

October 14, 2013

RE: SB 379 – Support Benevolent Gesture / “Apology” Legislation

Dear Honorable Members of the House of Representatives:

Reforming our state’s legal system is a top legislative priority for the business community in the Greater Pittsburgh region. Allowing a benevolent gesture (sometimes referred to as “apology”) prior to the origination of a medical liability action by a health care provider, is one specific legal reform provision that we support. Studies have shown that a large percentage of patients and families may not have filed medical malpractice suits if given an explanation and an apology regarding the event. And limiting the number of civil suits in our courts creates a better business climate and spurs economic development.

It is our understanding that SB 379 (benevolent gesture / apology legislation) may soon come up for a floor vote in the House. On behalf of the business community in southwestern Pennsylvania, I encourage you to vote in favor of this bill. By a vote of 50-0, the Senate unanimously passed this legislation in the spring.

The Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce has been working since 2011 with a broad statewide coalition of trade associations, business organizations and major employers to address many different types of reforms to our legal system. We believe passing benevolent gesture / apology legislation, is another step in the right direction. Over half of the states in the U.S. have passed some type of legislation that would exclude such actions as proof of liability.

Again, the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce supports passage of benevolent gesture / apology legislation, and urges you to vote in favor of SB 379. If you have any questions or concerns or would like to discuss this further, please contact Jenn Beer, Director of Government Affairs at jbeer@pittsburghchamber.com or 412-216-2890 x3114.

Sincerely,



DeWitt Peart
President, Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce