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House of Representatives

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg

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November 19, 2019

Honorable Josh Shapiro, Attorney General
Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General
16th Floor, Strawberry Square
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0018

Dear Attorney General Shapiro:

As a member of the House Gaming Oversight Committee, I respectfully request a review of the Local Share Account process oversight of DCED, specific to Washington County. Since I was sworn in as the Representative of the 49th Legislative District in January 2017, I have asked many questions. My findings have led me to the realization that reforms are desperately needed to ensure that the LSA grant program is held accountable, while guaranteeing the utmost integrity, fairness, and most importantly, open and transparent allocation of taxpayer dollars.

My primary reasons for calling for this review are as follows:

- To my knowledge, the LSA Grant Program does not require or maintain adequate voting records or meeting minutes regarding how the review committee votes, deliberates and/or discusses why they support and/or reject applicants or their respective funding requests. **Solution:** Voting records, meeting minutes and correspondence shall be maintained and provided by the LSA Review Committee.
- To my knowledge, the LSA Grant Program Review Committee members do not complete an ethics statement regarding potential conflicts of interest with grant awards that could benefit a group, organization or business from which they directly and/or indirectly could benefit. **Solution:** Members of the LSA Grant Review Committee shall complete and disclose ethics statements before being appointed to the committee. In addition, no group, organization or business shall be eligible for a grant award if an individual on the LSA Grant Review Committee has a conflict of interest.
- To my knowledge, the LSA Grant Review Committee has numerous individuals who serve on the committee annually. **Solution:** Members of the LSA Grant Review Committee should change annually and no individual should serve on the committee more than one year in sequence.

Page 2
November 19, 2019

Without establishing these reforms, major concerns will remain regarding conflicts of interest, special interest earmarking of funds and insider deliberation of projects in advance of the grant presentations.

We owe it to the taxpayers we represent to ensure that LSA funding is allocated with integrity, transparency, and above all, that projects are funded based upon their value to our communities and the opportunities to improve the quality of life for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bud Cook". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Bud Cook
State Representative
49th Legislative District

cc: Mike Vereb
Director of Legislative Affairs