesses we all rely on in our community."

Gov. Wolf's [\\$1.7 billion proposal](#) also includes \$225 million in support for small businesses, \$204 million for direct property tax relief, \$325 million for Pennsylvania's healthcare system, and \$450 million to invest in conservation, preservation, and revitalization of Pennsylvania communities.

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