

Emergency Powers Legislation MUST protect civil liberties while protecting public safety.

[SB633](#), the Public Health Emergency Act, sponsored by Senator Costa, fails to do this. [SB633](#), grants the state unprecedented and sweeping powers if a state public health emergency is declared with NO preservation of the civil rights of individuals.

[SB633](#) enables the suspension of current regulations which constrain the Department of Health's actions toward citizens. It allows new regulations to be promulgated without public input and authorizes public health workers "TO DISPENSE, ADMINISTER, FURNISH OR OTHERWISE PROVIDE PROPHYLAXIS OR TREATMENT FOR A **REPORTABLE DISEASE OR CONDITION AS NECESSARY TO PREVENT AND CONTROL THE SPREAD OF DISEASE OR CONDITION.**"

Pennsylvania currently has 74 "reportable diseases,"¹ and other diseases can be added to the reportable disease list which further broadens the reach of this legislation.

There are NO restrictions on the "as necessary" provision of this bill. Without safeguards, what would restrain the state from performing forced drugging or vaccination on its citizens? Language protecting young children from being separated from their families or law abiding citizens from forced interment in mass quarantine centers is absent.

The language of [SB633](#) leaves citizens in danger of being denied reasonable options and possibly even finding their basic constitutional rights denied, should local authorities act without well-defined parameters and limits.

CREATING A SAFE AND REASONABLE SOLUTION

Since the purpose of legislation is to provide clear directions in an emergency along with limitations, and the protection of citizens' rights, open ended directives such as those in [SB633](#) are not acceptable.

The [Connecticut Public Health Emergency Response Act](#)² is a comprehensive law that succeeds in balancing an emergency public health threat while maintaining civil liberty protections.

Any PA legislation that goes forward must include civil liberty provisions such as:

- Detailed direction regarding quarantine, including that "quarantine and isolation shall be by the **least restrictive means necessary** to prevent the spread of a communicable disease..." (Sec. 19a-131b.)
- Requiring that subjects be informed of an option to refuse vaccination or medication for specified reasons. Quarantine or isolation must be an alternative to vaccination orders. (Sec. 19a-1312e.)
- Defining reasonable actions in case of outbreaks and quarantines.
- Restricting use of emergency power to public health threats that carry imminent risk of statistically significant mortality.

¹<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/Reporting-Registries/Pages/Reportable-Diseases.aspx>

² https://www.cga.ct.gov/2019/pub/chap_368a.htm#sec_19a-131