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Exclusive: Pennsylvania Republicans Torch ‘Petty Tyrants’ Tom Wolf, Rachel Levine over Nursing Homes

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Sean Moran, Breitbart

Exclusive: Pennsylvania Republicans Torch ‘Petty Tyrants’ Tom Wolf, Rachel Levine over Nursing Homes

Pennsylvania congressional Democrats remain silent on Gov. Tom Wolf’s (D) decision to put coronavirus-infected patients in nursing homes, while Pennsylvania Republicans chastised the governor for endangering the state’s elderly in exclusive statements to Breitbart News.

Wolf, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D), and New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy (D) have all received intense backlash for forcing nursing homes to accept coronavirus-infected patients.

At least partly due to the order, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania have three of the four highest deaths in long-term care facilities, or nursing homes.

Breitbart News’s Michael Patrick Leahy noted that more than two-thirds of the 4,505 who died of the coronavirus pandemic in the state were residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities. Pennsylvania Health Secretary Rachel Levine, the nation’s highest-ranking state transgender health official, came under fire for removing his own 95-year-old mother from a nursing home in Pennsylvania while supporting the governor’s decision to require nursing homes to admit those who tested positive for the disease.

Wolf came under such controversy that he said on Monday that he would be open to a federal investigation into this administration’s handling of the coronavirus outbreak in nursing homes.

Breitbart News wrote about how New York and New Jersey congressional Democrats have remained silent on their governors’ decision to mandate that long-term care facilities host coronavirus patients.

Breitbart News sent comment requests to Pennsylvania’s congressional delegation, House and Senate, and Democrats have ignored the request for comment.

The Pennsylvania Democrats that ignored the comment request include:

- Bob Casey
- Brendan Boyle
- Dwight Evans
- Madeleine Dean
- Mary Scanlon
- Chrissy Houlihan
- Susan Wild
- Matt Cartwright
- Conor Lamb
- Mike Doyle

Several Pennsylvania Republicans chided Wolf for endangering some of the state’s most vulnerable citizens.

Sen. Pat Toomey (R-PA) told Breitbart News, “It is clear that aggressive measures should have been taken in Pennsylvania to protect nursing home residents and prevent outbreaks in long-term care facilities, particularly in those the PA Department of Health knew were ill-equipped to control the spread of the virus.”

Rep. Scott Perry (R-PA) called for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to investigate the governor’s handling of the coronavirus last week.

Perry wrote in an op-ed last week:

When the Congressional Delegation and the leadership of the State Legislature inquired to Gov. Wolf about the inordinate amount of COVID-19 fatalities in elder care, assisted living and nursing facilities, we received a familiar response: silence. Nearly 70% of all COVID-19 deaths in Pennsylvania have occurred in nursing and long-term care facilities. Governor Wolf has failed to protect our most vulnerable populations, and he’s shown little desire to modify his decisions that continue to have devastating effects on our most at-risk population.

The Pennsylvania Republican delegation slammed Wolf for failing to protect the elderly Pennsylvanians and chastised Levine for pulling a family member out of the nursing home while preventing small businesses from operating.

Rep. Fred Keller (R-PA) told Breitbart News, “From failing to protect older Pennsylvanians from the spread of COVID-19 in nursing homes while allowing a top cabinet official to pull a family member out of a similar facility, to refusing to allow small businesses to safely resume work despite the fact that we’ve successfully flattened the curve, Gov. Wolf’s coronavirus response has been nothing short of an unmitigated mess. It is clear that the governor lacks a coherent plan to deal with this pandemic, and the public health and economic impacts have been devastating as a result.”

Rep. John Joyce (R-PA) told Breitbart News, “Since the onset of the coronavirus crisis, I have called on Gov. Wolf to be transparent and forthcoming with the people of Pennsylvania. It is deeply concerning that the Wolf administration continues to move the goal posts as we seek to recover from the health and economic ramifications of this outbreak. We should be focused on protecting the lives and livelihoods of Pennsylvanians – including our seniors and residents of long-term care facilities. As I have said before, the Wolf administration must consider the comprehensive health needs of our communities and take action to serve Pennsylvanians across the Commonwealth.”

Other conservative lawmakers have noted that Wolf’s administration has especially harmed elderly Pennsylvanians, noting that nursing home deaths account for roughly 70 percent of total coronavirus deaths.

“Secretary Levine’s decision to place COVID-19 positive patients back into nursing homes was misguided and dangerous. Elected officials managing this crisis must rely on the data to make informed decisions. Seniors are particularly vulnerable to this disease and should be treated with the utmost caution,” Rep. Dan Meuser (R-PA) said in a statement to Breitbart News. “Secretary Levine’s intent may have been to protect hospital capacity, but placing seniors with COVID-19 back into nursing homes where they could expose other high-risk individuals was short-sighted. As a result, these facilities have accounted for nearly 70 percent of fatalities across the Commonwealth.”

