To: PA House of Representatives

From: Amy Sturges, Director of Governmental Affairs, PA Municipal League

Re: Opposition to HB 1082 and the Discharge Resolution

Date: May 26, 2020

On behalf of the members of the League, I write to provide our position on House Bill 1082 and the discharge resolution to move it out of House Labor and Industry. We strongly oppose both the bill and the resolution.

As you know, House Bill 1082 establishes the Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health Act. It requires the Pennsylvania Secretary of Labor and Industry to adopt the federal Occupational Safety and Health Standards (OSHA) and requires all public employers in the Commonwealth to comply with these standards. Local governments, as employers, would fall under these standards. Adopting and following the federal OSHA standards would be a new, expensive and onerous unfunded mandate on local governments.

Municipal employers value workplace safety and minimizing worker injury. Currently, municipalities must comply with the PA Worker and Community Right to Know Act. Additionally, many municipalities are engaged in on-going risk management activities designed to reduce workplace injuries. Participation in such activities only enhances safety workplace practices.

Our members do not believe that incorporating additional, expensive and administratively burdensome federal OSHA standards will necessarily increase worker safety. Furthermore, the cost of complying with this mandate will ultimately be passed on to taxpayers.

Finally, during a pandemic is not the time or a reason to move this controversial bill forward. Local governments are not in a financial position to incorporate costly new mandates. The severe loss of local revenue is causing layoffs of public employees; this bill will only exacerbate this unfortunate situation.

For the above reasons, we request a no vote on the resolution and any movement of House Bill 1082.

Thank you for your consideration.