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April 19, 2005

The Honorable Estelle B. Richman, Secretary  
Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare  
Post Office Box 2675  
Harrisburg, PA 17105

RE: **Payments to Nursing Facilities - Proposed Rates for State FY 2004-2005  
35 Pa.B.1939**

Dear Secretary Richman:

Please accept this letter as comment to the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare (DPW) regarding DPW's Pennsylvania Bulletin (35 Pa.B. 1939) Notice for Payments to Nursing Facilities.

**COPY**

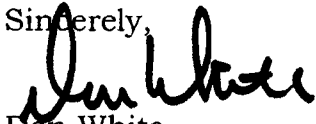
As I have voiced in the past, I believe DPW's failure to recognize the new federal designation of Armstrong and other counties as members of new Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) is an action that causes great harm to nursing facilities in such counties.

The current proposal to implement new payment rates, under the assumption DPW's MSA proposal will be accepted is another step in the wrong direction. It is my understanding that current regulations require DPW to calculate such payments based on current MSA designations. I believe this may be an attempt to undermine the Regulatory Review Process and sabotage the ability of counties such as Armstrong the opportunity to have their position heard and understood.

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Again, I firmly believe DPW is greatly mistaken in this matter, and is causing undue harm to residents of Armstrong County for reasons I can not understand. As the elected representative of Armstrong County, I cannot allow this to occur without making my position known to DPW.

Sincerely,



Don White  
Senator, 41<sup>st</sup> Senatorial District

DCW/rrc

cc: Representative Jeff Pyle  
Armstrong County Commissioners  
Ms. Gail Weidman  
✓ Mr. Bob Nyce  
Mr. Ross Nese