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Gov. Wolf: 'Let's Pass This Bill Now', Continues Push for \$2,000 Direct Payments to Pennsylvanians

Reading, PA – Governor Tom Wolf was joined by Representative Emily Kinhead at West View HUB in Pittsburgh to call on Pennsylvania's Republican-led General Assembly to finally act to support Pennsylvanians by passing legislation for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)-funded \$500 million PA Opportunity Program, which would send \$2,000 checks to Pennsylvanians.

"The cost of everything from gas to groceries is a little higher right now than it was just a few weeks ago and for Pennsylvanians living paycheck to paycheck even a small increase in expenses can mean painful decisions like paying for food or rent," said Gov. Wolf. "I see that pain in communities across Pennsylvania and I want to talk about solutions. I want to put \$2,000 checks into the hands of Pennsylvanians and families that need it."

In Gov. Wolf's proposed PA Opportunity Program, \$500 million in ARPA dollars would 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.

"Now is the time to act, and the bill has already been introduced in the General Assembly," said Gov. Wolf. "To the Republican leaders in the General Assembly, I say let's pass this bill now."

In February, Gov. Wolf unveiled a [\\$1.7 billion proposal](#) for Pennsylvania's \$2 billion in federal ARPA dollars. While Democratic leaders in the Senate and House have introduced legislation, [Senate Bill 1204](#) and [House Bill 2531](#), to support Gov. Wolf's PA Opportunity Program, Pennsylvania's Republican-led General Assembly have been slow to act on committing the federal funding or introduce a plan for the dollars. With continued inaction by the legislature, the money will be sent back to the federal government by December 31, 2024.

"We have an unprecedented, game-changing amount of federal money available to help Pennsylvanians who are struggling," said Rep. Emily Kinhead. "Our state residents are experiencing historic price increases because of massive inflation and unchecked corporate greed. A \$2,000 check has the power to transform the lives of so many Pennsylvanians and we

need to spend the American Rescue Plan dollars soon or return it to the federal government. Why wouldn't we spend that money as intended – helping the people who need it most? Our Republican majority has refused to work with us on initiatives that would clearly benefit the people – like raising the minimum wage – but they could help Pennsylvanians who have taken a massive pay cut due in inflation by sending out ARPA funds directly to support working families. The time to act is now.”

In addition to Rep. Kinkead, the governor was joined by Senator Lindsey Williams, Scott Pavlot, founder of West View HUB, and stakeholders in the Pittsburgh community.

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