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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cumberland County Commissioners Issue Letter of Support for Senate Bill 1279

Cumberland County, PA- The Cumberland County Board of Commissioners will vote Wednesday (June 22nd) to sign a letter of support for PA Senate Bill 1279, which addresses Medical Assistance eligibility for incarcerated individuals. The letter will be sent to members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly and Governor Wolf.

This bill would suspend, rather than terminate Medical Assistance benefits for individuals who are enrolled in Medical Assistance prior to incarceration in a county or state prison. By suspending rather than eliminating, individuals can have access to Medical Assistance benefits the day of release and in turn have the ability to maintain treatment services they may have received while incarcerated. Under current legislation, individuals are terminated and must go through the timely process to reapply and go without services for the duration.

As is evident through Cumberland County's Pennsylvania Supreme Court Accredited Treatment Court Program, as well as the work of the Cumberland-Perry Drug & Alcohol Commission and Cumberland-Perry Mental Health, Cumberland County is committed to and understands the value of addiction treatment and mental health services for incarcerated individuals. All three of these programs work to see successful offender re-entry into the community where applicable. This legislation would provide for continuity of care and assist and support those battling addiction and mental illness. Evidence shows that by ensuring these services we can effectively reduce recidivism rates in our community and across the Commonwealth.

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