

## **Governor Corbett Signs Bill That Will Lower Cost of Healthcare in Pennsylvania, Increase Access to Quality and Compassionate Care**

**News for Immediate Release**

**Oct. 23, 2013**

**Harrisburg** – Governor Tom Corbett today signed the second piece of new legislation associated with his *Healthy Pennsylvania* plan. Known as the “Apology Rule,” the bill will allow healthcare providers to apologize to plaintiffs or to make compassionate gestures without fear of those statements or gestures being used against them in any potential medical malpractice litigation.

“Today we are taking another step forward in our mission to increase healthcare quality and affordability for all Pennsylvanians,” said Corbett. “I thank Senator Vance and Representative Gillespie for their advocacy for a compassionate cause as well as for their collaboration on reducing the financial burdens that can drain individuals, families and our healthcare system.”

Corbett signed Senate Bill 379, sponsored by Senator Pat Vance (R-Cumberland), which formally establishes the free-standing Benevolent Gesture Medical Professional Liability Act and will establish that “benevolent gestures” made by health care and assisted living providers, as well as related employees and agents of these providers, will be inadmissible as evidence of liability in certain circumstances. The new legislation does not cover statements admitting to negligence or fault made by a medical provider.

“This legislation is an excellent example of how we can come together as Pennsylvanians to do the right thing for Commonwealth citizens,” said Corbett. “People want to see their elected officials work together to resolve problems and make a difference for the greater good and that’s exactly what this bill delivers.”

Senator Vance, along with Rep. Gillespie (R-Hallam), who with Vance has been advocating for this legislation for several consecutive legislative sessions, joined the governor for the signing.

“This legislation is the result of disparate interests laying their prejudices aside, acting like grownups and doing what is best for patients, their families, and the citizens of the Commonwealth,” said Sen. Vance. “Common sense and persistence finally paid off and we will all benefit.”

Also in attendance were Senators Lisa Baker and Gene Yaw, Representatives Matt Baker, Tom Caltagirone, Sheryl Delozier, Mauree Gingrich, Ron Marsico, Stan Saylor and Mike Turzai, Pennsylvania Department of Insurance Commissioner Michael Consedine, Physician General of the Commonwealth Carrie DeLone, local physicians and insurance professionals and representatives of the Pennsylvania Health Care Association, the Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvanian Medical Society.

Corbett signed the first piece of new legislation associated with his Healthy Pennsylvania plan on October 16, reauthorizing Pennsylvania's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and eliminating the program's six-month waiting period, allowing for timelier access to benefits for new CHIP participants.

To view Governor Corbett's full Healthy Pennsylvania plan, visit [www.pa.gov](http://www.pa.gov).