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**Manufacturer & Business Association Responds
to Governor Wolf's Veto to Reopen More Businesses, Plan for the Future**

ERIE – As increasing reports surface of businesses denied or still waiting on federal and state loans, employees unable to access unemployment compensation benefits, and permanent company closures, Manufacturer & Business Association President and CEO John Krahe issued the following statement:

“We share Governor Wolf’s concern for the health and safety of Pennsylvanians. However, after five weeks of forced closures, our members crave leadership as well as a plan to protect both lives and livelihoods. The two are not mutually exclusive and such standards have been established in neighboring Ohio, Maryland and West Virginia.

We were disappointed to hear the public praise of elected officials who supported the governor’s veto of Senate Bill 613, a responsible and safety conscious plan to restart jobs. Allowing business to operate while adhering to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines would have leveled our competitive disadvantage with the 42 states currently operating this way. It is further unsettling that the governor advocated what is tantamount to fraud when he encouraged individuals to choose to collect unemployment rather than return to work. This remark is contradictory to the Department of Labor’s instructions for employers to report suitable work refusals.

We are encouraged that the governor’s Plans for Pennsylvania will begin to lift heavy restrictions for some industries. However, this plan would increase costs and mandates on businesses at a time when many are unsure of their future. Holding employers hostage by requiring a \$15 minimum wage and increasing workers’ compensation reads more like campaign rhetoric than establishing public health benchmarks to re-engage our economy.

The administration’s concern for our business community has been disingenuous at best. When small businesses capable of following CDC guidelines are denied the ability to sell the same items as big-box stores or when companies in the same industry have received waivers to operate while their direct competitors are denied, the case is clear: These rules were not based on public safety but something else entirely.

Each of our members wants a safe environment for their employees. We are proud how they have risen to the occasion to support our communities and maintain compliance with every round of restrictions and threat of penalties. Additional industries must be included for the May 8 target date to begin the critical steps to reopen Pennsylvania business in a safe and responsible approach.”

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The Manufacturer & Business Association (MBA), founded in 1905, represents more than 3,000 member companies with approximately 120,000 employees in 54 counties across the Commonwealth. The MBA is dedicated to helping employers face challenges by delivering services that lower the cost of doing

business, ease the burden of compliance and increase productivity for its members. For more information and COVID-19 Employer Resources, visit www.mbausa.org.