

**Juniata Township Board of Supervisors
Huntingdon County, PA**

Date: August 16, 2025

From: The Juniata Township Board of Supervisors

P.O. Box 248
Huntingdon, PA 16652

To: Senator Judy Ward

1904 North Juniata Street
Hollidaysburg, PA 16648

Subject: Opposition to HB 1424

I am writing to you on behalf of the Board of Supervisors of Juniata Township and our taxpayers.

We oppose HB 1424 which was passed in the Pennsylvania House on July 8, 2025, with absolutely no consideration of the burden it would place on many small financially strapped municipalities.

HB 1424 would exempt visitors from paying for the benefits they receive and access to recreational opportunities we offer within the boundaries of the township. It is important to note that most of these visitors do not reside or pay taxes in Juniata Township. And many of them visit us from outside of Pennsylvania.

Juniata Township has no industrial base, no towns, stores or chain restaurants to contribute to our tax base. What we do have is the ability to provide access and an opportunity to get closer to nature via our campgrounds. Visitors get to swim, kayak, go boating, water skiing and go fishing on the waters of Raystown Lake and the Raystown Branch of the Juniata River.

Visitors are welcome to “our home”. When summer comes our population more than doubles and traffic increases on the roadways leading to many recreational opportunities we have. The downside comes when summer ends, it’s Juniata Township taxpayer dollars that pay for cleanup along our roads and repairs to the roadways that are needed to ensure safe roadways for our taxpayers during the rest of the year.

The ability of our township to raise revenue is strictly regulated by the Second-Class Township Code and the Local Tax Enabling Act. So strict, in fact, we have limited options. A **5% Amusement Tax** was the only viable option open to Juniata Township and a few other similar

townships in Huntingdon County. It allows the Board of Supervisors to limit the need to suddenly increase real estate taxes when emergencies come up or we simply need to fix a road. Raising taxes is an unwise knee jerk for solving problems when there is no other stable financial source of funding available.

Let's put this in perspective with a factual example. If a visitor rents a campsite in Juniata Township at a cost of **\$50.00** per night, our Amusement Tax adds **\$2.50** for a total of **\$52.50**. From our perspective this isn't a deal breaker for visitors who want to vacation at our local campgrounds and access the local recreational opportunities.

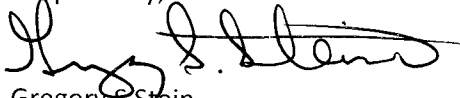
Here is another factual example. Juniata Township's annual budget is around **\$140K**. The township **Real Estate Tax** collects about **\$42k** of that total. Historically, the State provides about **\$60k** in **PA Fuel Tax**. To meet the shortfall, we apply for grants and bank loans hoping to fill the financial void. In the past our road repairs were strictly limited to "just in time and just enough" repair and chipseal on surfaces to get us through another winter.

To deal with the financial shortfall, we enacted **Amusement Tax Ordinance #2019-1** and later revised it to **#2024-1**. We began assessing the tax on campsites and recreational related activities about 3 years ago. Last year we received around **\$89K** in **Amusement Tax** funds which were immediately used to renew roads, not Band-Aid them. For the first time ever, we are no longer barely surviving but building for the future. HB 1424 will obliterate this opportunity.

The several hundred campsites within the township have a significant impact on relieving taxpayer burden. If the PA Legislature believes HB 1424 is so important and beneficial, then HB 1424 needs to include the charity of alternate stable streams of annual funding for small municipalities. Today, we are paying our way without having to ask for charity.

In closing, the passing of HB 1424 will force this township to consider raising real estate taxes to meet our future needs. That also means that the elite group of campgrounds HB1424 intends to help will also be paying higher real estate taxes, too. HB 1424 is misguided and destructive in its mission. Let's not favor one group over the very people who pay the township's bills. This is our story and our plight. Please do not pass HB 1424 into law. It isn't a win for anyone.

Respectfully,



Gregory S Stein

Supervisor

Board of Supervisors – Juniata Township, Huntingdon County, PA 814-644-8312