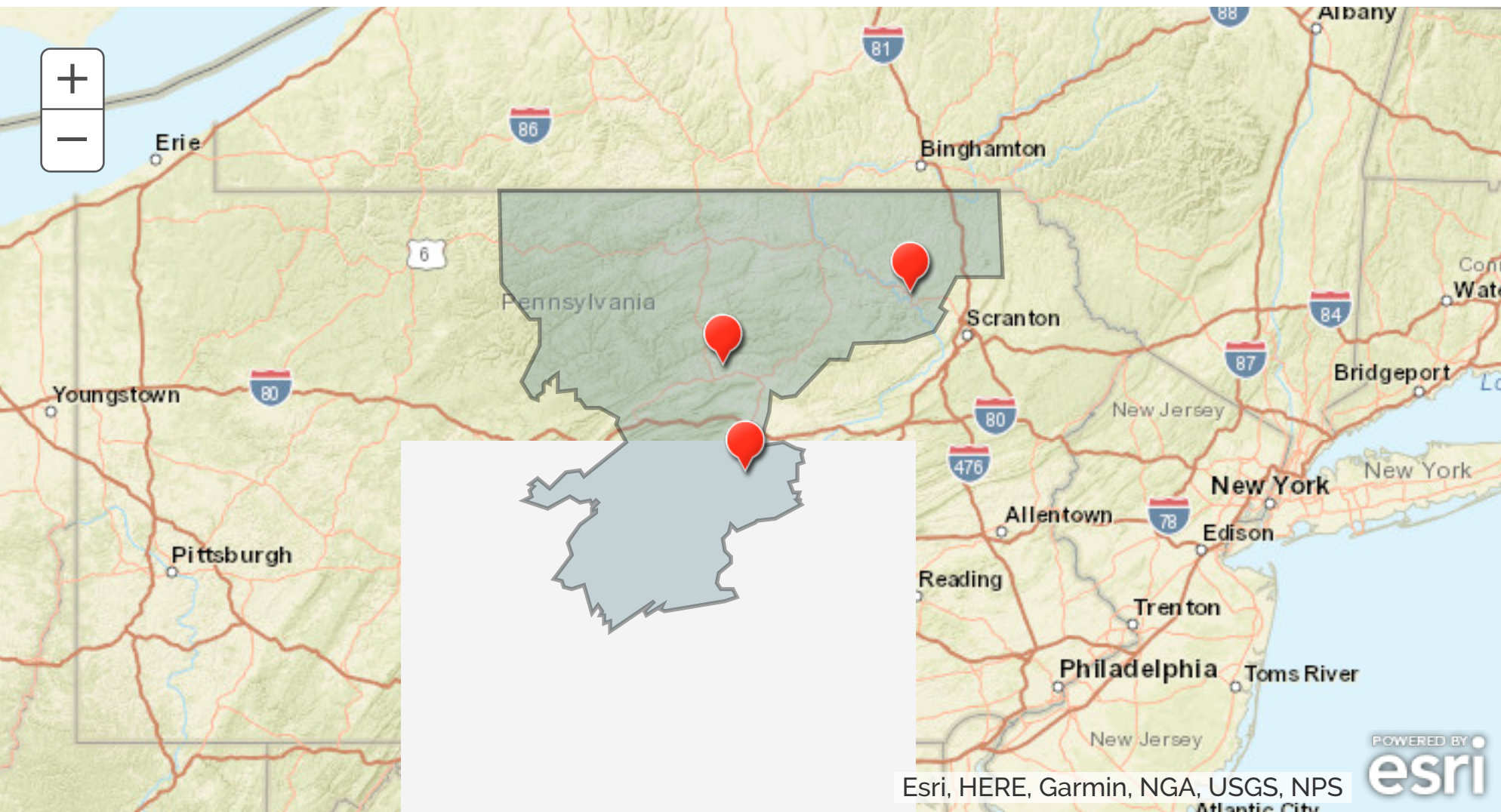
“COVID-19 patients should never have been readmitted to long-term care facilities where the congregate settings and at-risk populations were needlessly endangered,” Rep. Lloyd Smucker (R-PA) told Breitbart News. “Congressman Smucker has stated that Gov. Tom Wolf has failed the people of Pennsylvania in his administration’s handling of nursing home issues. The public has since learned that the state Department of Health abandoned early intervention plans for nursing homes while simultaneously requiring them to admit patients who tested positive for COVID-19, allowing it to spread quickly in our most vulnerable communities.”

Smucker said that he is “thankful that President Trump’s administration has been so supportive of the Commonwealth’s nursing home and long-term care facilities, by providing direct personal protective equipment shipments and dispatching teams of experts from the CDC to provide assistance to these hotspots.”

One conservative said that Wolf and Levine have acted as “petty tyrants” while harming Pennsylvania small businesses and the state’s senior citizens.

Rep. Guy Reschenthaler (R-PA) told Breitbart News, “Gov. Wolf, along with unelected bureaucrats in the Pennsylvania Department of Health, acted like petty tyrants by prioritizing shutting down small businesses rather than focusing on protecting our most vulnerable senior citizens. By forcing nursing homes to accept COVID-19 patients, Gov. Wolf put thousands of seniors in harm’s way, with nearly 70 percent of COVID-19 deaths in the state coming from these facilities. Gov. Wolf’s one-size-fits-all approach to fighting this pandemic has upended our economy and rendered one in four workers jobless, all while putting our seniors in care homes at greater risk.”

Issues: [Pennsylvania’s 12th Congressional District, Health](#)



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